

CRANFIELD UNIVERSITY

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**RECRUITING FOR DIVERSITY: SEX DIFFERENCES IN
UNDERGRADUATES' CHOICES OF POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS**

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

DBA THESIS

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**Recruiting for diversity: Sex differences in
undergraduates' choices of potential employers**

Supervisor: Professor Susan Vinnicombe

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Doctor of Business Administration**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to explore sex differences in undergraduates' choices of potential employers. It focuses on a major employer ('the Firm'), wishing to increase the number of job applications it receives from female undergraduates, and comprises three linked projects. No previous research was found that addresses sex differences in organisational choice.

In the first project, a contribution is made by identifying, using Repertory Grids, eighty-four organisational attributes by which undergraduates differentiate between potential employers. A survey in the second project found organisational attractiveness (the product of the importance of organisational attributes and the perceived extent of their presence in a particular organisation) positively correlated with likelihood to apply. Sex differences were found in both components of organisational attractiveness: a new contribution to the literature.

Regression analysis revealed the attributes that predict women's likelihood to apply to the Firm: *'people with whom I have things in common'*; *'friendly, informal culture'*; *'cares about its employees as individuals'*; and *'dynamic, forward-looking approach to its business'*. The Firm's image in these areas was found to require improvement and, in the final project, group interviews with female new joiners (to the Firm) identified tangible 'cues' that the Firm can use to signal the predictor attributes to undergraduates.

Having identified the importance of interaction with employees in forming undergraduates' images of organisations, a new approach was developed to measure the employees' image of the Firm, and this was supplemented by group interviews. The results contribute to practice and literature by revealing that the employees' image is not universally strong and, in talking with undergraduates, they 'tell it like it is'. This study highlights that, ultimately, the Firm's desired image must be supported by employees' experiences of it, which management may need to examine further if the Firm is to attract more female undergraduates.

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NOTES ON DISSEMINATION TO DATE

Conference Papers

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European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management
Brussels, March, 2002

“Recruiting for Gender Diversity: Exploring the Relationship between Organisational Attractiveness and Application Intentions in UK Undergraduates”, with Susan Vinnicombe

‘Career Evolution’

Harvard Business School
London, June 2002

“Organisational Attributes, Organisational Attractiveness and Diversity Management”
‘Work Values and Behaviour in an Era of Transformation’

The 8th Bi-annual Conference of the International Society for the Study of Work and Organizational Values (ISSWOV)
Warsaw, June 2002

“Recruiting for Diversity”

‘Fast-tracking Performance through Partnerships’

British Academy of Management Annual Conference
London, September 2002

Winner of Best Paper Award, Gender and Management track

Journal Papers

“Recruiting for Diversity”

Women in Management Review, Vol. 18, No. 1/2
In Press

“Measuring and Managing Employer Brand Image”, with Simon Knox

European Journal of Marketing
Submitted

“The Power of Organisational Attributes for Diversity Management”

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1 CHAPTER ONE: LINKING COMMENTARY

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 The Business Issue

The ability to attract and retain talented people has been rated more highly than market share, recently, in the top ten non-financial measures used by investors to analyse company performance (Ernst & Young, 2000). “As [our] economy becomes more knowledge-based, the differential value of highly talented people continues to mount” (Michaels *et al*, 2001, p3). At the same time, however, significant shifts in the prevailing demographics are changing the market for attracting talented people and making it increasingly challenging for many organisations. By 2006, the number of 16-24 year-olds in the labour market will have shrunk by one million compared to 1987. (And by 2010, it is estimated that only 20% of the workforce will be white, able-bodied, male and aged below 45 [Pearn Kandola, 2000]). As a result, Ewing *et al* (2002, p8) suggest “it is a distinct possibility that in coming years competition for talent among firms will be even more fierce than competition for customers”. These factors have led the sponsor of this research (hereafter referred to as ‘the Firm’) - along with many other major UK graduate employers - to question its traditional recruiting practices and turn its attention to the issue of diversity.

The Firm recognises also that it needs to embrace ‘differences’ if it is to continue to prosper; the perceived benefits of a diverse workforce including securing competitive advantage in a shifting global economy, avoiding the dangers of ‘group think’, facilitating increased creativity, and even improved shareholder value (Bank, 1999; Lewis, 1997; Rana, 1998). Interest (amongst the Firm and its competitors) in *gender* diversity, in particular, has been fuelled by increasingly frequent reports in the popular press of girls’ superior academic achievements. In 1996, *The Economist* reported that girls were now outperforming boys at all levels in school and also that they were tending to stay on at school for longer. Each year since, the national exam results bring the same crop of newspaper stories: “Girls are in a class of their own – again” (Clare, 2002). And some commentators see this trend as part of a wider social phenomenon (Cooper & Lewis, 1999), and boys becoming “tomorrow’s second sex” (The Economist, 1996; Gumbel, 1999). Not only might women (as a group) be increasingly better educated than men, they are also seen by some as a greater source of the new management skills prescribed for the successful post-industrial organisation (Cooper & Lewis, 1999). The anthropologist Helen Fisher states, for example, that the “trends toward decentralization, a flatter business structure, team playing, lateral communications, and flexibility favor women’s ways of doing business” (1999, p52).

In 1999, the Firm established (in its UK practice) a *Balanced Workforce* programme with the objective of achieving an increase in the recruitment, retention and advancement of women in the Firm. This doctoral research was designed to support the aims of the *Balanced Workforce* programme. When the research was first conceived, the author’s role within the Firm was that of Global Director of Recruitment Marketing, so the ‘recruitment’ objective of the *Balanced Workforce*

programme was selected as the focus for the research - specifically, the *graduate* recruitment programme, as new graduates constitute the largest part of the Firm's annual hiring targets.

Women typically make up just one-third of the Firm's total graduate intake each year. This compares unfavourably with a general, national picture, which shows that more than half of current students are female – although the gender ratio varies quite significantly between different course types (e.g. a greater percentage of those students studying 'technical' subjects are male), the Firm hires graduates from the whole range of degree types. Analysis (conducted as part of this doctoral study) of the Firm's graduate recruitment data for the UK showed that conversion rates (e.g. from applicant to offer, and offer to acceptance) are similar for men and women. From this it was surmised that it is the (relatively) low number of job *applications* from women that is primarily responsible for the low percentage of women recruited in to the Firm. Specifically, then, this doctoral research addresses the Firm's desire to increase the number of female (UK) undergraduates attracted to apply to the Firm for a job.

1.1.2 Recruiting Activities

The Firm's recruiting activities on university campuses are extensive and not restricted to direct hiring activities (e.g. interviewing) or a specific period of the year. At each of its leading target UK universities, the Firm has a presence throughout the academic year – examples of activities include sponsoring teams, societies and academic prizes, running training/advice sessions on completing application forms and interview skills, giving lectures and running business games and skills building sessions (e.g. team building), running quiz nights and hosting student dinners. The Firm is certainly not unique in this approach, but it is generally one of the highest profile employers on campus. In addition, the Firm is represented at all the major student careers fairs and also (like other large employers) makes a major presentation about careers at the Firm at each of its leading target universities in the autumn term every year.

The Firm has a recruitment department, with a team dedicated to 'graduate' (campus) recruiting. These (staff) recruiters have overall responsibility for all campus recruiting activity, for meeting recruiting targets and for the human resources aspects of the recruiting process. They are aided in their campus work, however, by University Action Teams (UATs), one of which exists for each of the leading target universities. The UATs are made up of (volunteer) employees of the Firm (across all job levels), who are alumni of the particular university. The Firm allows UAT members to dedicate a small amount of their work time to UAT activities and the teams are allocated a small budget. Each year, the UAT creates a plan of activity at the university and the work of organising and attending/running events is divided up amongst the team.

In addition, the *Balanced Workforce* programme has developed a number of campus recruitment initiatives, such as a 'Women in Business' presentation and a 'women's weekend' (a workshop to explore aspects of working in its industry) for female undergraduates. It was not the intention of this research to track the success (or otherwise) of the *Balanced Workforce* programme, but it is worth noting that the

perception of the Firm amongst women, over the period of the research, may have improved as a result of the programme's activities.

Another 'longitudinal' issue that should be noted is the change in the recruiting climate that occurred during the elapsed time between the two major fieldwork periods in the research (Project One and Project Two). At the time that the doctorate started, a 'war for talent' (Michaels *et al*, 2001) was raging on campus and employers were offering a variety of new incentives to entice undergraduates to their organisations, e.g. large signing-on bonuses. A couple of years later, in the midst of an economic downturn and much uncertainty on the world stage, some major graduate employers were not recruiting at all and many had curtailed their campus recruiting activities; the Firm itself made significant cuts in its recruiting targets for the 2001-2002 academic year. It would not be surprising, therefore, if some shifts had occurred in recruits' priorities and desired employer attributes over this period, for example a possible increase in the desirability of those employers offering greater job security. This study was not designed as longitudinal research, so exploring the possible presence of such a shift was not part of its remit, however the potential limitations imposed on the research by these events should be noted.

1.1.3 Existing Data

The Firm has a body of both primary and secondary research, which provides some insight into the UK graduate recruitment market. This includes third party surveys, survey research conducted (anonymously) by the Firm itself and focus groups conducted, as part of the *Balanced Workforce* programme, with recent joiners to the Firm. A 'sex-specific' analysis of these data was conducted as one of the early tasks of this doctoral research and there follows a short summary of the relevant findings (for the period 1999-2000).

The findings suggested that male undergraduates are somewhat more certain, at an earlier stage, of what they want in terms of a career and of their chosen employer. In terms of what is valued, the Firm's survey research (conducted across all the Firm's target recruiting markets, i.e. not just confined to the undergraduate market) showed that both sexes rate 'balance of life' highly, but that women placed a higher priority on this factor when assessing potential employers. Women also placed a higher value than men on employers who are 'approachable', 'committed to the community', 'global', and 'modern'. They placed *less* value than men on employers who are 'fun', 'visionary', 'leading edge', 'prestigious', and 'have high calibre management'.

The research findings also help to paint a picture of the Firm's image in the recruitment marketplace. Generally, the Firm is very well regarded: it is very highly placed in the rankings of top graduate employers (i.e. most popular/desired employer). As to *how* perceptions of employers are formed, the studies' findings stressed the importance of word-of-mouth and the impressions gained from meeting representatives of the employing organisations.

Whilst undoubtedly very strong on campus, the research (and the qualitative study in particular) exposed some less positive aspects of the Firm's image. For example, one aspect of the image that was identified as potentially off-putting was a pervading sense of homogeneity, that the Firm is not particularly diverse (an issue that was related to more aspects of employee profile than just sex). One finding that is particularly pertinent to the issue of attracting female undergraduates was the impression of a 'laddish' culture that can be picked up, for example, from some of the campus recruiting events that are hosted by the Firm. The research also showed that the women saw the Firm as less 'people-oriented' than did the men, and the women also took different messages from the Firm's advertising, seeing it (again) as a less 'people-oriented' and inviting culture.

Overall, these research findings suggested that differences exist between men and women with regard to both what they want in an employer and how they see the Firm. The studies could not be considered particularly robust, however, in relation to addressing the business issue raised above (i.e. attracting more female undergraduates to apply to the Firm). Firstly, all of these surveys (including the Firm's own) use lists of characteristics, to describe (ideal) employers, which do not (appear to) have any empirical or theoretical grounding, raising the question of whether they are measuring the *right* things. Secondly, the sample for several of the surveys was restricted to individuals with technology or commerce backgrounds, e.g. excluding undergraduates on arts courses (which are the courses with the highest percentage of women). Third, the Firm's own survey data include findings about 'experienced' individuals as well as undergraduates. Fourth, the time of year at which the fieldwork for some of the third party surveys is conducted is not ideal for the purposes of this doctoral research; for example, the surveys include some individuals who have already entered the interviewing stage of the recruitment process, whereas the present research is concerned with images held at the *pre*-application stage. And finally, several of the third party surveys included in their sample students who are not within the Firm's target market, such as those not attending target universities.

1.1.4 Bridging Academia and Practice

Given the nature of this doctoral programme and the sponsorship of the present research by the Firm, there is a strong practitioner thread running through this doctoral work – from the definition of the research question (being based on a real-world business issue) to the design of the research stages, where an important consideration was the development of outcomes that would lead to practicable applications.

The overall goal has been to ensure that this doctoral research as a whole provides an effective contribution to both theory *and* practice. A compelling backdrop to this objective is provided by the recent and ongoing debate in the UK on the role of management research, e.g. 'modes 1 and 2' (and '1.5' and '3'), its relevance (or otherwise), and the relationship between business and academia (Hodgkinson, Herriot *et al*, 2001; Huff & Huff, 2001; Pettigrew, 2001; Starkey & Madan, 2001; Tranfield & Starkey, 1998; Weick, 2001). Starkey and Madan (2001, pS12) define the "double challenge" facing management research as the need to be "of high academic quality and

of high relevance to users”. Hodgkinson *et al* (2001, pS42) use the label ‘Pragmatic Science’ to describe work that meets this challenge, being “rigorous both theoretically and methodologically *and* centred on issues of focal concern to a wide community of stakeholders” [italics in the original].

Parenthetically, it is interesting to note that several of these authors specify one of the necessary features of such research as its trans-disciplinary approach (Huff & Huff, 2001; Starkey & Madan, 2001; Tranfield & Starkey, 1998). Starkey and Madan (2001, pS18) point out that, in the increasingly complex and competitive world that most businesses face, management research requires the “capacity to draw on disparate sources of information to solve practical problems”. This point is demonstrated by the present research in its drawing on literature from a number of different fields, such as work values, sex/gender, organisational choice, and image and identity.

Weick (2001, pS72) has suggested that some of the problems in extending knowledge from academia to practice can include the facts that “ideas are too abstract, the research findings arrive too late, the principles are too general, the industry lore is too lean and the takeaways are too obvious”. As a practitioner, and in particular as the practitioner with ultimate responsibility for addressing the business issue at the centre of this thesis, the author has been able to guard against these problems in an ongoing manner throughout each stage of the study. The problem that has been of most concern (to the author), however, is that of timing. In doctoral work – in the rigours that it requires and the constraint on resources – there is a limit to the speed at which one can progress, and this is certainly significantly slower than is generally expected in practice (at the Firm, at least). By way of mitigation, it was felt important that the final stage of this research (Project Three) should incorporate not only the identification of the vital “implications for management” (Tranfield & Starkey, 1998), but also the actions of disseminating this knowledge and of putting the foundations of implementation in place. An overview of the different stages of the research is provided in the next section.

1.1.5 The Research Question and Project Structure

As stated above, this doctoral research study addresses the Firm’s desire to increase the number of female undergraduates attracted to apply to it for a job. In other words, it looks at the earliest stages of the recruitment process (up to the point at which the individual chooses, or not, to submit a job application to an organisation). It is not directly concerned, for example, with selection (the processes by which organisations screen applicants and choose between job candidates), with the interview experience, nor with how individuals select between job offers (to name just a few of the popular, related topics in the literature).

In common with most research, there are a number of different ways in which this business issue could have been approached, but also a necessity to define a clear and manageable scope for the work. In order to provide a point of initial focus for this research, two key choices were made: to focus on *organisational* choice, rather than, for example, the attractiveness to women of the ‘*occupation*’ of the Firm, and to focus on the role of organisational attributes in particular. These choices were influenced,

through an iterative process, by a review of the literature (see chapter 2), but also by practical considerations, in particular by the need for a practitioner (as well as an academic) focus to the research. For *this* practitioner – and indeed, it is argued, for the majority of practitioners in the recruitment field – *organisational* choice is of significantly greater interest than *occupational* choice. Whilst recognising that the two are likely to be linked, it is still the case that most practitioners are working in, and concerned with, one particular organisation – and it is therefore the factors involved in potential recruits choosing between that organisation and its competitors that most occupy their day-to-day thoughts and efforts. Practical considerations also drove the choice to focus on organisational attributes. As the author’s job responsibilities were in the area of recruitment marketing, understanding the attributes that are attractive to recruits was a fundamental concern, as they drive the development of marketing messages and programmes – and there was a desire to develop research outcomes that would lead to practicable applications.

This research study looks at the business issue (i.e. the Firm’s desire to increase the number of female undergraduates attracted to apply to it for a job) from the perspective of female undergraduates, in the sense that its aim is to develop a better understanding of sex differences in undergraduates’ desires and perceptions of potential employers, and of the Firm in particular. The later parts of the study then also look at the business issue from the perspective of the Firm by exploring the implications of this new understanding (of female undergraduates) for the Firm’s recruiting approach. The research question was formulated in four parts:

- a) Which organisational attributes do undergraduates use to differentiate between potential employers, and does the importance of these vary by sex?
- b) To what extent do undergraduates associate these attributes with the Firm, and are there differences in these associations between the sexes?
- c) How do (a) and (b) impact female undergraduates’ intentions to apply to the Firm?
- d) What action can the Firm take to address (c)?

This doctoral programme is structured around three projects. An overview of the three projects for this study against the parts (above) of the research question is provided in figure 1.1 below.

Project Question	One Oct 2000 – Jun 2001	Two Jun 2001 – Jan 2002	Three Jan 2002 – Jun 2002
A	• Identify attributes	• Explore sex differences	
B		• Identify perceptions of the Firm and explore sex differences	
C		• Identify impact (of above) on intentions to apply	
D		• Gather some of supporting data (for Project Three)	• Identify actions that Firm can take; develop recommendation

Figure 1.1 Overview of Projects and Research Question

The design, results and a discussion of each of these three projects are documented in this thesis under *Part I* (Project One; chapters 3 to 5), *Part II* (Project Two; chapters 6 to 8) and *Part III* (Project Three; chapters 9 to 11) below – per the requirements of this Cranfield doctoral programme, the projects were written up at the time that they were completed. The literature review is contained in chapter 2. Beyond this introduction (i.e. section 1.1), this first chapter provides: a high-level overview of the literature review and the overall research design (across the three projects), a summary of the key findings from the research (across all three projects), details of the main areas of contribution from the study, and discussions of the key limitations of the study and potential areas for future research.

1.2 Overview of the Literature

The literature review is presented in chapter 2; figure 1.2 below provides an illustrative (not exhaustive) summary. The six main elements shown in the figure (i.e. organisational attributes, organisational choice, sex and gender, identification and organisational image, relating to both the perspective of the potential recruit and the role of the employee) are the main areas of literature discussed, in detail, in chapter 2.

No literature was found that directly addressed the research question for this doctoral study. This is indicated by a dotted line in Figure 1.2 between ‘organisational choice’ and ‘sex and gender’, and the references included there are tangential only to the issues under investigation. As the figure illustrates, however, there are a number of related areas in the literature that can be usefully applied to the research question, and the bringing together of these separate areas (it is believed, for the first time) is one of the contributions of the present study.

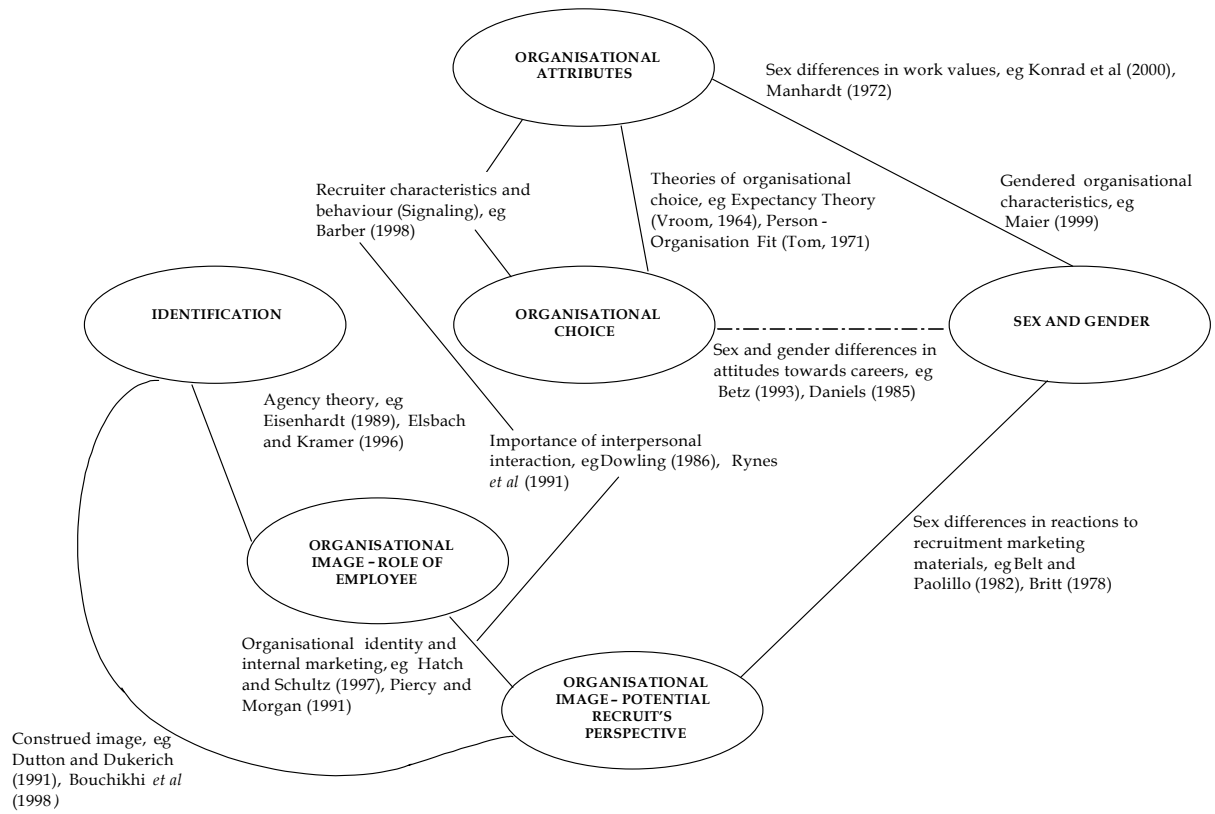


Figure 1.2 Illustrative Summary of the Literature Review

1.3 Overview of the Research Design

A schematic illustration of the research design for this study is provided in figure 1.3 below. A summary of the analysis conducted in the ‘pre-projects’ phase was provided in section 1.1 above. Details of the research designs for the projects themselves can be found in chapter 3 for Project One, chapter 6 for Project Two and chapter 9 for Project Three.

Vroom’s attractiveness model (see section 2.1) was used to guide the analysis of the data in Project Two:

$$A_j = f \sum_{k=1}^n I_{jk} V_k$$

A = attractiveness (of j)

j = choice (or attainment) of organisation

k = organisational attribute (n = the number of attributes)

I = instrumentality of j for the attainment of outcome k

V = valence of outcome k

The n organisational attributes (k) were identified in Project One. A was defined as the attractiveness of a potential employer and the model was used to explore the ‘likelihood

to apply' to a given organisation, with the 'j' of interest being the Firm, and k being a given organisational attribute from the short-list identified in Project One ($n=20$). In Project Two, V was operationalised as the importance of a given attribute (to the undergraduate) and I as the extent to which that attribute is associated (by the undergraduate) with a given organisation (e.g. the Firm).

Sex differences were explored in both the individual components of the model (e.g. V) and the model overall ('attractiveness'). Project Three was focused on identifying ways to address those elements which had been found (in Project Two) to be critical to increasing female undergraduates' likelihood to apply to the Firm.

Much of the literature review, which is reported in chapter 2, was conducted in the pre-projects phase. Overall, however, an iterative process ran through the study (particularly during the early projects), with research results inspiring new explorations of the literature and the literature, in turn, informing research design. Dissemination of the research details within the Firm also occurred throughout the study, but increased, in line with the increase in results and insights, towards the end. Similarly, whilst there were implementation points coming out of Project One, the focus on implementation is found in the later stages, particularly within Project Three, the objectives of which were largely concerned with the contribution to practice. A discussion of the implications for the Firm of the results of each of the projects can be found in sections 5.3, 8.3 and 11.3.

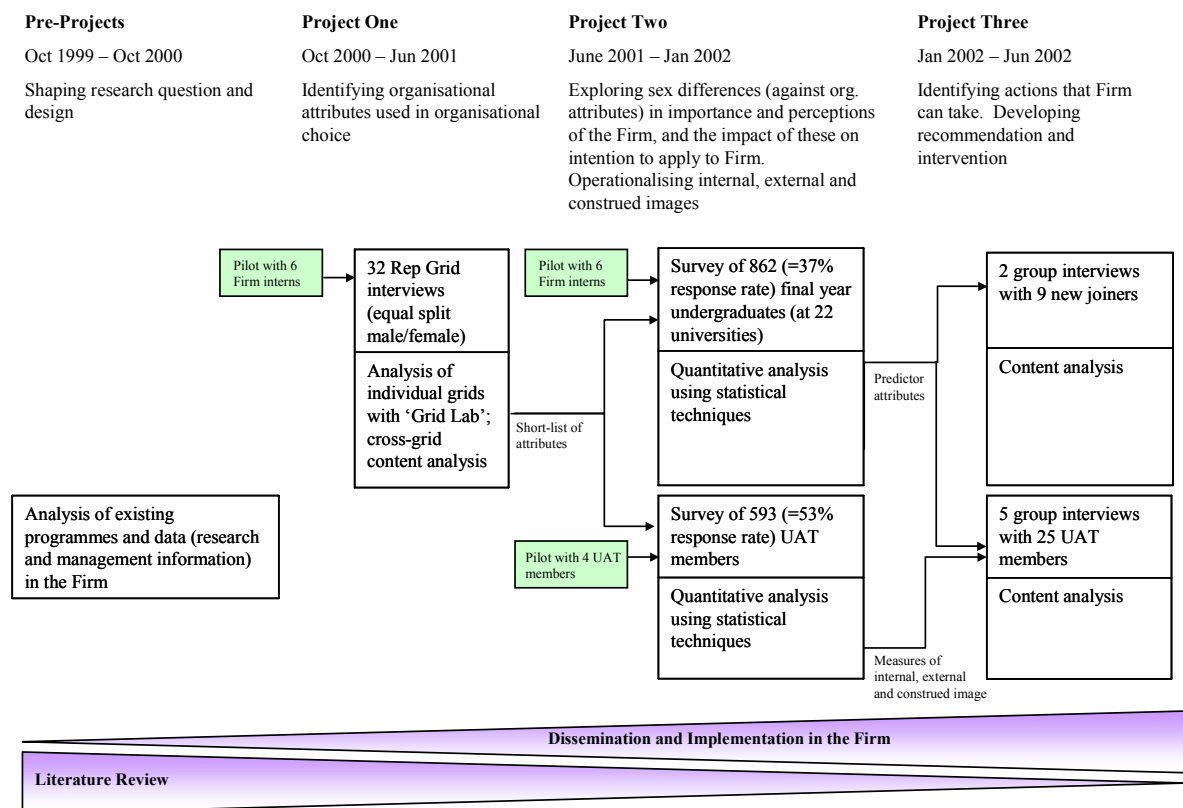


Figure 1.3 Schematic Illustration of Research Design

1.3.1 Philosophy and Other Factors Influencing Choices

A number of (sometimes competing) factors were considered - in addition to those related to validity and reliability - in identifying and assessing methods for the three projects. These factors can be classified into four groups: philosophical; personal; pragmatic; and political – a commentary follows on each.

Firstly, *philosophy*: ontology and epistemology inevitably drive thoughts about methodology. “All social scientists approach their subject via explicit or implicit assumptions about the nature of the social world and the way in which it may be investigated” (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p1). The most significant of these assumptions are those relating to ontology and epistemology.

Ontology is concerned with questions about the nature of reality: “social scientists, for example, are faced with a basic ontological question: ... whether ‘reality’ is a given ‘out there’ in the world, or the product of one’s mind” (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p1). Epistemology is concerned with questions about how and what it is possible to know, how to justify claims to knowledge. For example, is the nature of knowledge “hard, real and capable of being transmitted in tangible form” or is it “of a softer, more subjective ... kind, based on experience and insight of a unique and essentially personal nature”? (*ibid*). These assumptions are important because they can have consequences for methodology and research design: Blaikie suggests that “in adopting an approach to social enquiry, the researcher is buying into a set of choices with far-reaching implications” (1993, p215).

An important debate, regarding philosophy in the social sciences, is the extent to which the social sciences are considered similar to, or different from, the natural sciences, and “whether social phenomena can be subject to the same kinds of explanatory goals as physical phenomena” (Williams & May, 1996, p47). Blaikie (1993, p12) describes positivism as the “first of the classical positions” on this issue “and the one against which all other positions are reactions ...; it advocates that all sciences, whether natural or social, should use the same method”. On the other hand, the interpretivist position, for example, argues that this is inappropriate: “because of the qualitative differences in their subject matters, a different kind of scientific method is required [in the social sciences]” (*ibid*).

Several authors choose to illustrate the differences between the various philosophical approaches, or paradigms, by describing two alternative (or opposing) positions. For example, Blaikie (1993, p216) describes positions based on ‘realist’ and ‘constructivist’ natures of reality (single and multiple respectively) and Easterby-Smith *et al* (1991, p22) discuss the (opposing) “stereotypes” of ‘positivism’ and ‘phenomenology’ (reality as “objectively determined” versus “socially constructed”). Burrell and Morgan (1979, p3) compare objectivist and subjectivist approaches (the world being made up either of hard, tangible structures or of “nothing more than names, concepts and labels”) with ‘positivism’ and ‘anti-positivism’ as the epistemological poles (seeking to explain and predict by searching for regularities and causal relationships versus the view that “one can only ‘understand’ by occupying the frame of reference of the participant in action”). Blaikie (1993, p215) comments that “no one approach or strategy, and its accompanying

choices , provides a perfect solution for the researcher; there is no one ideal way to gain knowledge of the social world. All approaches involve assumptions, judgements and compromises; all are claimed to have deficiencies”.

The paradigm represented in this doctoral research is realism. At the core of realism is the belief that “the social world exists independently of an individual’s appreciation of it” (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p4). So it disagrees with the general ‘anti-positivist’ view that perception *is* reality – rather, “perception for realists is a *window on to* reality through which a picture of reality can be triangulated with other perceptions” [italics in original] (Perry *et al*, 1999). *Unlike* positivism, realism accepts both subjectivist and objectivist positions. For example, it allows for social structures, such as organisations, to both ‘pre-exist’ for the individual and be reproduced by the social actors (Robson, 2002).

In the social vs. natural sciences debate (see above), whilst realists “accept that there are fundamental differences between natural and social phenomena” (Robson, 2002, p35), they “take the view that the *structure of explanation* in the physical and social sciences are not fundamentally different” [italics added] – so “concepts such as causality, explanation and prediction are just as appropriate” (Williams & May, 1996, p82). However, whilst realists believe that social objects can be studied ‘scientifically’, they also believe that the methods used to do so must be appropriate to the subject matter (Robson, 2002; Williams & May, 1996), and these are, therefore, likely to differ.

Williams and May (1996, p81) describe realism as a “common sense” position, and this has a natural attraction for the author as a practitioner, wishing to make a contribution (from the present research) to practice. Perry *et al* (1999) recommend the realist paradigm as an appropriate response to criticisms in the literature that recent research about business and marketing strategy has failed to capture real-world complexity.

Pawson and Tilley (1997, p71) state that “the objective of realist inquiry is to explain social ‘regularities’, ‘rates’, ‘associations’, ‘outcomes’, ‘patterns’”. Thus it can be seen that the realist paradigm is appropriate for exploring the ‘patterns’ and ‘outcomes’ observed in the job applications behaviour of female undergraduates (and integral to the research question for the present study). “Within the realist paradigm, the world can be distinguished as having ... three domains of reality” (Perry *et al*, 1999, p18): the ‘empirical’ (where events can be observed or experienced – and on which positivists focus), the ‘actual’ (where events occur, whether they are observed or not), and the ‘real’ (consisting of the mechanisms that generate events) (Bhaskar, 1978). “Therefore”, Blaikie (1993, p59) suggests, “realism is ultimately a search for generative mechanisms” (and that Bhaskar’s view is of social science as a search for the fundamental mechanisms of social life). In the present study, the search is concerned with identifying and explaining the underlying ‘mechanisms’ relating to the business issue of increasing the number of job applications the Firm receives from female undergraduates.

Whilst philosophy is important, it is also recognised that, ultimately, the particular approach followed by an individual researcher is driven by a number of different factors (Blaikie, 1993, p201; Easterby-Smith *et al*, 1991, p21; Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p112).

These will include factors related to the enquiry itself, such as the objectives and context of the research, and probably also the established approach in that particular field. They are also likely to include factors related to the researcher herself, such as (conscious or unconscious) personal preferences and/or her training and past experience.

In this instance, the *personal* interests, experience and preferences of the author tend more towards the qualitative, but were balanced by the author's desire for personal growth and learning as a researcher through the doctoral process. *Pragmatic* considerations regarded issues such as access, resources and scheduling. The latter was key because as the 'interviewees' in the research were final year undergraduates their decision making (and the associated employer recruitment marketing activities) would follow a given timeline over the course of the academic year, and this was an important factor in determining the appropriate time for interactions with them. Finally, the *political* factors: in the context of research method, these were largely confined to the need to remain cognizant of the Firm's expectations from the research. In particular, the expectations regarding the data gathered - these favouring the quantitative and being focussed on the utility of the data for developing immediate action plans (i.e. the ability to *do* something with the information).

1.3.2 Multiple Methods

Multiple methods are represented in the research design for this doctoral study. A number of authors discuss the benefits of adopting a multiple method approach (e.g. Neuman, 2000, p124; Easterby-Smith *et al*, 1991, p133; Miles & Huberman, 1994, p40; Bryman, 1989, p254), i.e. mixing qualitative and quantitative techniques within a research design. Most commonly, reference to multiple methods is made in relation to triangulation (e.g. Jick, 1979; Neuman, 2000, p124; Gill & Johnson, 1997, p159; Easterby-Smith *et al*, 1991, p133; Gilbert, 1993, p199). The principle of triangulation is that "researchers can improve the accuracy of their judgements by collecting different kinds of data bearing on the same phenomenon" (Jick, 1979, p602). Several types of triangulation can be identified: triangulation of measures, where data are collected in more than one way on the same phenomenon; triangulation of observers, where data (again, on the same phenomenon) are combined from more than one observer; triangulation of theory, where multiple theoretical perspectives are used; and triangulation of methods, where, for example, qualitative and quantitative methods are mixed (Neuman, 2000, p125).

Whilst the benefits claimed for triangulation are convincing, what of the philosophical objections regarding combining qualitative and quantitative methods? Easterby-Smith, Thorpe *et al* (1991, p133) agree that "there are good reasons for using several different methods in the same study", but also that "at the philosophical level there is definitely a problem". Other authors suggest that such concern is misplaced. Bryman (1989, p249) critiques Burrell and Morgan's work, as "one of the most influential versions of the 'competing paradigms' view" (the competing paradigms being quantitative and qualitative research, or their synonyms), and argues (to the contrary) that "methods do not bring a trail of epistemological presuppositions in their wake". He concludes that

“the advantages of blending methods are considerable” and that “the arguments about the epistemological distinctiveness of quantitative and qualitative research ... should not be taken to be a barrier to such integration”. In a similar vein, Miles and Huberman (1994, p41) “believe that the quantitative-qualitative argument is essentially unproductive” and “see no reason to tie the distinction to epistemological preferences”. It can be argued that the location of the present research in the realist paradigm is mitigating in this debate, as “at the practical level, realism is dedicated to some form of pluralist empirical inquiry” (Pawson & Tilley, 1997, p158). As indicated in the preceding section, realism is not epistemologically tied to particular methods, rather it “is concerned with developing methods appropriate to the particular subject matter” (Blaikie, 1993, p58).

It should be noted that the combination of methods is not restricted to the area of triangulation (Gill & Johnson, 1997, p160; Miles & Huberman, 1994, p41). Miles and Huberman (*ibid*) describe an impressive number of different ways in which benefits can be derived from the linking of qualitative and quantitative data – such as providing richer detail, expanding the scope and breadth of a study, and initiating new lines of thinking – and they claim that “at bottom, we have to face the fact that numbers and words are *both* needed if we are to understand the world”. Robson (2002, p371) makes the simple statement that a multiple methods approach is useful in allowing “the use of different methods for alternative tasks”. In sum, Miles and Huberman (1994, p42) identify three levels of “qualitative-quantitative linkage”: firstly, the “quantizing” level, such as the application of frequency counts (used in Project One); secondly, “a linkage between distinct data types”, such as the examples given for triangulation above; and finally, the level of “overall study design”. They provide some examples of designs to illustrate this latter point (*ibid*). These are reproduced in figure 1.4 below: the design of the present study can be likened to design ‘3’ (see section 6.3.2 for further discussion).

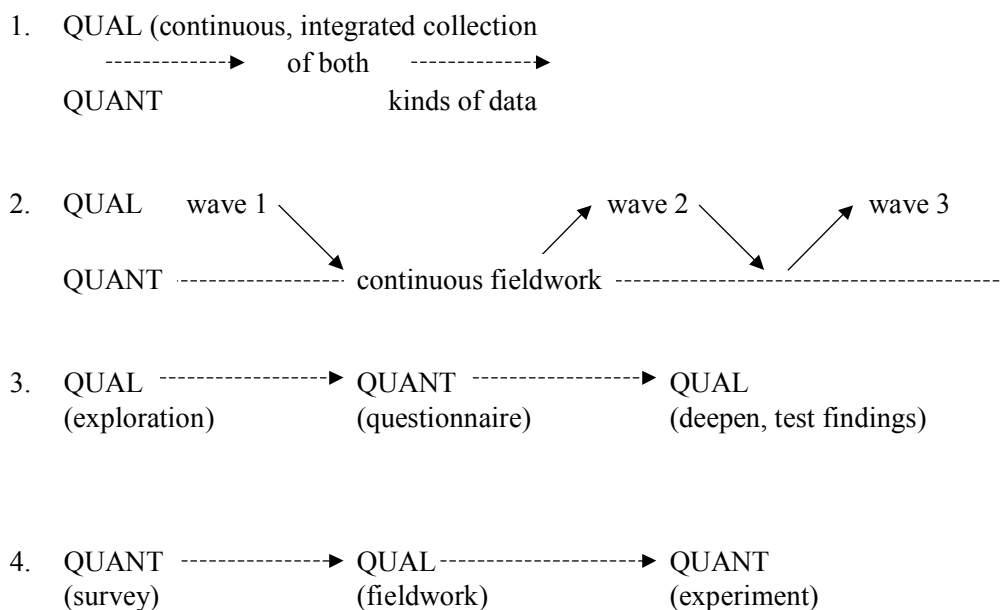


Figure 1.4 Illustrative Designs Linking Qualitative and Quantitative Data

1.4 Summary of Key Findings

The Repertory Grid interviews in Project One resulted in the identification of eighty-four common constructs as pertinent to undergraduates' organisational choice. The length of this list is interesting in comparison with the shorter lists of attributes usually reported in the work values literature. In addition, the present study focussed strictly at the organisational, rather than the more commonly researched job, level; this combination of factors resulted in the identification (in Project One) of a large number of attributes apparently hitherto unconsidered in the literature.

A short-list of twenty of these attributes was carried forward into Project Two, where it was used to operationalise Vroom's attractiveness model (see section 1.3 above) – and positive correlations were found, for the model, with 'likelihood to apply'. Of these twenty attributes, the survey of undergraduates found sex differences on nine as regards the importance placed upon them in selecting potential employers (see figure 1.5 below)

Attributes more important to:	
Females	Males
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common • Have a friendly, informal culture* • Would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues* • Would use your degree skills* • Really care about their employees as individuals* • Would offer variety in your daily work • Would require you to work standard working hours only • Offer a relatively stress-free working environment* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a very high starting salary

* also found in Project One

Figure 1.5 Attributes More Important to Females or Males (external survey)

Three of the attributes considered more important by the female respondents, specifically 'have a friendly, informal culture', 'really care about their employees as individuals' and 'would require you to work standard working hours only', were identified from the literature as more characteristic of a 'feminine organisation'. Interestingly, however, the only *explicit* reference to sex/gender on this question of

importance of attributes was the construct *Male dominated*, which appeared relatively low down on the list of common constructs in Project One (and did not make the short-list used Project Two).

Furthermore, the work done in both Project One and Project Two to probe a little deeper into respondents' preferences for the constructs/attributes – through qualitative analysis of differences and factor analysis – also produced apparently new insights regarding sex differences. Firstly, it was found that men and women may ascribe different benefits to organisational attributes. For example, the benefits envisaged by the males of the attribute '*would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles*' were focused on skills and experience building, in essence on increased marketability, whereas for the women there was a strong sense of valuing the ability to try different areas of work and, thereby, "the opportunity to find out what I'd like to do". Secondly, the factor analysis conducted on the ratings of importance given to the organisational attributes by the undergraduates produced different factors for the male and female respondents.

The use of Vroom's attractiveness model introduced (and helped to investigate) the issue of organisational images, i.e. to move beyond the focus on 'importance' (of attributes) that is characteristic of the work values literature. Sex differences were found in the undergraduates' perceptions of the three organisations included in the survey: statistically significant differences between the male and female mean ratings existed, on average across the three organisations, on nearly half the attributes. Furthermore, factor analysis on these data also revealed, as above, different factors for the male and female samples on their perceptions of all three organisations, in other words the males and females also *structured* their perceptions of the organisations differently.

A multiple regression analysis revealed that four (of the twenty) organisational attributes were significant in predicting likelihood to apply to the Firm for the female undergraduates (and seven for the males, providing further evidence of differences between the sexes in their assessments of the Firm's attractiveness and of the effect of their assessments on their likelihood to apply). Isolating these four variables provides a starting point for action planning; in order to progress this further, these four attractiveness variables (organisational attributes) were deconstructed into their constituent parts, i.e. the importance of the attribute to the respondents and their perception of the Firm relative to the attribute – see figure 1.6 below. Two new samples were created for the purpose of this analysis: one comprising all the female respondents likely to apply to the Firm and the second the female respondents unlikely to apply (defined by 'top two box' and 'bottom two box' responses to the 'likelihood to apply' question in the survey).

Attribute	Valence (<i>V</i>)			Instrumentality (<i>I</i>) of Firm		
	Females unlikely to apply	Females likely to apply	Sig.* (2-tailed)	Females unlikely to apply	Females likely to apply	Sig.* (2-tailed)
Employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	5.47	5.19	*	3.28	4.96	***
Have a friendly, informal culture	5.78	5.72		3.55	4.94	***
Really care about their employees as individuals	6.22	6.24		3.89	5.21	***
Have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	5.61	6.18	***	5.65	6.33	***

* $p = 0.05$

** $p = 0.01$

*** $p = 0.001$

Figure 1.6 Differences Between ‘Female Apply’ and ‘Female Not Apply’ for Four Predictor Attributes (external survey)

As can be seen, there are statistically significant differences on all of the instrumentality (*I*) ratings and two of the four valence (*V*) ratings. Arguably, changing perceptions about the Firm is a more realistic goal than attempting to change the more fundamental views that students hold as to the importance of organisational attributes. These results suggest then that, in order to attract more job applications from female undergraduates, the Firm should focus its efforts on ‘improving’ the image that this group has of it as regards the four predictor attributes.

On this issue of forming organisational images, the literature review revealed an apparent consensus as to the importance of interpersonal communication between employees and external groups. Furthermore, specific to recruitment, there is evidence for the particular importance of interpersonal effects on women’s attitudes to potential employers. It has been found also that line employees (e.g. job incumbents), such as UAT members, have a greater impact than staff recruiters. Given this, it was decided to gather data (as part of Project Two) to explore the relationships between internal, external and construed organisational images, per figure 1.7 below, using the *n* organisational attributes (collectively) to define (and operationalise) ‘image’ in each case, and undergraduates and UAT members as the populations of interest.

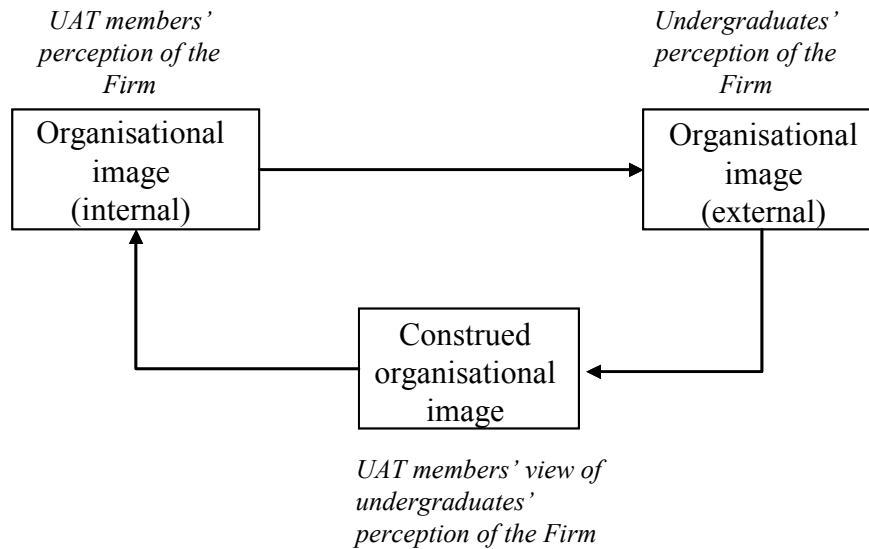


Figure 1.7 Internal, External and Construed Organisational Images

The results of the survey of UAT members revealed that there were statistically significant differences between the internal and external images (some ratings being higher and some lower for each) on all but one of the twenty attributes. The results also revealed that the Firm is generally not rated as well by undergraduates as the UAT members believe: on nearly all of the twenty attributes (based on statistically significant differences) the 'construed image' (i.e. the way they believe undergraduates perceive the Firm) was more positive than that held by undergraduates in reality. These attributes may, therefore, represent areas in which problems are not being identified or addressed - they include three of the four attributes identified above (see figure 1.6) as predictors for female undergraduates' likelihood to apply to the Firm.

The group interviews with new joiners in Project Three explored what cues female undergraduates might see as synonymous with the four predictor attributes and, thereby, identified effective messages and behaviours (for attracting female undergraduates). For example, the use of first names only at recruiting events was taken as a cue for the informality of the organisation (in themselves these observations also provided evidence for the phenomenon of signalling). The results also supported the idea that interpersonal interaction is very important in the formation of organisational images and provided evidence of the greater impact of these effects when related to line personnel (rather than staff recruiters).

One of the most important findings from the UAT group interviews was the fact that UAT members, when they are at campus events talking to students, 'tell it like it is', i.e. they are frank in their responses to students' questions about what it is like to work at the Firm. Not only do they not add any 'marketing spin' to their responses, they (would) also resist/resent any suggestion that they should give certain responses to undergraduates' questions or even emphasise certain recruiting messages. This finding underlines the criticality of the employee-external group link in Dowling's model of creating corporate images (see figure 2.6). It also raises a concern related to the findings

of the survey of UAT members (in Project Two) on the four predictor attributes: it can be seen, in figure 1.8 below, that the internal (UAT members') image was not high in the case of '*really cares about its employees as individuals*' and '*has a friendly, informal culture*'. These ratings may effectively set limits on how far the Firm can hope to improve the (female) undergraduates' ratings of the Firm on these attributes, given the finding above that UAT members will not 'parrot' marketing messages in their interactions with potential recruits.

Predictor Attributes	External Image	Internal Image	Construed Image
Employs people with whom I feel I will have things in common	4.21	5.85	5.51
Has a friendly and informal culture	4.20	5.17	4.78
Really cares about its employees as individuals	4.41	4.66	4.89
Has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to its business	5.84	5.99	5.91

Figure 1.8 Ratings for the Four Predictor Attributes from the Internal and External Surveys (Project Two data)

The output from the UAT group interviews was inconclusive as to the question of how strongly members identify with the Firm, but it was found that their motivation (to become UAT members) was not directly related to the Firm (or its promotion) suggesting that their membership cannot be taken, in itself, as a confirmation of their 'identification'. Indeed, given that it appeared (from the reaction in the group interviews) that UAT members were not particularly concerned about the relatively low rating of the Firm (by undergraduates) on some of the predictor attributes (figure 1.8), it could be suggested that their identification with the Firm might not be particularly strong. These findings are interesting in the light of Barber's (1998, p71) suggestion that employees "have their own goals and objectives that may or may not coincide with those of the organisation".

A diversity recruitment marketing toolkit was developed for the Firm, in response to the findings of Project Three (in particular). The primary audience for this document was the recruiting organisation, for use in their briefing and planning activities with UATs. The toolkit includes detailed message text for each of the four predictor variables and, for each message set, a summary of supporting evidence is also provided. The selection of these evidence points was based on the understanding generated from both sets of group interviews. Other actions taken in support of the research findings included embedding the messages and evidence (relating to the four predictor attributes) in the Firm's recruitment website and the Firm's recruitment brochure and campus presentation for the next recruiting season, and developing a discussion guide for use in UAT planning sessions.

As stated above, UAT members would resist being told exactly what to say to undergraduates, however they were not averse to receiving relevant factual material. Given this, it was determined that an additional (short) summary document should be produced for recruiters to distribute to UAT members, containing just the evidence material from the toolkit in brief. This would help the UAT members to underpin the messages in response to questions from undergraduates in these areas (and it was positioned to UAT members in this context, as an aide for ‘frequently asked questions’). An important second benefit was also sought with this approach, however: the hope that by reminding UAT members of the attractive benefits and programmes that the Firm offers in the areas of the four predictor attributes, the UAT members’ *own* ratings of the Firm (internal image) in these areas might increase.

On a broader scale, the project results have catalysed an internal debate on the effectiveness of internal communications (in the context of employee satisfaction) and the need to take a holistic view of employer image issues – both internal and external, and the link between the two – asking questions of the current working relationships between human resources, recruiting and marketing. For example, internal and external communications programmes need to be synchronised, probably requiring new levels of co-operation across organisational boundaries. Finally, however, it is recognised that, whilst these issues of perception are key, ultimately they must be supported by employees’ experiences of the Firm, and, if internal images on the four predictor attributes cannot be improved, senior management may need to examine this further if the Firm is to be successful in recruiting more female undergraduates.

1.5 Main Areas of Contribution

1.5.1 Contributions to Empirical Evidence and Theoretical Knowledge

One of the most fundamental contributions of this doctoral research is its focus on sex differences in organisational choice: no extant research has been found that directly addresses this issue (either in the organisational choice or sex/gender literatures). Although Thomas and Wise (1999, p378) recognised that, “given the increasing importance of diversity in organizational staffing, understanding whether different factors are of differential importance to male or female, majority or minority [job] applicants assumes great importance”, it is difficult to find any references to sex differences in the organisational choice literature. Conversely, the work values literature is well populated with studies of sex difference, but little of this work has looked at the “consequences of sex differences in job attribute preferences” (Konrad *et al*, 2000, p618). In particular, no previous work has been found regarding sex differences in job application intentions. As the Firm’s own data show, however, this is a critical issue in increasing the representation of women in organisations: even where selection processes are gender neutral, if there are insufficient job applications (from women) being input to the process, then the make-up of new joiners to an organisation will continue to be male-dominated. Generally speaking, this early (i.e. job applications) stage of the recruiting process is not well covered by the literature, for example, there is little research that looks at non-applicants, rather than just applicants: “in short, many interesting questions about initial recruitment activities remain unaddressed by

empirical research ...[and] opportunities to contribute substantially to the literature are great” (Barber, 1998, p51).

It is believed that the *empirical* identification, in Project One, of the organisational attributes used by undergraduates to differentiate between potential employers may be the first of its kind. Whilst a large number of different attribute batteries can be found in the work values literature, no evidence has been found (published with them) that any have been empirically derived. Furthermore, the discovery, in the present study, of a large number of common constructs (eighty-four) as pertinent to undergraduates’ organisational choices can be contrasted with the shorter lists of attributes commonly reported in the work values literature (see, for example, the twenty-five job characteristics used in the widely leveraged work by Manhardt, 1972). Whilst it is understandable that shorter attribute lists will be employed for use in surveys (a common method in work values studies) – just as in Project Two here – no discussion has been found in the literature acknowledging potential issues of content validity. Taken together, these factors suggest that data, and thereby understanding, may have been lost in previous studies.

Schwab, Rynes *et al* (1987, p131) comment that “most researchers have not made any attempt to differentiate between [job and organisational] constructs”. The approach in this study of focussing strictly at the organisational, rather than job, level has contributed a different perspective to work values. In doing so, it has brought in its wake a significant number of organisational attributes apparently hitherto unconsidered in the work values literature. In particular: *‘would offer the opportunity for international travel’*, *‘would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad’*, *‘would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues’* and *‘would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles’*. Also, no direct equivalents have been found in previous studies for the constructs: *‘employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common’*, *‘really care about their employees as individuals’*, *‘have a friendly, informal culture’* and *‘offer a relatively stress-free working environment’* – to name just those appearing amongst the constructs in the short-list. In addition, no other study of sex differences in work values has been found that has been conducted in the UK.

In the investigation of sex differences in the importance ascribed to the organisational attributes, confirmation was found of the greater importance to women of *‘would require you to work standard working hours only’* and *‘would use your degree skills’*, and the greater importance to men of salary related constructs (findings reported by others in the work values literature). There were some new findings also: females were found to place a greater importance, than males, on the attributes *‘have a friendly, informal culture’*, *‘employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common’*, *‘really care about their employees as individuals’*, *‘offer a relatively stress-free environment’* and *‘would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues’*. Three of the twenty attributes used in the survey were defined as characteristic of a ‘feminine’ organisation (Maier, 1999) - *‘have a friendly, informal culture’*, *‘really care about their employees as individuals’* and *‘would require you to work standard working hours only’* – and all three were found to be rated more important by the female respondents (than the male), suggesting a preference on the part of female

undergraduates for 'feminine' organisations. This finding is consistent with that of Konrad *et al* (2000, p604) who found that "sex differences in job attribute preferences [were] consistent with gender roles and stereotypes", but adds a new perspective being specifically related to organisations, rather than jobs.

It was interesting to compare this finding with the very low incidence of any attributes related explicitly to the gendering of organisations arising in the Repertory Grid interviews in Project One, e.g. only a small number of the interviewees mentioned the male domination of certain organisations as a factor in their decision-making regarding job applications. There appears, therefore, to be something of a paradox here between the females' desire (relative to males) for organisational characteristics that can be described as feminine in nature and the general lack of preference for (or recognition of) explicitly gendered cultures. No data or discussions on this question (of such a paradox) have been found in the literature.

Another potential new area for consideration in the field of sex differences in work values, raised by the findings of this study, is that female and male undergraduates appear to ascribe different benefits to some organisational attributes. For example, no difference was found between the men and women on the ratings of importance they gave to the attribute '*would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles*', but the men saw the benefit of this as increasing their marketability, whereas the women saw it as an opportunity to gain a clearer sense of what direction they might wish to follow in their careers. (This finding also constitutes new evidence for the different approaches that men and women take to their careers – characterised by Daniels' (1979) concept of 'dream vs. drift'). Another example can be seen with the attribute '*invest heavily in the training and development of their employees*': there was no (statistically) significant sex difference in the importance ratings, but for the females there appears to be an additional meaning ascribed to training, related to a sense of feeling valued. These conclusions are based, in part, on factor analysis results, which produced different factors for the men and the women. The existence of these different factors suggests that the practice (reported in the work values literature) of determining sex differences based on quantitative differences across a *common* set of factors (see Bu & McKeen, 2001, for example) may not be warranted.

In their meta-analysis of sex differences and similarities in job attribute preferences, Konrad *et al* (2000, p615) found that "the overall pattern was equivocal regarding the notion that women and men pursuing the same undergraduate major have more similar job attribute preferences than those pursuing different majors". It was found, in the present study, that course type (as 'arts' or 'science') affects undergraduates' likelihood to apply to the Firm, but in opposite ways for men and women: female arts undergraduates are less likely to apply to the Firm (than female science undergraduates), but male arts undergraduates more likely to do so (than male science undergraduates). The attribute '*would use your degree skills*' was found to be more important to the female respondents (than the male), however, in their assessment of potential employers. The attribute also appeared, from the factor analysis, to have different connotations for the men and the women: suggesting that the women may find the idea of going in to an area about which they appear to have no previous relevant knowledge stressful. It is proposed here, then, that the nature of the interaction between

course type and sex may be partly to do with a different attitude between men and women towards the *application* of their degrees rather than simply with the nature of the degree itself. If this is the case, it would suggest that purely quantitative analyses (such as have been reported to date in the literature) of the moderating effect of course type on sex differentials in work values may limit understanding of the issues.

The research findings show that sex differentials exist not only in the values that undergraduates place on certain organisational attributes, but also in their perceptions of organisations against those attributes. There were differences in the extent to which the male and female undergraduates thought that certain attributes were characteristic of the organisations included in the survey and in the way they structured those perceptions. Although others have found that images of an organisation can differ across different subject groups (Gatewood *et al*, 1993; Dowling, 2001; Huddleston & Carr, 1982), sex differences of this type have not been found in the literature.

The use of Vroom's attractiveness model constitutes a development to the literature on expectancy theory. Specifically, only one other study has been found in the literature that applies Vroom's attractiveness model to job application decisions (in real time): Lawler, Kuleck *et al*, 1975 (who operationalised the model with 'attractiveness' as a rating of how, subjectively, desirable a given organisation would be to work for, rather than 'likelihood to apply' as in the present study) - they did not investigate sex differences. Interestingly, their results showed a correlation coefficient of 0.40, the same average value as found in the present study. It is believed that the present study also provides three new contributions to the expectancy theory literature. Firstly, no reports have been found in the literature of organisational attributes being empirically derived (for use in the models), as they were in the present study (by using Rep Grid). This study provides a response, therefore, to Mitchell and Beach's (1976, p236) observation, in relation to expectancy theory models, that "it is not clear *how* an investigator ... should ascertain what outcomes [attributes] would be most relevant" [italics added]. Secondly, no other research studies have been found that have used Vroom's model as a framework for investigating sex differences – and it is proposed that the results of the present study have demonstrated its potential in this regard. Finally, neither have any studies been found that have extended the analysis of model data to include regression techniques; it is suggested that this is a valuable addition, as the resulting insights can help to form a bridge between theory and practice.

The findings of this study provide further evidence of the importance, to female undergraduates, of interpersonal interaction with employees in building their perceptions of an organisation (Dowling, 1986; Rynes, Bretz *et al*, 1991); and of the existence, and importance, of the phenomenon of signalling (extant evidence of which Barber, 1998, p59, states is "relatively scarce"). In this way, the results also provide support for the argument that changes in organisational image have to start on the inside of an organisation (Dowling, 1986). The study also contributes an increased understanding of the role and impact of line employees, rather than staff recruiters, in the recruiting process - Turban, Campion *et al* (1995) point out there is very little research that looks at the effects of employees beyond recruiters - and provides further evidence of the particular importance of the former in this respect (Rynes, Bretz *et al*, 1991).

The focus on the UAT members' motivations and behaviours has provided a contribution to the recruitment literature by exploring the 'agents' perspective – identified by Barber (1998, p144) as a “potentially serious omission” of research to date in this area. Barber suggests that employees “have their own goals and objectives that may or may not coincide with those of the organisation” (*ibid*, p71) and evidence for the latter was produced by this study. The UAT members were found to be very frank in their responses to undergraduates' questions about what it is like to work at the Firm. Not only do they not add any 'marketing spin' to their responses, apparently they (would) also resist/resent any suggestion that they should give certain responses to questions or even emphasise certain recruiting messages. This appears to be a new finding and questions the likely success of suggestions, made in the literature (in response to findings of the importance of interpersonal interaction with employees), that more attention should be paid to training those involved in recruiting (Barber, 1998, p72; Rynes, 1990, p414; Rynes, Bretz *et al*, 1991).

Barber (1998, p36) also states that “the proper measurement of organizational image is an area that merits greater attention than it has so far received” (in the context of recruitment). Introducing (from the corporate image and organisational identity literatures), operationalising and producing measures (in this study) of three aspects of image – internal, external and construed – appears to be a new contribution to the literature, not just in regard to recruitment, but to the image and identity areas as well. The bringing together of different literatures also constitutes a contribution; for example, the study has applied new concepts, from the corporate image, organisational identity and identification literatures, to recruitment issues and in this way developed new insights and, most particularly, introduced new questions about the way recruitment processes might operate and be managed.

1.5.2 Contributions to Methodology

The use of the Repertory Grid technique to identify the organisational attributes used to differentiate between potential employers has not been found in either organisational choice or work values studies in the literature. It is proposed, based on the present study, that Rep Grid has much to offer in this area, as it provides a way of helping subjects identify and articulate the organisational attributes most important to them – an area in which 'direct estimation' studies (such as those based on expectancy theory) have been judged to be weak (Barber, 1998, p101). A further contribution was made through the development of an approach for prioritising the common constructs arising from the cross-Grid analysis – no guidance on this had been found in the literature.

As mentioned above (section 1.5.1), the use of Vroom's attractiveness model to compare different subject groups and the extension, in this study, of the analysis of the data to include multiple regression appear to be new, and generated valuable insights. Furthermore, having identified the predictor attributes (from the regression analysis), the approach of deconstructing 'attractiveness' (*IV*) in to its constituent parts and comparing those females likely and not likely to apply to the Firm is believed to be

unique to this study also. Together these techniques were central to developing one of the study's main contributions to practice.

Also mentioned above (section 1.5.1) is the work done in this study to operationalise and produce measures of internal, external and construed image, which is believed to be a new contribution. The separate application of factor analysis to male and female samples also has not been seen in the organisational choice or work values literature, but can be seen to have produced some important insights.

Finally, it is suggested that the description of the internet-based approaches, to the design and administration of the surveys in Project Two, should also prove valuable to other researchers, such information seeming to be rare still in the literature.

1.5.3 Contributions to Practice

The identification of the organisational attributes used by undergraduates to differentiate between potential employers provided a contribution to the Firm through the ability to increase significantly the validity of its own survey instruments. The list of organisational characteristics used in the Firm's questionnaires (prior to this doctoral research) had neither theoretical nor robust empirical grounding. A comparison of this existing battery with that generated from the Rep Grid process revealed that two-thirds of the (short-list of) attributes developed in Project One were not represented in the Firm's survey instrument, suggesting that the value of the findings from the Firm's past surveys will have been severely limited. The identification of these attributes also constitute a broader contribution to practice, beyond the Firm. For practice in general, the study results also provide an indication that, regardless of the popular view that the values of young women and men are increasingly converging, and possibly contrary to the professed views of young women themselves, female undergraduates value (to a greater extent than the males) organisations with certain 'feminine' attributes.

One of the most important contributions to the Firm is the identification of the four predictor attributes for female undergraduates' likelihood to apply to it (together with the identification of the predictors for men, and the fact that there are differences between the two). This provides a clear direction for developing recruitment programmes to address the business issue presented at the start of this doctoral research (i.e. to increase the number of female undergraduates applying to the Firm for a job), particularly when taken together with the identification (in the study) of the Firm's image (on these predictors) as the most profitable area for remedial action. These findings are important because it is the first time it has been possible to make a direct link between specific aspects of the Firm's image and their direct effect on the target audience's intention to apply to the Firm. Furthermore, the study also identified the specific messages and activities ('cues') that the Firm can use to successfully address its image amongst female undergraduates on these four predictor attributes, providing a highly tangible way forward. The approach developed in this study – the use of Vroom's attractiveness model, the application of regression analysis, the deconstruction of predictor attributes on the basis of application intentions and the identification of

cues – is one that could be adopted by other organisations and, thereby, also provides a broader contribution to practice.

The new understanding of the importance of interpersonal interactions with employees in developing potential recruits' images of the Firm, and the associated implications regarding the role of the UATs, has brought the importance of this (marketing) channel to senior management's attention for the first time. Furthermore, the discovery that UAT members, when they are at campus events talking to students, 'tell it like it is' (and that they have their 'own' motivations for participating in UAT activities), together with the finding that UAT members' ratings of the Firm on some of the predictor attributes were not high, has been one of the most insightful contributions for the Firm. These results have catalysed a debate, within the Firm, on the effectiveness of internal communications (in the context of employee satisfaction) and the need to take a holistic view of employer image issues – both internal and external, and the link between the two – asking questions of the current working relationships between HR, recruiting and marketing. These are important ideas for all practitioners to consider.

Finally, a contribution has been made through the creation of a comprehensive tool (the gender diversity recruitment marketing toolkit), and related actions, to directly support the Firm's activity in the recruitment marketplace and provide clear direction and priorities for the planning process in the next recruitment year (in order to increase the number of job applications received from female undergraduates). Again, the design of this toolkit could be adopted by other organisations and can, therefore, be seen as providing also a broader contribution to practice beyond the Firm.

1.6 Limitations and Further Research

1.6.1 Key Limitations of the Study

Two of the limitations of this study relate to sampling. First is the non-random nature of the sample used for the external survey in Project Two. Strictly speaking, this means that (many of) the results cannot be generalised to the whole population of interest (i.e. all final year undergraduates, at targeted UK universities, looking to start their careers shortly after graduating) – as inferential statistics require data from a random sample (Neumann, 2000, p341). It is, however, seemingly rare that studies do manage to achieve a truly random sample and it is felt that the efforts put in to managing the sampling process worked well and resulted in a sample that was robust. Second, the 'new joiner' population selected for group interviews in Project Three excluded, *inter alia*, female undergraduates who had not been interested in applying to the Firm. It is recognised that including feedback from 'non-joiners' (as well as joiners) might have enriched the results. In addition, the majority of the organisation-specific findings and implementation actions were confined to the Firm and not extended to other graduate employers. It is felt unlikely, however, that it would have been possible to gain the necessary access to other organisations, even if the Firm had agreed to share the efforts and findings of the study with them.

The focus in this study on intention (‘likelihood’) to apply, rather than application behaviour itself, leaves this latter part of the story untold. There are many factors that might be hypothesised to affect the translation of intention into action (as regards job applications). Personal circumstances can change, for example: an undergraduate might decide to postpone joining the workforce, or suffer an academic setback and have to lower her sights with regard to potential employers. Alternatively, external factors may impact decisions; such as an economic downturn, which may cause job-seekers to concentrate their energies on those companies with the most jobs. In other words, “circumstances that cannot be controlled or predicted will often influence behaviour” (Mitchell, 1972). From the point of view of the Firm, such issues may be of less concern if they cannot influence them. Nevertheless, it would be interesting to understand whether any further sex differentials are introduced in to the process at this latter stage. On a related point, noted in section 1.1.2 above, the shift in the recruitment market (caused by the economic downturn) during the course of this study places potential limits on some of the findings.

This study is also limited in its application of the concepts of organisational identity and identification. Whilst the literature on these areas was used to good effect to raise questions and possibilities during the analysis of the (quantitative and qualitative) data collected from the UAT members, the concepts themselves (i.e. organisational identity and identification) were not operationalised, nor fully explored, in the study. Some further limitations, imposed by scope, are reflected in the following discussion on opportunities for further research (and further critique of the research can be found also in the following chapters).

1.6.2 Opportunities for Further Research

A number of opportunities for further research have been identified during the course of the three projects and are noted in the following chapters; the most significant of these are documented below.

Firstly, following on directly from the discussion of limitations (section 1.6.1), a longitudinal study could be conducted to investigate actual applications behaviour and/or changes in undergraduates’ images of the Firm over the course of the recruitment process (and any sex differences therein). Also, a sample of female undergraduates not likely to apply to the Firm could be researched on the question of ‘cues’ linking the image of the Firm to the four predictor attributes.

It would be interesting to repeat the study with other groups. For example, given the global nature of the Firm, it would be valuable to repeat the study (or aspects of it) in other countries and to assess whether there are any key differences in results across geographies and cultures. Another group of interest would be ‘experienced hires’, i.e. potential recruits who have already been working for a number of years (rather than new graduates). It would be expected that this group would exhibit some differences in both the salience of particular organisational attributes and their perceptions of the Firm, e.g. women (in particular) in this group might prioritise family-friendly company policies. The Firm wants to increase the diversity of its workforce with regard to ethnicity, as

well as gender, so using the approach established in this study to investigate issues in that area would also be valuable.

Further investigation could be undertaken with regard to potential intervening variables. For example, more research could be conducted at the university level: comparisons could be made between universities on the Firm's external image and these contrasted with any differences between the associated UATs (e.g. as to their activities, and/or the internal images held by their members). More could also be done to investigate the direct and interaction effects of course type on preferences for certain organisational attributes. It would also be interesting to research how the processes of occupational and organisational choice interact with each other – they seem to have been considered primarily in isolation from each other in the literature to date. Generally speaking, further research in to the causes underlying the differences found between female and male undergraduates in the importance they ascribe to certain organisational attributes and in to the finding that the women and men held different images of organisations (to identify the cause of this differential) would be very valuable.

The pursuit of two particular issues related to the operationalisation of Vroom's expectancy theory would also be worthwhile. Firstly, an approach could be developed to test the differential effectiveness of the attractiveness model when all eighty-four common constructs are used (rather than the short-list of twenty). This would expand the understanding of the 'missing' piece of the explanation represented by the moderate correlation coefficients found in the present, and other, studies. Secondly, given these moderate correlation values, it would be interesting to investigate the 'expectancy' variable of Vroom's theory, i.e. to use the motivation model (see section 2.1), and include a measure of 'E' (expectancy) in the data. This could provide not just a test of whether expectancy has an effect for job applications in the present context, but also whether any difference exists in its effect between men and women.

Finally, referring again to section 1.6.1, it would be valuable to conduct a complete study applying the principles and concepts from the literature on organisational identity and identification to develop a more detailed understanding of the UAT members and their motivations. Similarly, it would be useful to expand the investigation of how UAT members' internal image (or their view of the organisational identity) of the Firm might be altered. It would be interesting, for example, to pursue further the potential role of internal marketing in influencing the UAT members' perceived role and image of the Firm - this concept of internal marketing is gaining acceptance in the marketing literature, but is still largely unresearched (Foreman and Money, 1995).

2 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Organisational Choice

The phenomenon of how people select the organisations they join is covered in the ‘organisational choice’ literature. Wanous’ (1980, p86) report that there is “much more research and literature on occupational choice, than organisational choice, although there appears to more agreement on the latter” appears to be true still today. There also appears to have been more research conducted on the later stages of the organisational choice process, e.g. on selection (from the recruiting organisation’s point of view) and on candidates’ choosing between job offers, than on the ‘attraction’ phase of the recruiting process that is the focus of this research (Barber, 1998, p18; Barber & Roehling, 1993; Peck *et al*, 1999, p305; Rynes, 1990, p403).

Much of the research that has been done on organisational choice is based on Vroom’s (1964) ‘expectancy theory’ (Osborn, 1990; Wanous, Keon *et al*, 1983) – a cognitive motivation model that predicts “that individuals will choose to behave in the way which is expected to produce the most attractive combination of outcomes” (Lawler, Kuleck *et al*, 1975, p134). “These ideas have been central to many of the major theories of ... decision making, attitude formation ... and motivation, but Vroom [was] instrumental in introducing them” to this particular field (Mitchell & Beach, 1977, p206). Expectancy theory comprises two models (Barber, 1998, p111; Mitchell & Beach, 1976): the ‘valence’ (or ‘attractiveness’) model and the ‘motivation’ (or ‘force’) model. The former can be represented as follows:

$$\text{Total motivation to join an organisation} = \text{Expectancy of being admitted to the organisation} \times \text{Attractiveness of the organisation}$$

Figure 2.1 Vroom’s Expectancy Theory: Motivation Model (Wanous, 1980, p93)

And the attractiveness model can be represented as:

$$\text{Attractiveness of an organisation to an individual} = \sum \text{Desirability of each outcome to the individual} \times \text{Belief about each outcome associated with membership}$$

Figure 2.2 Vroom’s Expectancy Theory: Attractiveness Model (Wanous, Keon *et al*, 1983, p67)

Mathematically, the attractiveness model is described:

$$A_j = f \sum_{k=1}^n I_{jk} V_k$$

Figure 2.3 Vroom's Attractiveness Model (adapted from Mitchell & Beach, 1977, p206)

In the context of organisational choice, A is the attractiveness of outcome j , outcome j is the choice (or attainment) of organisation, outcome k is an organisational attribute, I is the instrumentality of outcome j for the attainment of outcome k , V is the valence of outcome k , and n is the number of outcomes (or organisational attributes). Porter *et al* (1975, p58) emphasise that “the expectancy model is just that: a model and no more. People rarely actually sit down and list their expected outcomes for a contemplated behaviour, estimate expectancies and valences, multiply, and add up the total unless, of course, they are asked to do so by a researcher. Yet people *do* consider the likely outcomes of their actions, do weigh and evaluate the attractiveness of various alternatives, and do use these estimates in coming to a decision about what they will do. The expectancy model provides an analytic tool for mirroring that process and for predicting its outcome, but it does not purport to reflect the actual decision-making steps taken by an individual” [italics in the original].

Both (the valence and motivation) models have been tested, in a variety of different contexts and forms – “various revisions have been suggested” (Mitchell & Beach, 1977) - and there are a good number of research studies reported in the literature (Barber, 1998, pp 47, 111; Connolly & Vines, 1977; Lawler, Kuleck *et al*, 1975; Lawler & Suttle, 1973; Mitchell & Beach, 1976; Muchinsky & Taylor, 1976; Vroom, 1966; Wanous, 1977; Wanous, 1980, p98; Wanous, Keon & Latack, 1983). The majority of these studies have been conducted on occupational, rather than organisational choice; those that *have* been conducted on organisational (employer) choice have tended to be concerned with the later stages of the organisational, or job, choice process (rather than with job applications decisions) – and some have not studied real choices (but have been ‘experimental’ in method). A small number of studies have examined the expectancy piece (E) of the motivation model for job application decisions, but have found little evidence of its effect (Barber & Roehling, 1993; Lawler, Kuleck *et al*, 1975; Rynes & Lawler, 1983). Results from studies of final job choices (where the expectancy piece of the motivation model is effectively redundant as job offers have already been received, i.e. $E=1$) have been positive, however: “expectancy models do seem to predict both attraction to organizations and actual organizational choice” (Barber, 1998, p112), thus providing support for the attractiveness model. No studies have been found that apply Vroom's models to sex differences in organisational choice.

A key argument that is used against the expectancy theory approach is that such decision-making processes are not, in reality, as rational as expectancy theory suggests (Barber, 1998, p112). In particular, some commentators (Barber & Roehling, 1993; Osbourn, 1990; Rynes & Lawler, 1983; Rynes, Schwab & Heneman, 1983) have considered whether, due to limited “information and information-processing ability”, individuals use noncompensatory decision-making approaches (i.e. setting minimum

standards for organisational attributes), rather than the compensatory approach represented by expectancy theory (e.g. where a low 'score' on one organisational attribute may be offset by a higher score on another attribute). One of the main noncompensatory models to receive attention in the literature is Soelberg's (1967) Generalizable Decision Processing model of organisational choice (Osborn, 1990). In the first phase of Soelberg's model, the individual screens potential employers against a very few key criteria to identify "implicit favourites", the first of which to meet all the 'minimum' criteria is chosen. The latter stage of the process is then an exercise in *post hoc* rationalization of this choice, in which "evaluations and weighting of factors are distorted" if necessary (Barber, 1998, p113; Highhouse & Hoffman, 2001; Osbourn, 1990; Stevens & Beach, 1996).

Results of studies exploring compensatory versus non-compensatory models are mixed, and it may be that some organisational attributes are treated in a compensatory, and others in a non-compensatory, manner (Barber, 1998, p48) and/or that individuals use different approaches (i.e. some favouring compensatory approaches and others not) (Barber, 1998, p116). For example, Liden and Parsons (1986, p110) suggest that college students "may have many job alternatives and much information available on organizational and job attributes" compared to those seeking "lower level" jobs and this may mean that they are less likely to use "satisficing" approaches.

The other theory, apart from expectancy theory, that is widely discussed in the organisational choice literature is 'person-organisation' fit. The landmark study here was by Tom (1971), who applied Super's (1953) vocational choice theory – that the process of vocational development is essentially that of developing and implementing a self-concept – to organisational choice and found that people select those organisations whose images are most similar to their own self-image (Bretz *et al*, 1989). Just over a decade later, further empirical evidence was found for the theory of person-organisation fit by Keon, Latack and Wanous (1982), in their study of students' choice of graduate schools. More recently, Judge and Bretz (1992) and Cable and Judge (1996; and Judge & Cable 1997) also found evidence to support the person-organisation fit hypothesis – again with student samples – the former looking at the congruence between organizational and individual values.

In assessing 'person-organisation fit', Tom (1971) used an adjective checklist of personality measures, asking respondents to consider 'description of self' and 'description of organisation', and considered this to work for the organisation description as well as the individual. Barber (1998) identifies a number of "conceptual and practical difficulties" with person-organisation fit research, however: for example, against which criteria (e.g. values, personality) the 'matching' should be made and whether, in reality, a combination of different criteria are likely to be in play. Also, as Kristof (1996, p26) points out "the relationship between any specific form of person-organisation fit and an individual outcome will be moderated by the importance of the characteristic on which fit is assessed". It is worth pausing to consider, then, the extent to which the practice of 'cv building' and the current phenomenon of the 'free agent' – and the new 'psychological contract' (Smithson & Lewis, 2000) - affect the validity of person-organisation fit as an explanation for organisational choice. For example, will individuals accept a poor 'fit' in order to join a prestigious firm because the work

experience will enhance their *cv*? And in a world where it is generally not expected that people will stay with an employer more than a few years, is 'fit' as critical as it might have been in the past?

Also on the subject of 'fit', it should be noted that people may choose organisations that allow them to use their talents and skills – another view of self-concept – and that research has shown that people will tend to value more highly those occupations for which they have the skills (Wanous & Colella, 1989). This raises a question as to what extent arts graduates (of whom the majority are female) perceive their skills will be relevant within the Firm, and how large a factor this is in their decision making.

There are very few studies explicitly focussed on sex /gender and organisational choice in the literature; but some related observations can be found in other studies. For example, Kristof (1996) mentions that group demographic composition has been shown to influence both attachment to a group and turnover. Schneider's ASA (attraction-selection-attrition) model (1987) – another 'fit' model - suggests that "the range of people attracted to apply to an organisation is limited by the extent to which those already in the organisation behave as they themselves do" (Jordan *et al*, 1991, p48). Based on this, Cable and Judge (1996) have proposed that applicants should perceive greater fit when they are demographically similar to representatives that they see from organisations – and there is some support for this in the literature (Thomas & Wise, 1999). With regard to job interview situations, however, the literature tends to report weak support on this issue (Barber, 1998, p61), e.g. Maurer *et al* (1992) found that females reacted more favourably to the recruitment process when recruiters in interviews were male. Zedeck (1977, in Bretz *et al*, 1989) conducted a study whose results suggested that those alike in biographic characteristics use similar job decision-making processes.

An area that is potentially interesting with regard to sex/gender differences in organisational choice is that of self-esteem. A number of studies have found a trend for self-concept to be moderated by self-esteem (Keon, Latack & Wanous, 1982), which may affect perceptions of person-organisation fit. For example, Behling and Tolliver (1972) found some support for this in relation to both vocational and organisational choice. Within the psychology and feminist literature, there are many references to the fact that many women struggle with issues around self-esteem (Mednick & Thomas, 1993) – this might mean, therefore, that the person-organisation choice works differently for women than for men. Vroom (1964) reminds us that there is a distinction between preference, choice and attainment; so a teenager may prefer to become a pop star, but may choose to become an accountant, and attain a position as a book-keeper. Might women choose not to apply to organisations that are their first preference, because of a lack of self-confidence or self-esteem? The link here to expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964) can be noted (see also the discussion on self-efficacy in the next section). It is certainly interesting that Powell (1988, p81) reports "most studies of both aspirations and expectations have found that occupational expectations are more sex-typed than occupational aspirations – girls [see] greater constraints on their aspirations than boys, expecting to work in organisations that are more female-dominated than those they preferred". And their intellectual self-confidence appears to begin to decrease

in early adolescence (Betz, 1993), so that they tend not to realise either their educational or occupational potential (Fitzgerald & Crites, 1980, in Betz, 1993).

All of the organisational choice models explored above have a common feature: the central role and importance of organisational attributes (Breaugh, 1992; Stevens & Beach, 1996). Although Thomas and Wise (1999) have recognised that, “given the increasing importance of diversity in organizational staffing, understanding whether different [organisational attributes] are of differential importance to male or female, majority or minority [job] applicants assumes great importance”, there does not appear to be any work on, or discussion of, this in the organisational choice literature. Conversely, the ‘work values’ literature is well populated with studies of sex difference, but little of this work has looked at the “consequences of sex differences in job attribute preferences” (Konrad *et al*, 2000). Before reviewing this (latter) research, there follows a review of pertinent issues in the sex and gender literatures.

2.2 Sex and Gender

In the ‘gender’ literature, the term *sex* is limited in use to things ‘biological’, whereas *gender* “is a psychological and cultural term, referring to one’s subjective feelings of maleness or femaleness or to society’s evaluation of behaviour as masculine or feminine” (Basow, 1992, p2). Whilst the Firm is targeting sex, rather than gender, it is useful to note the distinction in a research context, because it has been argued that “studies that have examined the separate effects of sex and gender-role orientation typically find that gender-role orientation accounts for a greater proportion of variance in an individual’s personality, attitudes and behaviour than sex does” (Korabik, 1999, p7).

For example, a study conducted by Mainiero, Powell and Butterfield (1978, in Powell, 1988, p83) showed that “‘masculine’ individuals aspired to top management in greater proportion than ‘feminine’ individuals”. Wolfe and Betz (1981, p52) found that “‘masculine-typed women were ... most likely to make non-traditional choices” and more likely to match their career aspirations and choices; and Powell (1988, p81) reports that “women MBAs have more masculine characteristics”. “Androgynous and masculine persons have been shown to be more motivated by competitive achievement situations” (Hansen and O’Leary, 1991, p81). Links have also been found (Betz, 1993) between greater levels of masculinity and stronger career orientation and need for achievement - nAch (Chusmir, 1984; McClelland *et al*, 1953) - higher levels of performance, and greater self-esteem.

Several instruments have been developed to assess ‘gender’. These typically employ the rating of adjective lists to reveal sex-role stereotypes, which in turn determine individuals’ beliefs about the general appropriateness of various roles for men and for women (Williams and Best, 1982). Lueptow *et al* (1995) conducted an audit of these various instruments and found the adjectives most frequently used for the ‘masculine’ were: dominant, aggressive, competitive, independent, ambitious, self-confident, adventurous, and decisive; for the ‘feminine’ those descriptors most often applied were: affectionate, submissive, emotional, sympathetic, talkative, and gentle.

The work by Schein (originally, and subsequently built upon by others) on stereotyping of managers is an interesting example of the application of these concepts of gender to the world of management. Schein (1973) used the 'adjective list' approach to develop the Schein Descriptive Index (SDI) and applied it to an investigation of whether perceptions of the managerial occupation were stereotyped. The index was completed by respondents so as to describe 'women in general', 'men in general' and 'successful middle-managers' – the results can be found in a paper entitled, "Think manager, think male"! And over the last ten years there has been a rapid growth in the 'gendered organizations' field (Martin & Collinson, 2002), which claims that organizations themselves are gendered (Due Billing & Alvesson, 1994, p221; Itzin, 1995, p49; Martin, 1992, p208; Wilson, 2001, p178). Acker (1998) suggests that there is a "gender substructure" to organisations and Maier (1999) refers to these "deeply hidden and embedded aspects of gender" as 'corporate masculinity'. Maier goes on to identify the following, *inter alia*, as 'feminine' organisational attributes: prioritising life-work integration; inclusiveness, intimacy and caring amongst core values; dialogue, rather than argument, as the purpose of communication; a relational and connected view of self; "service" rather than "success" as the ultimate motivator; flexibility and a guiding "ethic of caring" for resolving conflict; and empowerment (e.g. to challenge authority), empathy and the embracing of a common vision as primary influencing approaches. In a recent study, van Vianen and Fischer (2002) found gender differences in masculine organizational culture preferences for young employees in non-management positions (with the women showing fewer masculine culture preferences), but not for employees at the managerial level.

Whilst the gender literature is compelling, a couple of concerns suggested that an attempt to operationalise 'gender' (versus sex), of potential recruits, within this present study might not be appropriate. In the first instance, there was a concern as to the extent to which the 'gendering' of characteristics in the available instruments is valid. The original PAQ (Personal Attributes Questionnaire) – to take one of the most commonly used instruments as an example – was developed in the early Seventies (Spence, Helmreich and Stapp, 1975) and, using the concepts of instrumentality and expressiveness, was based on ratings of a number of characteristics as to whether they were more typical of males or of females. It seems unlikely (although unproven) that those ratings would be the same if conducted by a student sample today, in the new millenium (i.e. the sample with which we are concerned in this present study). Secondly, as mentioned above, the Firm does not (nor is it likely to) recruit by 'gender' – in the 'real world' recruitment process, the gender of any specific individual is an unknown variable. It would not, therefore, be possible to implement any solutions derived from this study that were based on gender.

As for differences between sexes (rather than 'gender'), there are some similarities, perhaps not surprisingly, with the findings summarised above for gender difference. Self-esteem, assertiveness (Feingold, 1994) and, in particular, academic self-confidence have been shown to be higher in males than females. Research has supported the "theory that males and females are differentiated along the agentic versus communal continuum described by Bakan (1966), which posits that males are higher than females on agentic (sometimes known as instrumental) traits and that females are higher than

males on communal (sometimes known as expressive) traits” (Feingold, 1994, p449). Maccoby and Jacklin (1975, p162) question some of the claims on differences in self-esteem as applied to younger samples, but agree that “during the college years some sex differentiation does occur”. They conclude that “there is a ‘male cluster’ among college students made up of greater self-confidence when undertaking new tasks, and a greater sense of potency, specifically including the feeling that one is in a position to determine the outcomes of events” (*ibid*, p158). Another interesting observation of sex differences is that of Horner’s (in Farmer, 1976) ‘fear of success’ in women; this posits an avoidance of achievement as a result of fear of the perceived *negative* consequences (such as unpopularity) associated with it by women. Although, as Mednick and Thomas (1993) note, subsequent studies have shown “mixed outcomes” and, they claim, overall, as regards the psychology of achievement, “sex differences are few”.

Daniels (1979) offers an evocative proposition of ‘dream vs. drift’ regarding differences in men and women’s approaches to their careers, based on Levinson’s (1978) concept of “the Dream” in men’s constructions of their adult lives. Levinson found that the Dream for men often centred on their occupational aspirations; Daniels (1979, p427) proposes that the Dream is just as important developmentally for women, but “much more complicated, for it must *integrate* imagery of self-in-family with self-in-relation-to-others with self-in-work-of-one’s-own” [*italics in the original*]. She concludes, “small wonder, then, that many successful women.... feel that they initially drifted into their Careers” (*ibid*, p428).

These ideas are echoed by other authors. White, Cox *et al* (1997, p104) suggest that “for a large proportion of women, forging a vocational identity is a complex process involving role conflicts which may lead to an extended period of identity ‘diffusion’”. Eccles (in Mednick and Thomas, 1993) suggests that men and women have different life goals and that these result in different career choices. Farmer (1976, p13) notes that “women’s vocational interests may crystallize somewhat later than men’s and be organized in a different way”, and Hauser and Shapiro and Garai and Scheinfeld (Fransella & Frost, 1977) found that young men have a much clearer idea of their future selves and occupations than women of the same age.

The idea of self-efficacy, that is a person’s self-belief concerning his/her ability to successfully perform or complete a task, has also been applied to the differences in career approaches between men and women (White, Cox *et al*, 1992). Betz and Hackett (1981, p404) found that females reported “significantly lower levels of self-efficacy with regard to non-traditional occupations”, where ‘non-traditional’ was defined as occupations where there are less than 30% women. (Note that the Firm would fall in to the non-traditional category on this basis.) Subich *et al* (1986, p128) suggested that self-efficacy might be the theoretical basis for their finding that (undergraduate) males were “more likely than females to explore, enter, and predict success for themselves in [various] occupations”.

Another area where sex differences have been found is in “personal conceptions of career success” (Sturges 1999). In Sturges’ study, women managers were more likely to hold conceptions of success related to “internal criteria, especially accomplishment and achievement, and intangible criteria, in particular personal recognition ... or influence

[which] transcended material success”. This leads to the question of the extent to which these differences are pre-factored into the desirability of organisational attributes, and this is explored in the next section.

2.3 Organisational Attributes

As mentioned above, organisational attributes play a central role in each of the models of organisational choice reviewed in section 2.1. Rynes, Bretz and Gerhart (1991) in their study of factors influencing individuals’ perceptions of ‘fit’ with a potential employer, found that what they described as ‘job and organizational characteristics’ were mentioned by respondents more often than any other factor as being important in developing their initial assessments. Whilst there is no body of work addressing organisational attributes *per se*, the ‘work values’ literature is closely related and contains a large number of studies on *job* characteristics, including investigations of sex differences – and values have been utilised directly in studies of person-organisation fit (Feather, 1987; Judge & Bretz, 1992; Katrinli, 2002). “Attempts to categorize previous research on the basis of job or organizational choice are ... hindered because most researchers have not made any serious attempts to differentiate the two constructs” (Schwab *et al*, 1987, p131).

In 1957, in one of the earliest work values studies, Herzberg *et al* (1957) concluded that there was a difference between men and women on job orientation, with men placing greater value than women on the ‘intrinsic’ aspects of a job, where ‘intrinsic’ refers to *job content* factors such as the work itself (the so-called ‘motivators’), and ‘extrinsic’ to *job context* factors such as work environment (‘hygienes’). However, in the same year, Rosenberg (1957, p51) reported that men were more likely (than women) to “place strong stress on the *extrinsic* rewards of work – money and security” [italics added]. Two subsequent studies, published in 1966, found no difference between men and women in the importance placed on groups of job characteristics selected to represent intrinsic and extrinsic factors (Burke, 1966; Centers & Bugental, 1966). Saleh and Lalljee (1969) hypothesized that the reason for this apparent inconsistency in results was the need to control for differences in education, age and job level. They found their hypothesis to be supported when applied to a student population (where such differences were limited) – no sex differences existed at the level of intrinsic and extrinsic job orientation. They noted, however, that it was possible that significant differences between the sexes might exist with regard to specific items (within the overall categories of intrinsic and extrinsic) – in fact, such differences can be seen in both the Burke (1966) and the Centers and Bugental (1966) studies.

On the basis that the approach taken by these earlier studies “may obscure some sex differences in specific aspects of a job.... Not related to the ... intrinsic-extrinsic dimension”, Manhardt (1972, p362) set out to explore the subject using “a less theory connected approach”. He created a questionnaire consisting of twenty-five job characteristics (it is not clear from what these were derived), which was administered to new graduate joiners at the Prudential Insurance Company (USA). Based on a factor analysis, the results suggested that a key difference between men and women was the greater importance placed by men on issues related to long-term career objectives.

Overall, he found differences between men and women on eleven of the twenty-five job characteristics, although the ‘shape’ of the prioritisation placed on different characteristics by the two sexes was similar (Spearman Rank Correlation coefficient 0.76). He also found that the female group was less homogenous (than the male) – exhibited through a higher standard deviation on scoring – although this finding was ‘reversed’ in a later study by Brenner and Tomkiewicz (1979), who found the *males* in their sample to be the less homogenous group.

A number of studies have used Manhardt’s (1972) job characteristics instrument (or variations of it), or similar inventories, to investigate sex differences in a range of samples. An illustrative summary of the differences reported in some of the studies found is shown in figure 2.4 below (the focus is placed on differences, rather than similarities, as the context for this review is an attempt to understand sex differences in behaviour, i.e. in organisational choice). The data shown are confined to undergraduate samples as this is the population that is relevant to this doctoral research. Note that the studies shown do not take account of degree course, which, together with job level and type, have been suggested by some commentators to play a role in explaining apparent sex differences in work related attitudes, for example through the process of socialization (Bartol & Manhardt, 1979; Gomez-Mejia, 1983; Konrad *et al*, 2000; Morgan & Carney, 1985).

Figure 2.4 Selected Findings from Work Values Studies

Author and Date	Bartol 1976	Brenner & Tomkiewicz 1979	Beutell & Brenner 1986	Bu & McKeen 2001
Respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US undergraduates Male and female business majors, female psychology majors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US undergraduates Business majors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US undergraduates Business majors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business students in Canada and China
Females place more value (than males) on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comfortable working environment Pleasant interpersonal relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages continued development of knowledge and skills Involves working with congenial associates Provides comfortable working conditions Is intellectually stimulating Permits you to work for superiors you admire and respect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides feeling of accomplishment Is respected by other people Provides comfortable working conditions Encourages continued development of knowledge and skills Is intellectually stimulating Permits working independently Makes use of your specific educational background Involves working with congenial associates Requires originality and creativity Makes a social contribution by the work you do Permits you to work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balanced life Moral congruence (factor includes ‘congenial associates’) Simplicity/Routine (factor includes ‘use of specific educational background’)

Author and Date	Bartol 1976	Brenner & Tomkiewicz 1979	Beutell & Brenner 1986	Bu & McKeen 2001
			for supervisors you admire and respect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfies your cultural and aesthetic interests 	
Males place more value (than females) on		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides the opportunity to earn a high income • Gives you the responsibility for taking risks • Requires supervising others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides job security • Provides opportunity to earn a high income • Permits advancement to high administrative responsibility • Provides ample leisure time off the job • Requires working on problems of central importance to the organisation • Gives you the responsibility for taking risks 	
Notes	Findings for Business majors	Spearman's ρ : 0.9	Spearman's ρ : 0.89	Findings for Canadian sample

It is interesting to note (in figure 2.4) the importance to women of relationships (e.g. 'pleasant interpersonal relationships', 'congenial associates'), a trend that also appears in several other 'work values' studies (Neil & Snizek, 1987; Bigoness, 1988; Schuler, 1975; Burke, 1966; Centers & Bugental, 1966; Harpaz, 1990; Rosenberg, 1957; and Manhardt, 1972). Clearly, this trend also harks back to theoretical themes such as Bakan's (1966) Agency/Communion model and 'need for affiliation' (see Chusmir, 1984). Important issues for men, that are consistently reported (and also seen here), are those around salary and job security (Neil & Snizek, 1987; Bigoness, 1988; Schuler, 1975; Burke, 1966; Jurgensen, 1978; Lacy *et al*, 1983; Harpaz, 1990; Rosenberg, 1957; and Manhardt, 1972). Recently, Konrad *et al* (2000) meta-analyzed 242 samples (over 600,000 people) from studies of sex differences in preferences for job characteristics. They found relatively small differences between the sexes, but "the significant differences that were observed were generally consistent with gender roles and stereotypes" (*ibid*, p616). For example, "most of the largest sex differences were associated with the gender stereotype that interpersonal relationships are more important to women" (*ibid*), encompassing such job attributes as 'working with people' and 'opportunities to make friends'.

Before concluding this review, it is important to note a key shortcoming (it is suggested) of all of the above studies; namely, that they are based on characteristics that were *provided* to the respondents, rather than characteristics that were identified *by* the respondents. It is arguable that, because of this, key issues may have been missed or other issues assigned misleading levels of importance. As Barber (1998, p101) comments, "failure to include attributes salient to job seekers could result in erroneous conclusions about the relative importance of specific attributes, or about the importance of job attributes in general as determinants of job choice". This issue is also explored further in the discussion on 'Project One Research Design' below.

2.4 Organisational Image: the Potential Recruit's Perspective

Having looked at the potential importance of various organisational attributes, the question arises as to how potential recruits form images of organisations, in particular how their perceptions of a potential employer's attributes are developed – note that 'image' is used in this study to refer to how others see an organisation, not to what the organisation believes itself to be (Davies & Chun, 2002). A small number of studies have been conducted to investigate the effects on recruitment markets of communications tools such as advertisements and brochures, but their findings appear to have been limited. Studies have shown, for example, that brochures can have an effect on application decisions (Williams & Bauer, 1994), but as Turban and Keon (1993, p192) point out "little is known about *how* brochure information affects attraction". With regard to recruitment advertising, there has been an increased interest recently (in 1982, Belt and Paolillo reported that "the literature in the field is severely limited. Empirical studies are virtually non-existent, with no common body of knowledge in the field"). Firstly, research suggests that, as far as recruitment advertising is concerned, 'less' is not 'more': "ads containing more attributes were seen as promoting more appealing jobs than ads containing fewer attributes" (Highhouse & Hoffman, 2001). Secondly, there is evidence that the promotion of "positive social values" in ads (or recruitment brochures) can be effective (*ibid*).

A handful of these studies have addressed the issues of gender/sex in relation to recruitment advertising and collateral. There is some evidence that men and women react differently to recruitment ads: both Bruno (1973) and Belt and Paolillo (1982) found a somewhat greater tendency for men (than for women) to respond favourably to ads. An interesting study, in the context of this review, was an experiment conducted by Williams and Bauer (1994) on the issue of diversity in brochures. They found no "gender difference" in responses to the inclusion of diversity statements in brochures, but a preference on the part of *all* respondents for the brochure with the managing diversity statement included. Honeycutt and Rosen (1997) similarly found that all participants (both male and female) responded more favourably to diversity-related policies, in this case family-friendly HR practices. Although, in a study testing the effect of a recruitment message explicitly encouraging women and minorities to apply, Barber and Roehling (1993) found positive reactions from the women, but negative ones from the men. More generally, Gatewood *et al* (1993) found that images of potential employers differed between different subject groups, although they did not analyse these data by sex – and, indeed, Dowling (2001, p29) suggests that "each person will form a (slightly) different evaluation of an organisation" (see also Huddleston & Karr, 1982). Overall, it has been concluded that "the influence of ... gender on perceptions of various aspects of recruiting is poorly represented in the organizational ... choice literature" (Thomas and Wise, 1999, p379).

There are some assertions in the psychology literature about sex differences in the way that people receive messages. Britt (1978, p298), for example, states "the learning of a message will be enhanced by certain variables of intelligence, creativity, and environment as determined by one's sex". Amongst the differences he cites are: that

women have a higher aptitude for learning messages requiring language skills (and men for quantitative or technical material); that men tend to perceive objects more in terms of their structure and spatial interrelations, whilst women tend to perceive these less because they focus within objects (particularly seeking human/inner characteristics); and that women tend to grasp communications more quickly and generally remember them more readily. Whilst these observations are intriguing and may prove useful in considering, for example, the way in which marketing materials might be received differently by male and female undergraduates, they do not tell us how images are formed and processed by the individual.

There appears to be a consensus in the literature, however, on the importance of interpersonal communication in forming organisational images. "Research in psychology and sociology consistently indicates that interpersonal communication is far more powerful in terms of shaping the attitudes and images held by people than any communication sponsored by the company itself" (Dowling 1993, p105), which (the latter) will tend to reflect an organisation's desired (or aspirational) image. Dowling (1986) also states that research into the effectiveness of advertising as a medium has shown that whilst it is very valuable as a tool for raising awareness and knowledge, interpersonal communications are more powerful influencers on adoption/rejection decisions. Alvesson (1990, p377) also states that "the experiences based on personal contact carry more weight in forming opinions and beliefs than the message in the advertisement". Furthermore, it has been found that line employees (e.g. job incumbents) have a greater impact than staff recruiters (Rynes, Bretz *et al*, 1991), e.g. because they are "better liked and more trusted" (Rynes, 1990, p411) and more credible (Rynes, Heneman *et al*, 1980). Although, overall, Turban, Campion *et al* (1995) point out there is very little research that looks at the effects of employees beyond recruiters. Interestingly, Rynes, Bretz and Gerhart (1991, p511) found evidence for the particular importance of interpersonal effects on women's attitudes to recruitment. "Women seemed to be more affected than men by their interactions with recruiters and potential co-workers. Women were more likely to mention acquaintances as reasons for initial interest in organisations and recruitment interactions as reasons" for either positive or negative changes in their attitudes towards potential employers.

Apart from its impact on potential recruits' perceptions of organisational attributes, it has been suggested that contact with the organisation through the recruiting process, including interpersonal interaction with recruiters and other employees, directly influences organisational choice (Barber, 1998, p107; Highhouse & Hoffman, 2001, p38). Examples of the items that have been considered in this area are recruiter characteristics (such as recruiter demographics, as discussed above in relation to Schneider's ASA model) and the efficiency of the recruitment process itself. It is suggested, however, that this theory may hold more for the later stages of organisational choice - when the potential recruit has been exposed to more of the recruitment process - than to the understanding of job application decisions. For example, Turban, Campion and Eyring (1995, p211) report that the 'likeableness' (as reported by students) of the hosts on site visits to potential employers is related to job offer decisions and "suggest that organisations should carefully attempt to match host with applicants". The evidence on the outcome of these 'critical contacts' (Barber, 1998, p96) on organisational choice appears to be mixed, but overall it suggests that perceptions of organisational attributes

are far more influential than such contact experiences, e.g. “once job attributes are taken into account, recruiter traits add little or nothing to explained variance in recruiting outcomes” (Rynes, 1990, p413). Turban, Forret *et al* (1998, p38) found that “applicant perceptions of recruiter behaviours did not have a direct effect on attraction to firms, but did have a substantial indirect effect on attraction through influencing perceptions of job and organizational attributes”. It is, therefore, the impact of these interpersonal contact points – through a process called signalling - on the perceptions held by potential recruits of organisational attributes that are of most interest.

In the context of job applications, signalling theory suggests that “because job applicants often have limited information about jobs and organizations, they may use recruiter traits and behaviors as signals of important aspects of the employment opportunity” (Barber, 1998, p55), such as the likelihood of receiving a job offer and perceptions of organisational attributes (Rynes, 1990). For example, if the recruiter appears competent, then signalling suggests that the potential recruit will infer that the company itself is competent. Support for the presence and effect of signalling has been provided by a small number of studies (Barber, 1998, p59). Consistent with some of the comments above, but interesting in the context of the present research, Rynes, Bretz *et al* (1991, p514) found that signalling was stronger “when little is known about the organization prior to the job search” - likely to be true of undergraduates (with regard to the Firm, at least) as they have limited work experience – and “when organizational representatives are in the same functional area as the applicant” (e.g. University Action Team members, rather than staff recruiters).

2.5 Organisational Image: the Role of the Employee

It is clear from the preceding section that employees can play an important role in the development of potential recruits’ perceptions of an employer’s attributes. Firstly, it has been shown that employees may impact an organisation’s image through their behaviour or simply their demographic characteristics; secondly, the mechanism of signalling has been described, where recruiter actions or characteristics are interpreted as indicative of organisational attributes; and, thirdly, it should be noted also that employees are a channel for content, they provide direct information (about the organisation) to potential recruits during the course of interpersonal interactions. It is valuable, therefore, to explore the employee’s role from the organisation’s perspective (as well as the potential recruit’s) – to understand how this ‘employee channel’ to the market might be best managed. Barber (1998, p36) comments, “it would be interesting to know whether and how organizational image can be manipulated for the sake of enhancing recruitment effectiveness”, for example, understanding how to influence the employees involved (directly or indirectly) in the Firm’s recruitment activities in such a way as to increase the number of job applications from female undergraduates. For example, a number of authors have raised the issue of whether more attention should be paid to training recruiters (Barber, 1998, p72; Rynes, 1990, p414; Rynes, Bretz *et al*, 1991) and Kennedy (1977, p121) proposed that “steps are needed to ensure that the information that [employees] transmit is compatible with the way in which top management wish the company to be seen”.

There is very little research in this area – “most research either treats agents [i.e. those individuals who carry out the organisation’s recruitment strategies] as passive actors or fails to differentiate them from the organization itself” (Barber, 1998, p144) – and Barber states that this “is a potentially serious omission”. Agency theory “reminds us that much of organizational life, whether we like it or not, is based on self-interest” (Eisenhardt, 1989, p64). So, in this context, whilst employees might be expected to execute their company’s desired recruitment plan and to present the company (to target potential recruits) to its best advantage, agency theory suggests that it would be naive to assume that this is what always occurs in reality. Amongst the reasons for this is that the employees also operate according to their own personal agendas, which may not be aligned with those of their employer, and which they may pursue in preference to the objectives with which they are charged. The risk is particularly high where the actions of the ‘agent’ cannot be seen and/or monitored (Barney & Hesterly, 1996) – an example of this in the recruitment arena might include selection interview situations.

It is proposed here that rather than just focussing on the image of the Firm held by potential recruits it should be recognised that employees (e.g. University Action Team members) also hold images of the Firm. Further, it is proposed that these images will affect their views and behaviour and, thereby, the images held of the Firm by the potential recruits with whom they have contact. In order to explore these issues further, it is instructive to introduce some concepts from the organisational identity and corporate image literatures (as Barber [1998, p151] comments, “recruitment is a fertile ground for the *application* of existing theories from the basic social sciences”).

There are a number of conceptual models of corporate image formation in the literature (Stuart, 1999); those that highlight the role of the employee are of most interest here. Kennedy’s model (Kennedy, 1977, p126) is one of the earliest (see figure 2.5) and a key element of it is the contribution from the company personnel’s perceptions of company (Stuart, 1999).

Kennedy’s (1977, p123) view is that “it will be personal contact and experience which is the prime former of an image”. She reports the results of research that showed employees and external groups had very similar perceptions of a company and concluded that “the views of employees will be reflected among those having contact with them” (Kennedy, 1977, p143). In support, Balmer (1995) states that “there is a wide degree of consensus on” the point that “employees are particularly effective spokespersons for any organization”.

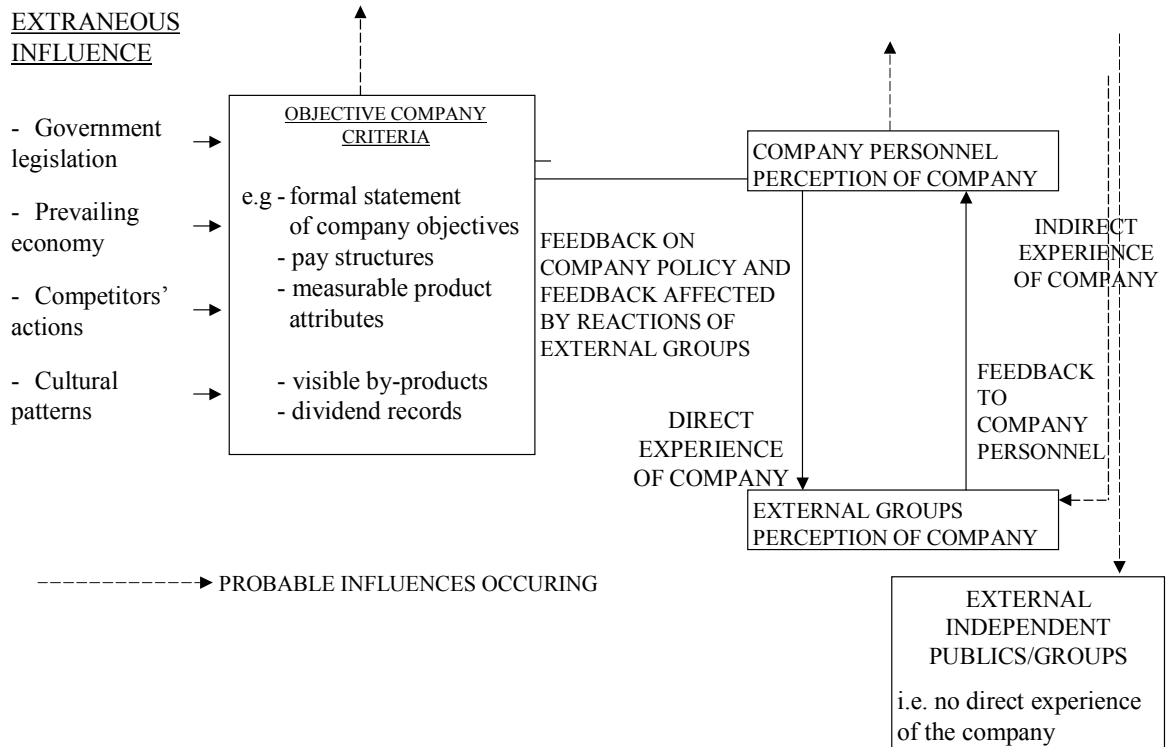


Figure 2.5 Kennedy's Model of the Corporate Image Formation Process

The employee's image of the company is also central to Dowling's model (Dowling, 1986, p111) - see figure 2.6. He expands, however, on the influences that input to this image, adding 'organisational culture' and 'marketing media communications' to the 'objective company criteria' ('formal company policy') and 'external group's perception of the company' of Kennedy's model (in a later text, [Dowling, 2001, p55], he adds, further: 'professional values', 'industry image', 'competitors' activities', 'publicity', and 'advertising, products/services, brands, corporate identity'). His overall theme is that "developing an organization's desired image into a strategic asset starts on the inside of the organization" (*ibid*, p60).

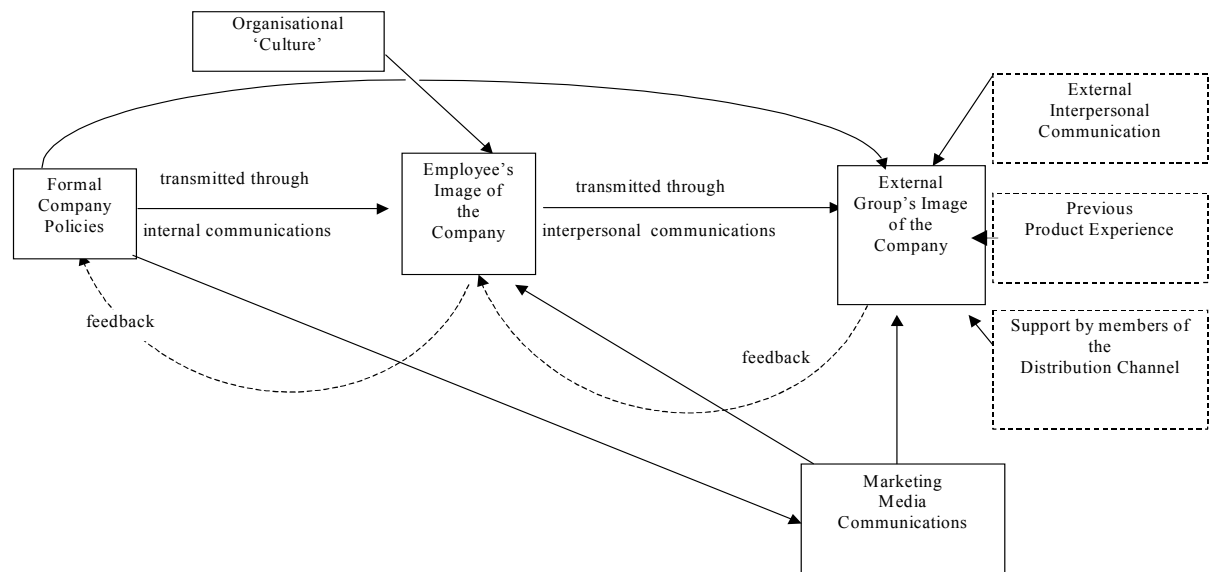


Figure 2.6 Dowling's Model of Creating Corporate Images

Although neither of these models overtly recognise recruitment as one of the processes affected (although Kennedy (1977) notes the attraction of employees as one of the benefits of a good corporate image), it is proposed here that they can be applied (with minimal adjustment) to the recruitment process. They are clearly consistent with the findings above that interaction with employees is a key factor in image formation for potential recruits. And, in applying models such as these to recruitment, it is possible to gain new insights in to the way that process might be more effectively managed. They encourage focus on the employee's (rather than just the recruit's) image of the Firm and cause reflection on the nature of these images and the factors that impact them - this is important if positive change is to be effected.

In exploring this area, some authors have drawn together the fields of marketing and organisation studies (Hatch & Schulz, 2000, p12; Balmer, 1997; Knox & Bickerton, 2003). In the latter, the term used to refer “broadly to what members perceive, feel and think about their organization” is ‘organizational identity’ (Hatch & Schulz, 1997), a term which has its roots in social identity theory (Hatch & Schulz, 2000, p15). Gioia and Thomas (1996, p370) state that “it is unlikely that a change in image can be sustained without an associated change in identity”. “The behaviour that supports a corporate reputation or brand needs to be deeply rooted, it needs to rest in the organization’s identity” (Schulz, Hatch *et al*, 2000, p1) and the management of identity and image cannot be separated (Hatch & Schultz, 1997, Markwick & Fill, 1995). From a marketing perspective, consistency between image and identity makes for a stronger brand, because the images ‘projected’ by a company (i.e. management-endorsed external communications) are “supported by multiple cues that observers receive in interacting” with it (Bouchikhi *et al*, 1998, p60).

Hatch and Schultz (1997, p356) state that “one of the primary challenges faced by contemporary organisations stems from the breakdown of the boundary between their external and internal aspects” leading to “external and internal relations ... collapsing together” (and they go on to make the case for combining knowledge from the marketing and organisation studies disciplines). This collapse is important because it means that the influence of organisational identity and organisational image on each other is increased. At the same time, under the collapse of internal-external boundaries, it becomes important that there is consistency between internal and external communications (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Bouchikhi *et al*, 1998), otherwise an organisation “will have difficulties sustaining and confirming a coherent sense of ‘self’ necessary to maintain credibility and legitimacy in and outside the organisation” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p232). What is communicated internally gets ‘leaked’ out in to the external world (e.g. via interactions with employees) and external communications about the company have an impact on internal relations.

Related to this is the question of the extent to which interactions between employees and external groups (recruits) can, or should, be managed. Cheney and Christensen (2001) quote SAS’s (Scandinavian Airline System) notion of the ‘moment of truth’ as one example of the increased managerial interest in this point of interaction between employee and customer. They also note that “a growing number of organizations have begun to think of their employees as customers who ... also need to be satisfied” (*ibid*, p248). This is a central idea behind the concept of ‘internal marketing’ (Rafiq & Ahmed, 1993) – “if management wants its employees to do a great job with customers, then it must be prepared to do a great job with its employees” (Peck *et al*, 1999, p314). The internal marketing literature, which grew up in the 1990’s (Collins & Payne, 1991; Gilmore & Carson, 1995; Gronroos, 1990; Piercy & Morgan, 1991), includes debate on, *inter alia*: the application of traditional marketing tools to the internal market; whether internal marketing should reside within Human Resources or with the marketing professionals; and optimum working conditions and organisational climate (Peck *et al*, 1999). In addition, Ewing *et al* (2002) and Ambler and Barrow (1996) introduce the notion of branding the firm to potential and existing employees in order to develop market place differentiation. They use the terms “employment brand” and “employer brand” respectively to characterise the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment and identified with the employing firm. Ambler and Barrow (1996) propose that the box labelled ‘employee’s image of the company’ in Dowling’s model (see figure 2.6 above) represents the employer brand equity in employees’ minds and thus is “an intangible asset for the company which needs to be nurtured” (*ibid*, p189).

External, as well as internal, communications have a role to play here – in so far as external communications are self-enhancing, the organisation is also *auto*-communicating, i.e. communicating with itself. In this auto-communication process “besides acting as a receiver of the corporate message, the external audience represents an ideal reference point in terms of which the communicator recognises itself, chiefly in terms of how it wants to be seen by others” (Cheney & Christensen, 2001, p247). For example, Ewing *et al* (2002) point out that some of the more innovative recruitment advertisements in use today can be hard to distinguish from traditional product or ‘image’ ads, in that they concentrate on the broader company image, rather

than (just) the ‘vacancy’. Such (external) communication can enhance the image of that company with its employees and this has been noted by Smidts *et al* (2000, p5) as “a significant factor in influencing organizational identification” (see section 2.6 below).

The feedback loop in both the Kennedy and Dowling models (above) - flowing back from the external groups to the employees – also represents an important process. Not only do employees impact the image that recruits have of the Firm, but the reverse may also true – the image that employees think that recruits have of the Firm impacts the image that they (the employees) have of the Firm. Dutton and Dukerich (1991) refer to this image (that the employee sees ‘reflected’ back from the external world) as the “construed external image”. This is the image that employees think that external audiences have of the company and is not necessarily the same as the image that external audiences *actually* have of the company – in fact, they later argue that “most organizations are unable to align fully outsiders’ beliefs about an organization (i.e. reputations) and insiders’ readings of these beliefs (construed external images)” (Dutton, Dukerich *et al*, 1994).

It can be seen, then, that a circular process is at work, as illustrated in figure 2.7 below. Neither Dowling nor Kennedy explicitly constructs this intermediate staging in the feedback process, so the following figure is adapted from Dukerich and Carter (2000, p104).

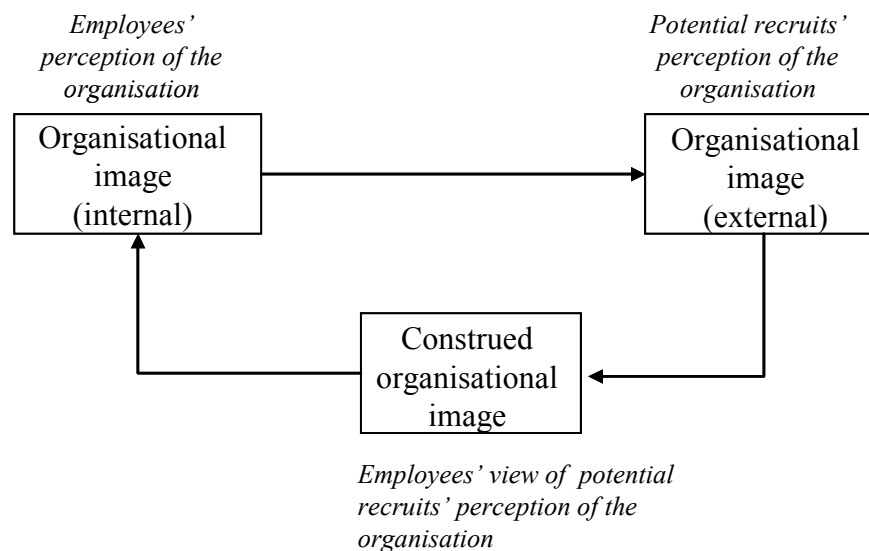


Figure 2.7 Internal, External and Construed Organisational Images

Representing external, internal and construed organisational images together in this way raises questions as to “the time dimension of these phenomena and, in particular, the problem of stability and change in interaction with constituents” (Bouchikhi *et al*, 1998, p62) – should we expect the system above (figure 2.7) to be stable over time? As reported above, Kennedy found this to be the case with external and internal images, but Rao (1994, in Bouchikhi *et al*, 1998, p66) suggests a more cautious view: “we have seen

that “identity and [image] depend on each other and feed off each other”, but “whether they are coupled in reality or not depends largely on the actions that different actors take to manage both”. In addition, Arnold (1990, p217) states that undergraduates’ images are limited by their lack of experience - “they typically have high expectations of working life in general, and of their prospective jobs and organizations in particular” – suggesting that internal and external images, in the context of recruitment, will always differ.

It is proposed here that the stability of the system (figure 2.7) is likely to be disturbed by the “noise” introduced by factors such as the cognitive processes that produce a construed image, and that this imperfect feedback may result in the ‘wrong’ action being taken to address any perceived problems. For example, Fiol explains that “how I believe outsiders should be defining me (based on my own views of who I am) is filtering how I see images outsiders are projecting about me. That probably is resulting in my holding on to my old views of myself and not responding as quickly as I should to my external constituencies” (Bouchikhi *et al*, 1998, p67). In a ‘worst case’ scenario, this dynamic might result in employees taking actions that actually exacerbate an image ‘problem’, e.g. make an undesirable attribute more pronounced – “organizational members may inaccurately assess reputation cues that are received and distortions of these cues may lead to inappropriate reputation repair” (Dukerich & Carter, 2000, p102).

2.6 Identification

As mentioned above, organisational identity has its roots in social identity theory, which informs us that “individuals classify themselves as members of social groups” (Lobel, 1991, p510). When a person identifies themselves with a group, they will, *inter alia*, tend to conform to group norms and attribute prototypical characteristics to themselves, reinforce the group’s prestige, value and practices, and tend to invest more of themselves in that role (*ibid*). This concept of ‘identification’ is clearly related to that of organisational identity, but whereas the literature in the latter “tends to concern itself with definitions of how organizational members see themselves as an organization”, research in to identification “focuses on the relationship between the individual and the ... organization” (Hatch & Schulz, 2000, p16).

The groups with which an individual identifies grant her with personal meaning, so praise or criticism of an organisation will be interpreted by an individual on a personal level, to an extent that is a function of the degree to which the individual identifies with that organisation (Cheney, 1983); and this link to the individual’s self-concept is a motivator for their behaviour (Erez & Early, 1993). As Dutton, Dukerich *et al* (1994) explain, when an individual identifies strongly with their work organization, “the attributes they use to define the organization also define them” (*ibid*, p240) and their well-being and behaviour are affected by the attributes “they believe others infer about them from their organizational membership” (*ibid*, p241). So, referring back to figure 2.7, “construed external image provides more than just information about the probable social evaluation of the organization” (*ibid*). This link to self-concept is key, because it means that “individuals are strongly motivated and committed to take actions that will

restore their organization's image" (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991, p548) – "members will be motivated to protect and affirm positive perceptions of their organization's identity to restore and affirm a positive social identity" (Elsbach & Kramer, 1996, p446). The fact that the construed image (that motivates such behaviour) may be a distorted version of the 'real' perceived image is not an issue as "images are mental models that guide behaviour irregardless of to what extent it represents reality" (Normann, 1984, p72).

UAT members volunteer to support the Firm in its recruiting activities and are putting themselves in a position where their association with the Firm is very visible, thus it could be surmised that they have a high level of identification with the Firm (Dutton, Dukerich *et al*, 1994). And, if they do have strong identification with the Firm, they would be motivated to take remedial action in response to any negative cues they perceive in the construed image of the Firm that they pick up from recruits - in Elsbach and Kramer's (1996) terms, to reduce any "identity dissonance" that they experience.

In their case study of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, however, Dutton and Dukerich (1991, p543) found that "the organization's identity served as an important reference point that members used for assessing the importance of [issues]". So not all apparently negative issues were identified as threats – those interpreted as being inconsistent with the organizational identity were invested with more importance - Dutton and Carter (2000, p107) go further in suggesting that "organisational members may not even notice ... cues that do not directly threaten the organization's core identity". In their work looking at business schools' responses to the *Business Week* rankings, Elsbach and Kramer (1996) concluded that organisation members managed identity dissonance reduction in two main ways: firstly, by emphasizing positive organisation attributes not highlighted in the rankings; and secondly by suggesting that other criteria (that favoured the organisation) were more important than those used in the ranking process.

Regardless of the basis for the cues that instigate it, any change in employee behaviour is likely to impact resources, e.g. remedial actions undertaken by employees will require their time and energy, at minimum, and perhaps even costly new marketing programmes. It seems from the above that cues may often be misread by employees, e.g. if construed and external images are often not the same, and the 'lens' of identity may lead to some issues being viewed as more threatening than perhaps they are in 'reality'. In this way resources may get misallocated in attending to image issues. Indeed Dukerich and Carter (2000, p109) point out that "organizations that have a strong commitment to maintaining a good reputation, and thus feel this is part of their overall identity, may be the very ones that are most likely to overreact and allocate too much of the organization's resources to responding to the negative reputation cues". It is possible, then, that the Firm, which sees itself very much as a market leader, might fall in to this 'trap', perhaps particularly where cues are being interpreted by employees, such as UAT members, who may identify strongly with it.

PART I: PROJECT ONE

3 CHAPTER THREE: PROJECT ONE RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

As detailed in section 1.1.5 above ('The Research Question and Project Structure'), the objective of Project One was to identify which organisational attributes are used by undergraduates (specifically, those targeted by the Firm) to differentiate between potential employers in their decisions about job applications. It was decided to use Vroom's attractiveness model as one of the main analysis tools for the present study (see section 1.3) and the identification of the appropriate 'outcomes' (organisational attributes) was necessary to operationalise it. As Mitchell and Beach (1976, p236) observe, however, "it is not clear *how* an investigator ... should ascertain what outcomes would be most relevant" [*italics added*].

3.2 Methodology

"The methodologies for determining what attributes job seekers value have received much less attention [than other aspects of the subject area]" (Breaugh, 1992, p80) and, as mentioned in the literature review (above), there does not appear to be any established best practice for creating the attribute lists used for surveys in this field.

A number of approaches for this project were, therefore, considered (see section 1.3.1 for a discussion of influencing factors); starting with semi-structured interviews. As there were specific (pre-defined) items of enquiry to pursue through Project One, a semi-structured (rather than unstructured) approach was thought to be the more appropriate design for the task. One of the benefits that the interview approach provides is the proximity it allows to the data – important if the 'field' (as in this case) is not one with which the researcher is currently intimate. From an analysis perspective, interviewing also offers the potential benefit of pausing for reflection *en route* and, through the immediacy of response, the opportunity to test new ideas quickly and relatively easily. Although, it should be noted that these characteristics can also lead to one of its potential disadvantages – that it is relatively time-consuming, both in the field and in analysis, particularly in comparison with many survey approaches.

The subject focussed on in Project One is relatively abstract. Another benefit that an interview method provides is a mechanism for *exploring* subjects with a interviewee; this flexibility can help identify and deal with misunderstandings and be used to explore responses in depth, thus guarding against the irrelevant and the banal. As Brenner *et al* (1985) remark, this allowance to both parties to explore the meanings of questions and answers is probably the central value of the interview approach. Linked to this issue is the quality of the output from using interviews, which is more likely to be 'richer' than with some other approaches. The interactive nature of the process is also likely to

maintain the interviewee's interest and engagement for longer than, say, a survey approach.

There is a fundamental (and, it is suggested here, unwise) assumption in all of the above, however, that is that the interviewee is actually able to structure and articulate her views and feelings about organisational attributes: "just asking job candidates is inadequate because their knowledge may be limited or inaccurate" (Mitchell & Beach, 1976, p236). Interviewing provides the benefit of inviting the interviewee to provide her own ideas in her own language (another advantage of the approach) – rather than responding to a closed, pre-determined question set. If, however, the interviewee is not cognizant of her own mental frameworks the interview approach will fail and a different approach is needed. Given the nature of the subject under study in Project One, this was a key concern and one of the drivers for the eventual selection of the Repertory Grid approach (see below).

Before moving on to discuss Repertory Grid, it should be noted that an alternative resolution to this problem (of an interviewee's lack of cognisance of her mental frameworks on a subject) would have been to *provide* a framework to the interviewee – within which she could position her own feelings and beliefs. This type of highly structured design would be very amenable to a survey approach. In addition, a survey can address any concerns regarding interviewer bias – through both the absence of an interviewer and the anonymity of the process. On the other hand, however, the absence of an interviewer necessitates simple and unambiguous questions (particularly with a relatively complex subject like employer image) and thus significantly detracts from the richness of the data (Brown, 1992, Bryman, 1989). Although a survey would also have had the advantage of delivering what the sponsor was expecting: large samples and 'scientific' output.

The key argument *against* the survey approach centres on its validity: the results might look impressive, but do they actually represent what they purport to represent? In this instance (i.e. Project One), the results of a survey might claim to tell us which attributes interviewees use to differentiate between potential employers, but arguably all it would actually tell us is the extent to which interviewees agreed with the researcher's own assessments of the attributes used (because designing the survey would require judgements to be made about what is important and what is not [Huff, 1990]). Also, "you only get the answers to the questions you ask" (Johnson & Harris, 2002, p102), so important data can go undetected.

One way of benefiting from the different strengths of these research approaches (and minimising the weaknesses) is to combine them in a research design. A survey could be a very useful tool for quantifying, for example, the number (and types) of men and women who hold a certain attribute to be important – where the attributes have previously been identified through a different method. As already stated, interviews were not considered a reliable way to help interviewees surface and articulate their thoughts on the subject of employer image (i.e. for such a first stage) - the methodological search in this respect led to Repertory Grid.

3.2.1 Repertory Grid

The theory of personal constructs (PCT), developed by the psychologist George Kelly (1955), proposes that we each approach our lives like scientists. That is, we continually explore our worlds and create mental maps of our observations – maps made up of structures (and hierarchies) of constructs - to which we then refer when we need to make decisions (and predictions) (Smith, 1986a). “The psychology of personal constructs is concerned with the ways in which [these] personal construct repertoires can be analysed and defined...” (Bannister, 1962, p104). Kelly subsequently developed a tool, called the Repertory Grid, to facilitate this process - fundamentally, Rep Grid allows us to uncover an individual’s mental map on a given subject and see “how people understand their world” (Huff, 1990).

The fundamental postulate of Kelly’s theory (Kelly, 1955, p32) states that *a person’s processes are psychologically channelised by the ways in which he [sic] anticipates events* (eleven corollaries were also presented by Kelly). Thus (it might be proposed) an individual’s decision-making process around organisational choice will be dependent on her mental map of that arena. As Kelly (1955, p47) explains, “the Choice Corollary [of PCT] lays down the grounds upon which we can make some predictions regarding how people will act after they have construed the issues with which they are faced”.

Of particular interest, Rep Grid enables the researcher to “collect data unbiased on a subject that is not totally understood by the subjects” (Goffin, 1994) - like some cognitive mapping techniques, it “allows researchers to tap in to the interviewee’s cognitive constructions of the phenomena of interest instead of forcing them to fit their perceptions into the cognitive structure of the researcher” (Huff, 1990; Jankowicz, 1990) - which was the problem identified above as regards surveys. And, unlike the issues identified in the discussion above on interview methodology, Rep Grid facilitates the surfacing and articulation of the interviewee’s thoughts and thought processes without prompting from the researcher (Bannister & Fransella, 1986; Frost & Braine, 1967; Stewart, 1997).

One concern that has been raised as to the efficacy of Rep Grid, however – particularly in the marketing literature – is the danger of ‘banal’ responses (Chisnall, 1977; Harmar-Brown, 1969; Pitts and Woodside, 1984): “interviewees tend to express rational rather than emotional reasons [for their preferences] and differentiating criteria [identified might be] irrelevant to brand purchase motivations” (Gordon and Langmaid, 1988). In marketing usage, different visual stimuli may be employed to guard against this. Another, more sophisticated, technique commonly applied in this regard is ‘laddering’: “in-depth probing directed toward uncovering higher-level meanings” (Reynolds & Gutman, 1984). Stewart (1997) notes that “propositional” constructs (i.e. those referring to “objective criteria”) can generate important information when laddered.

Laddering is a qualitative interview approach in its own right, but can also be employed within the structure of Rep Grid interviews to achieve even greater depth and finer distinction on constructs (Pitts and Woodside, 1984; Stewart, 1997; Jolly *et al*, 1988). As a parenthetical observation, it should be noted here that laddering interviews were considered as a potential methodology for Project One, but it was felt, on balance, that

the Rep Grid technique provides significant superior benefits by virtue of its strong theoretical foundations (Huff, 1990), structure, amenability to both qualitative and quantitative analysis (Huff, 1990), and option of supporting software.

Rep Grid has a strong pedigree. It is a well-established research technique in psychology (Smith, 1986a) and has been used widely in marketing (as previously mentioned), for example to explore brand images (Easterby-Smith, 1980a; Gordon, 1988; Marsden & Littler, 1998; Stewart, 1997). Only one previous (full) application of Repertory Grid to the issue of organisational choice has been found. Within the Geography literature, Reid and Holley (1972) used the technique to explore factors affecting university choice. Repertory Grid was seen as particularly valuable because “choice is based on discrimination of some kind” - a key characteristic of a Rep Grid interview. Stewart (1981) also reports using the basic technique, on a commercial project, in the form of a group discussion with new joiners to an organisation. No previous applications have been found in the investigation of sex differences in organisational choice.

Comparing Rep Grid with interviews and survey approaches, Rep Grid can be seen to capture many of their advantages, whilst avoiding many of their disadvantages: Marsden and Littler (1998) suggest that it “incorporates the virtues of both” qualitative and quantitative methods. Rep Grid provides the same advantages as interviews with respect to: closeness to the data; dealing in the interviewee’s own language and ideas; providing opportunities for avoiding misunderstandings and for digging beneath the surface of issues; and, to some degree, the flexibility to explore new ideas and adopt an iterative approach. At the same time, Rep Grids may take less time to analyse in most cases – as grids are often analysed quantitatively and therefore share some of the advantage of survey approaches in that respect. They share other advantages with survey methodology as well: there is less chance for bias, particularly as the grid interviews (being structured) can be relatively easily administered by a third party; and the output (being, in most instances, at least partially quantitative and computer driven) is in a format with which the Firm was likely to be comfortable. Rep Grid also avoids many of the disadvantages of the survey. In addition to those implicit in the advantages of interviews above, characteristics include far richer data, in the interviewees own terms and a greater degree of ‘truthfulness’, as it is virtually impossible to ‘fake’ a Rep Grid (Bannister & Fransella, 1986; Frost & Braine, 1967).

One undeniable disadvantage of Rep Grid, however, is that the interviews can be relatively time-consuming to conduct, and so it can be difficult to maintain the interviewees’ attention and enthusiasm or even to gain access for the required amount of time. This was not expected to be a particularly pressing problem with the sample base proposed, however: the students were to be paid for completing the interview; they were not expected to be under any acute time pressures; their ability to concentrate for a protracted period was anticipated to be reasonably high; and it was also anticipated that they would develop some intellectual curiosity about (and engagement in) the interview process (particularly as the issue under discussion would be of personal significance to them). Some of these characteristics might not apply to a sample of managers, for example.

“It can be argued that the Grid has intrinsic validity” (Fransella & Bannister, 1977). Certainly, if the related theory (of Personal Constructs) is not contested, construct validity has, almost by definition, to be very high. As Jenkins (1994) points out, “the notion of validity as capturing individual sense-making is ... pre-eminent in the design and undertaking” of this type of research. Even with the Grid, however, validity will always be design dependent (Fransella & Bannister, 1977) – the way in which the Grid is used and the manner in which elements and constructs are elicited or provided all contribute to the overall validity of Rep Grid research. It should also be noted that many (published) applications of the Grid are not conducted within the context of the original theory – a factor that must inevitably put at risk the validity of the research (Jahoda, 1988).

It has been suggested that test-retest reliability cannot be properly assessed in the normal way, because the first (Rep Grid) test is deemed exhaustive, e.g. of constructs, with any given individual (Bannister & Fransella, 1986; Frost & Braine, 1967). Nevertheless, some research has been undertaken in this area, with encouraging results: studies have proven the stability of elicited constructs and that whilst the stability of element rankings seems to vary it is generally high overall (Fransella & Bannister, 1977). However, Bannister and Mair (1968, p175) “stress the pointlessness of trying to make a simple, generalized statement about ‘the reliability of the grid’”, given that a static mind is a contradiction in terms - the view being that reliability should, instead, be considered as another aspect of validity (Fransella & Bannister, 1977).

3.3 Sample

On the subject of the number of Rep Grid interviews that need to be completed to establish a valid picture of a ‘population’, Kelly (1955) does not comment (not surprising as his chief interest was presumably individual counselling interventions). Guidance in the marketing and management literature, however, suggests that twenty to forty interviews are likely to be sufficient (Frost & Braine, 1967; Stewart, 1997). The reasoning is based on reaching the point beyond which no new constructs (with the possible exception of the eccentric) are likely to emerge (Neuman, 2000, p200). It seems likely that the exact number will be dependent, to some degree, on the nature of the subject and the interviewees and it is therefore not prudent to attempt to forecast it in advance (Neuman, 2000, p196). Based on this argument, the sample size for Project One was tentatively targeted at thirty-two (grid interviews), with a provision that the emergent data be reviewed at regular intervals and the sample size extended (or reduced) as appropriate. A total of thirty-two allowed for equal numbers of men and women across arts and science degrees in two universities – see figure 3.1 below.

The sample was ‘purposive’ (rather than random) (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p27; Neuman, 2000, p198). As Neumann (2000, p196) explains “qualitative researchers focus less on a sample’s representativeness ... instead, they focus on how the sample ... illuminates”. The sample included both women and men, as the objective of the study was not only to understand women’s perceptions, but also how these differ from those held by men. The sample also included a range of different university course types, specifically science (e.g. physics, engineering, IT) and arts (e.g. English,

languages, history) subjects. Courses for inclusion in the sample were chosen to provide a reflection of minority (or token) groups, e.g. females on science courses and males on arts courses – to achieve ‘maximum variation’ (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p28), given the discussion in the literature review (chapter 2) about the potential role of gender and course type on work related attitudes. Kanter’s (1977) typology was followed, and courses with less than 35% male or female participation were selected (as representing either ‘token’, less than 15%, or ‘minority’, 15-35%, positions). Within the bounds of this criterion the largest courses were chosen so as to maximise the ease of recruiting for interview. At Cambridge the courses targeted were:

- Arts: English, Modern and Medieval Languages, Archaeology and Anthropology, History of Art, and Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic
- Science: Computer Science, Maths, Engineering, Electrical and Information Sciences, Manufacturing Engineering

At Birmingham the courses identified as suitable were:

- Arts: English, French, Hispanic, History of Art, Italian
- Science: Computer Science, Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Physics, Manufacturing and Mechanical Engineering, Civil Engineering

No more than four people (i.e. two men and two women) were selected from any one course (e.g. English) in order to guard against any unforeseen bias effects related to a specific course. The Cambridge interviews were scheduled first and recruitment for the interviews at Birmingham did not take place until the Cambridge interviewees had been identified. This allowed the recruitment at Birmingham to be more closely targeted, to match that at Cambridge in terms of specific courses as closely as possible; for example, of the science students at Cambridge, two were studying computer science, so in the Birmingham recruitment a target of two computer science students was set (to provide a mirror sample). This facilitated the process of checking for the reflection of any inherent differences between the two universities in the interview results.

Two further screening criteria were applied in terms of the student characteristics. Firstly, that they should be final year students actively looking to start work the following autumn. This was important as it meant that they would be attending employer recruiting presentations and familiar with potential employers (see below). However, potential interviewees were rejected if they were *too far* advanced in their job search, i.e. if they had accepted a job offer – it was felt that the psychological commitment of such students to their chosen firm (and their corresponding rejection of all other options) could result in biased responses – per Festinger’s (1957) dissonance theory. Secondly, the interviewees were required to be on target for a 1st or 2:1 class of degree – as this is an entry requirement for the Firm, it was a desirable screen for the sample.

Another key issue was the importance of interviewees having an awareness of the Firm and some of its competitors (as potential employers), so that they could be relied upon to have perceptions of them. Without this, it would not be possible to extract meaningful data from the interviews. The timing of the fieldwork thus became critical. It was important, in order to build up as accurate a picture of organisational attractiveness as possible, that interviews take place during the period in which undergraduates are

seriously considering to which potential employers to apply for jobs (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1973) - typically in the autumn term of their final year.

Apart from the very small minority who have held summer intern posts, undergraduates have little direct experience of the organisations they are assessing. Key events in this respect, therefore, are the major employer presentations timetabled during the autumn term. These events are important sources of information for most of the students and the first time many of them may have met people working at the employing organisation (as discussed above, this interpersonal interaction is likely to play a significant role in forging the initial perceptions that undergraduates hold of potential employers). It was concluded, therefore, that the optimum time to conduct the interviews for Project One would be after the main employer presentations had taken place, but before the majority of students began to make their job applications (and before the start of the post-Xmas exam season). In the event, the interviews were conducted between 6th and 17th November 2000 in Cambridge and 23rd November and 8th December 2000 in Birmingham (it was decided to visit Cambridge first because the recruitment process – e.g. employer presentations - typically starts earlier there than at Birmingham).

As to the decision of which university or universities to include in the study, a number of factors needed to be covered. From a purely practical viewpoint, the fewer the better as travel time and time spent arranging access (with parties both inside the Firm and at the university) are reduced. There appeared to be no reason why just one university could not be used provided it could provide a suitable sample, however it was clear that the Firm would be more comfortable with what they considered a more ‘representative’ sample (i.e. more than one university). The inclusion of more than one university had the additional advantages of reducing the risk of a ‘random’ (unseen) event skewing the results and of reducing the risk of interviewees discussing the interview process between them (by virtue of the researcher’s shorter presence on campus) and, thereby, potentially introducing bias in to the interview process.

It was decided, therefore, that the students for the study should be drawn from two universities (analysis of the application statistics showed that 80% of the applications received by the Firm come from the top twenty of a total of approximately one hundred universities, so two universities could be argued, to the Firm, to represent a significant percentage of the applications received). Three criteria were set for the selection process: that the universities be ‘typical’ (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p28) - on pertinent criteria - and be considered to be important by the Firm, and that they be capable of generating the sample required (i.e. suitably ‘qualified’ interviewees in sufficiently large numbers). The statistics for all the universities at which the Firm recruits were studied and the universities of Cambridge and Birmingham were selected. These shared the following characteristics: they were amongst the top three in number of applications received by the Firm; amongst the largest universities in the UK in absolute size; the percentage of their students submitting applications after attending the Firm’s presentation was similar to the average in both cases; the percentage of students who see the Firm’s ‘graduate recruitment promotions’ (according to external survey data) was relatively high (both being above 75%); they had employer presentation schedules that ran early in the Autumn term (including the Firm’s own presentation); the Firm has good relationships with the careers officers (which it was felt might prove a factor in

gaining access and assistance on site); and, perhaps most important, their ‘gender split’ of applications to the Firm was close to that for the population as a whole.

Within all the ‘subgroups’ defined above, a ‘quota selection’ approach was then taken (*ibid*). The final interview splits are shown in Figure 3.1 below:

	Male	Female
Arts	4 Cambridge 4 Birmingham	4 Cambridge 4 Birmingham
Science	4 Cambridge 4 Birmingham	4 Cambridge 4 Birmingham

Figure 3.1 Sample Structure

3.4 Interview Design

There are three main parts to a Repertory Grid: the *elements*, which are the objects of whatever topic is being explored; the *constructs*, which are the dimensions with which these objects are examined; and a linking mechanism which describes each element in terms of each construct (Easterby-Smith, 1980b). A typical interview to generate such a grid consists of four stages: elicitation of elements; elicitation of constructs; preparation of the grid; and the grading of each element on each construct (Smith, 1986a).

It should be noted that there is considerable discussion in the literature as to whether elements, and even constructs, can be justifiably *supplied*, rather than elicited (the supply of elements/constructs has the advantage, *inter alia*, of facilitating the comparison and combination of grids, as will be seen later). It would seem, even from the brief summary of Personal Construct Theory given above, that to supply constructs departs some way from the spirit of Kelly’s original theory – as well as negating many of the advantages of the Rep Grid technique. However, Fransella and Bannister (1977, p107) state that “there is no definite evidence to indicate that [one] should not provide constructs for a Grid”. The practice of eliciting constructs from a sample group and then supplying (a common subset) of these to a larger sample is frequently followed in quantitative studies for example (although in the strictest sense, as Fransella and Bannister (1977) point out, in this case, the constructs are then neither supplied nor elicited). There are also situations where the researcher may feel it is necessary to provide constructs, even in an individual counselling interview, for example: if the researcher believes the construct to be important to the interviewee, but that the interviewee is not aware or able to provide it herself; or where the interview forms part of an experimental study. There is, however, a price to be paid for this convenience: there is “considerable evidence that ... constructs which are elicited from subjects individually are more personally meaningful to [them] than are constructs supplied to them from other sources” (Adams-Webber, 1979, p23), usually seen in greater extremity of scoring on rating scales.

In Project One, the constructs were elicited. Kelly (1955, p74) defined a construct as “a way in which some things are construed as being alike and yet different from others” and the methods for eliciting constructs can be seen to derive from this definition. Fransella and Bannister (1977) identify five different methods of eliciting constructs – although, as Marsden and Littler (1998) note, none of these is “sacrosanct” – some are more specific to clinical settings, but of those remaining the triadic approach is probably the more frequently used (Pope & Keen, 1981). In the ‘minimum context card form’ of the triadic approach the interviewee is presented with three of the elements – “the minimum context for a construct is *three* things” (Kelly, 1955, p79) – and asked to specify “some important way in which two of them are alike and thereby different from the third” (Fransella & Bannister, 1977, p14). The answer provides the *emergent pole* and the way in which the third element is different the *implied pole*. The next ‘triad’ is then presented and so on until all constructs have been exhausted – Hunt (in Adams-Webber, 1979, p21) found that twenty to thirty triads succeed in eliciting most constructs and “very few novel constructs emerged after the fortieth triad”. In the ‘full context form’ of the approach, the elements (written on cards) are spread out all together in front of the interviewee and differences then identified. The other method covered by Fransella and Bannister (1977) of most relevance here is laddering – the merits of which were discussed above in section 3.2.1. Laddering recognises that – as per Kelly’s *Organisation Corollary* – an individual’s construct system is “a hierarchy, with some constructs closer to the essence of a person, and others more peripheral” (Stewart, 1997, p22). As an interviewing technique, laddering helps the researcher help the interviewee make explicit the underlying personal values she places on things (Fransella, Jones & Watson, 1988). Project One employed a combination of the triadic and laddering methods to elicit constructs.

The triads were selected using a random number approach. Random number tables were used to assign a number sequence to the elements, e.g. the ‘top three’ elements (see below) were assigned the numbers 8, 1 and 6. Triads were then created following a variation on Stewart’s (1981) recommended model (for nine elements) – 1 2 3, 4 5 6, 7 8 9, 10 1 2, 3 4 5 etc. Care was taken to ensure that at least two elements changed between each successive triad in order to give the interviewee a more varied set to compare and, thereby, elicit constructs that are more significant (Goffin, 1994). In total, forty triads were prepared as per Hunt above.

In the debate on ‘eliciting’ versus ‘supplying’, it appears to be more commonly accepted to supply *elements* (than constructs) – particularly in the marketing field, where the researcher is often interested (as in this case) with how a particular brand is described and compared *vis a vis* its competitors. All elements must meet two important requirements, however: they “must be within the range of convenience of the constructs to be used” (as Kelly [1955, p76] explains, “each construct, as used by a person, has a limited range of convenience. Outside that range the person does not find it relevant”); and be “representative of the pool from which they are drawn” (Fransella & Bannister, 1977, p13). To optimise the usefulness of the Grid, it is also recommended that: elements are specific and precise, they provide ‘coverage’ (albeit roughly) of the ‘ground’ that the study wishes to explore, and the group is mixed (e.g. includes ‘good’ and ‘bad’) so that differences are highlighted (Stewart, 1997). Elements may be

generated also through provision of role titles (one of Kelly's own approaches) or situation descriptions, or by defining a 'pool' from which the interviewee creates her list.

Easterby-Smith (1980b) advises that eight to ten elements are quite adequate for most managerial applications. The elements for Project One were potential employers. Whilst it would have been far more convenient to supply, rather than elicit, these (in order to combine findings later – see discussion below), the quality of the research findings would have been severely impacted if the interviewee had been unable to make meaningful statements about certain employers and/or they were outside of their 'range of convenience' (a significant risk if the elements are supplied to the interviewee). It was decided, therefore, to take an approach that drew on the ideas of the 'pool' and the 'roles' approaches covered above. Specifically, the interviewees were asked to provide nine elements: three of which were organisations for whom they were currently interested in working; three organisations for whom the interviewee had decided she definitely would not want to work; and, finally, three organisations about which she did not feel strongly positive or negative. A final, tenth element was provided by the interviewer in the shape of an 'Ideal Employer'. This element was generic in concept (i.e. not linked to any particular, existing potential employer) and was included as it was felt it might be helpful to some of the interviewees: an 'ideal' element is often used in Rep Grid in psychology applications.

The *disadvantage* (to this approach to selecting elements) was that it could not guarantee that the Firm would be chosen as one of the elements (despite it being highly prominent in the graduate employment market). Gaining a measure of perceptions of the Firm was not an objective of this first project, though, and it was felt that robustness of design - as offered by the elicitation approach outlined above – should be the more pressing consideration.

Once the elements and the constructs have been determined, the final step to creating the basic Rep Grid is to link the two. Kelly's (1955) original approach was to mark each 'cell' in a binary fashion – i.e. an element either is or is not like the emergent pole. A common approach today, however, is to use rating scales (although ranking scales, for example, can also be employed), and it was believed that this approach would provide the richest data for analysis for Project One (as rating scales are supported by the main computer packages). A further decision needed to be made, however: how many points to employ on the scale. Stewart (1997, p43) states that "there is evidence to suggest that a seven-point scale is getting close to most people's limits of discrimination", and it "is widely preferred for grids" (Slater, 1977, p36); it was decided to adopt a seven-point scale here. A last detail concerned whether, in 'scoring' the grid, interviewees should be asked to rate 'vertically' (each element, in turn, against all the constructs) or 'horizontally' (all the elements against each construct in turn). As the focus of interest in Project One was more on the way in which the different elements were compared on each construct, the latter approach was used.

3.5 Pilot Interviews

Much of the responsibility for the richness of the data that are produced from a Rep Grid falls to the quality of the initial design – in particular, the selection of the context and the management of the elements and constructs. The interview design was piloted during August 2000. Interviews were arranged with summer interns at the Firm. Interns are second year undergraduates working at the Firm over the period of their summer vacation. The intern profile does not fall directly within the sample for the study (partly because the pilot interview timing is too early and partly because the interns have direct experience of working at the Firm) so the results of the pilot interviews were not intended for inclusion in the final data set. As a group, however, the interns had the advantage of sharing important characteristics with the target interviewees as well as being easily accessible and available at the necessary stage in the process.

Six intern interviews were conducted as part of the pilot study – comprising three female and three male interviewees and a mix of universities (including Cambridge and Birmingham) and courses. The experience of the pilot provided some important learning – in the technique of Rep Grid as well as on this particular design – and several changes were made to the design as a result. Firstly, it was found that more time was needed per interview than originally thought: some interviewees required closer to two hours than the ninety minutes originally scheduled. This comparatively long interview length did not appear to be a problem for the interviewees – although it was recognised that, as interns, they were likely to be motivated to oblige the interviewer (being aware of the fact that the Firm was sponsoring the research and of the identity of the interviewer). Some level of confidence about the ability of the process to sustain the ‘real’ interviewees’ interest was taken from the personal value that the pilot interviewees appeared to gain from the process. This was frequently commented upon after the interview along with statements such as “I didn’t know I thought that”, one interviewee even asked for a copy of his grid to take away for his own reference.

Other important learning points concerned the directions given to interviewees; for example, the importance of stressing to the interviewees that the key items of interest were their *perceptions* of potential employers regardless of whether these were factually correct or not. On a related point, it was also found to be important to advise them to pick organisations, for their elements, about which they held some opinions. And to pick for their ‘bottom three’ potential employers organisations that their friends might be interested in (but were not a fit for them personally) rather than firms that were not serious competitors in the graduate marketplace and might result in the generation of less relevant constructs. The interviewees were also directed, in the questioning, to use constructs that were applicable to an *organisation*, rather than (solely) a *job*.

The pilots also provided an opportunity to experiment a little with technique, particularly in the area of construct elicitation. The laddering approach was found to work well and was retained in the final design. Both the ‘minimum’ and ‘full context’ forms of the triadic technique were employed and both worked well – some interviewees in particular responded very well to the full context form. In the final design, both forms were employed – with the full context form introduced at the end of the Rep Grid process when the others had been exhausted (again, in the full study, it

was found that for some people this resulted in the generation of a number of further constructs).

In preparation for the full study – in addition to the pilot - the opportunity was taken to re-familiarise the interviewers with the graduate recruitment experience by gathering contextual data from three further sources. Firstly, informal discussions were held (by the author) with the careers officers at the universities of Cambridge and Birmingham. The aims of these discussions were: to gain a better understanding of the context in which undergraduates were making their application choices; to gain some additional insight into the thought processes and behaviours of the students as they go through their decision making process; to gain a ‘third party’ view of the Firm’s profile on the campus; and to provide a courtesy ‘heads-up’ to the universities that the research was being planned. Secondly, discussions were also held with those members of the Firm’s recruiting teams who are active on the Cambridge and Birmingham campuses in order to fully understand the extent of the Firm’s activities and to ensure that any special issues were surfaced.

Finally, as the interviews were to be scheduled to take place shortly after the Firm’s campus presentations (at Cambridge and Birmingham), it was felt important that the interviewers were aware of the content and format of the events, how they were received, and any particular issues that arose. As the interviews were to be conducted anonymously, it was felt unwise for the interviewers to attend these presentation events at Cambridge and Birmingham, but the author attended the Firm’s campus event at Oxford University (which was very similar in style to those planned at Cambridge and Birmingham) and then debriefed the relevant recruiters after the Cambridge and Birmingham presentations had taken place in order to ensure that there were no substantial differences from the Oxford event and that no special circumstances had arisen that might influence the research at those campuses.

3.6 Co-interviewer

There is a particular danger of interviewer-based bias affecting the research process, where, as in this case, the interviewer is not a ‘third party’, but an employee of the sponsoring organisation (and working in the area that is being studied). In order to mitigate this risk (to a reasonable degree) it was decided to use a co-interviewer: a researcher, based at Cranfield University, who is experienced in Rep Grid technique. This would allow for a comparison between the data emerging from each interviewer’s grids (the other interviewer being the author) and thereby a check as to the possible presence of bias – it is proposed that this process enhanced the validity of the interview data.

The initial interviews (at both universities) were conducted by the author, and covered both sexes and both course types. This was to ensure that any (final) design issues had been resolved and that the interview process was in ‘steady-state’ before the second interviewer was introduced to the project. The co-interviewer attended the first day of (three) interviews conducted by the author, which facilitated a common understanding on the nuances of approach. The interviews were scheduled in such a way as to allow

for a full debrief (by phone), between the author and the co-interviewer, at the end of each day – and after each interview on the co-interviewer's first day (in retrospect, it would have been ideal for the author to have attended the co-interviewer's first day of interviews in person). All interviews were tape-recorded and this, together with sharing of the 'raw' grid data, facilitated the debriefing process. A detailed interview guide was also produced as part of the preparation and this helped to ensure that both interviewers followed the same procedure and used similar language.

As the interviews progressed a tally was kept of the length of interviews and the number and type of constructs that were emerging in order to ensure that they were similar between the two interviewers (and two universities) and that there was no bias appearing. This process also revealed the extent to which new constructs were emerging as the interviews progressed and ensured a high level of confidence that the vast majority of constructs had been surfaced after thirty-two interviews. The same process helped to establish that there were no systematic differences appearing between the Cambridge and Birmingham interviews.

3.7 Administration

There is also, of course, the risk of bias being introduced from the interviewee's side (i.e. in their responses). This was considered a particular concern in this instance where the research was taking place at the same time as the recruitment process and 'impression management' tactics might be employed in the research interviews by those in the sample who were interested in joining the Firm. In order to guard against this, the interviews were conducted anonymously, i.e. the Firm's sponsorship was not revealed. A third party market research agency was employed to source the interviewees and to manage the logistical details. Those invited to take part were advised that the sponsor was a 'graduate employer', but that the interviews would be conducted anonymously (in order to avoid potential bias). This was considered the most ethical way to avoid the need for disclosure as those invited to participate were aware that a potential employer was involved and able to decline the invitation to participate if they felt uncomfortable with this. As an encouragement to participate and to provide candid responses, the invitations also stressed that the interview data would be anonymous and that the study was a market research exercise and not in any way connected to the recruitment processes of the sponsoring organisation.

As mentioned above, a third party agency was employed to manage the administration of the interview process. This was important in order to secure the Firm's anonymity whilst staying well within acceptable ethical boundaries. The agency was given a detailed written and verbal brief on the target interviewee profile and a screening questionnaire was developed. The agency's researchers then approached students and applied the screener to those who expressed an interest. In order to encourage participation, the students were offered a £30 incentive – the amount being advised by the agency to be the current 'going rate'. The agency was instructed to assign a code to each interviewee – comprised of B or C to indicate university, M or F to record sex, a number to indicate interview order, and the name of their course – and this code was the only information made available to the interviewers. To facilitate this preservation of

the interviewees' anonymity, the agency provided a receptionist at the interview location (a hotel local to the campus) – this also helped to preserve the Firm's anonymity as the dealings with the hotel for the room bookings could be handled solely through the agency.

3.8 Example of a Rep Grid Interview

After the introductory remarks, which included an explanation of the purpose of the exercise (“to explore your perceptions of various potential employers”), the first part of the interview covered the selection of the elements. Ten numbered cards were used to record the names of the potential employers selected by the interviewee (plus the ‘ideal employer’). The numbers were placed on the upper side of the card, thus giving the interviewee the option to refer to the element during the interview by number rather than name – in case the use of the names themselves might prove inhibiting (e.g. when making negative comments). The interviewee was asked first to select three organisations for whom, if she had any choice, she would most like to work. Each name was written on a card (8, 1 and 6 for these first three according to the random number order described above) and then selection moved to three organisations for whom she would, personally, definitely not want to work (cards 10, 7 and 4) and, finally, three organisations about whom she did not feel very strongly either positively or negatively (3, 9, 2). If at any stage the interviewee was struggling to bring names to mind, she was asked if she would like to see a (prompt) list of graduate employers – the list used was The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers for the year 2000. The interviewer then introduced the tenth card – the ‘Ideal Employer’ – “to represent your ‘theoretical’ ideal”.

The construct elicitation process could now begin, with the interviewer explaining the process in outline: “I am going to show you three of these cards at a time and ask you to tell me of a way in which you think two of them are the same, and different from the third, in terms of your perception of them as organisations to work for” (note that the question is ‘value-free’). The first triad (1 2 3) was then presented to the interviewee according to the predetermined order described above. Once the interviewee had identified a construct, the interviewer probed if necessary to ensure full understanding; a mental check was also made to ensure that the construct was ‘in range’ (e.g. some interviewees occasionally identified constructs that were job/role, rather than organisation, specific) and that it was not binary (i.e. only rateable as a 1 or a 7). The construct was then captured on the grid – care was taken to ensure that the language used was that of the interviewee and not the interviewer. The ‘emergent pole’ of the construct (Pe) – i.e. that mentioned first – was noted on the right-hand side of the grid and the implied pole (not ‘opposite’ as the second pole may not be the common opposite) on the left hand side. An example of a completed grid, for CM4 Engineering (Cambridge, male, interview number 4, engineering student), is shown in figure 3.2 – typed up after the interview.

Figure 3.2 Example of Completed Rep Grid

Interviewee: cm4 engineering Interviewer: csf Date: 07/11/00 START TIME: 1:05 END TIME: 2:20														
Triad	Pi=1		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Pe=7	
			Mckinsey	AC	Lane Clark, Peacock, (actuaries)	Barclays Capital	Ideal Employer	Ove Arup	Tesco	Warner Brothers	CSFB	Coca Cola		
123	Less social, more insular	-	7	5	4	5	7	7	3	6	2	5	Outgoing people	+
	People go home and don't mix, have own lives	-	5	3	4	2	6	4	2	4	1	5	Plenty of social events with people from work (L)	+
456	Battle with management	-	3	1	4	1	7	7	2	3	1	4	Team feeling – shared goal, no animosity	+
789	Just plays with numbers	-	1	1	1	2	5	5	6	7	1	6	Tangible results/products (company)	+
	Obscure acronym	-	5	3	1	4	7	5	7	7	1	7	Public recognition, recognisable co name (L)	+
1012	Casual	+/-	4	7	7	3	6	5	5	2	7	2	Wear a suit	+/-
	Fixed number of hours and times	-	7	4	1	4	7	3	3	5	7	3	Flexible hours (# of hours as needed)	+
345	Things that genuinely find interesting and care about	+	2	7	7	7	1	5	6	1	7	5	Would make me care about dull things	-
678	Cubicle hell	-	7	6	4	5	7	5	2	7	6	7	Nice working environment	+
9101	Staying in the same office all the time	-	7	3	2	1	7	5	1	3	3	6	Opportunity for overseas travel	+
	Being assigned	-	7	5	2	3	7	6	1	4	5	4	Personal input into job direction (eg location, projects)	+
234	Having to figure it out myself	-	6	3	7	3	7	4	3	2	5	2	Job related training	+
	absence of these opportunities	-	5	2	3	2	7	6	2	1	1	1	Support/provide extra-curricular study	+
	Lack of variation	-	7	4	3	4	7	3	1	3	4	2	Constant learning curve	+
567														
8910	'bank' boring	-	4	2	1	1	7	4	3	7	1	7	Fun, exciting	+

Interviewee: cm4 engineering Interviewer: csf Date: 07/11/00														
START TIME: 1:05														
END TIME: 2:20														
Triad	Pi=1		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Pe=7	
			Mckinsey	AC	Lane Clark, Peacock, (actuaries)	Barclays Capital	Ideal Employer	Ove Arup	Tesco	Warner Brothers	CSFB	Coca Cola		
135	bit-player	-	7	2	4	3	7	6	5	4	3	5	Market leading, prestigious, 'best'	+
791														
357														
ALL	have to follow rules (like automaton)	-	7	1	1	1	7	5	3	5	1	4	Can work own way	+
	not like me	-	7	5	6	4	7	7	2	3	5	4	People who join are like me	+
	hate co-workers	-	7	6	7	4	7	7	5	5	6	4	Getting on with people	+
	Feminine	+/-	4	7	5	6	3	6	4	5	5	3	Masculine	+/-

It can be seen that the first column in the grid records the triad, the underlining on the triads marks which elements were referred to in relation to the emergent pole. Once the construct had been noted, the interviewee was asked whether she preferred one pole or the other and, if so, which – the answers are represented by the plus and minus signs on the grid. It is at this point that laddering was introduced – per the technique recommended by Stewart (1981). If the interviewee expressed a preference for a pole then she was asked, “can you tell me why you prefer _____?”, this leads (ladders up) to the higher level construct, if it exists (sometimes all that is revealed is a restatement of the original construct in different wording). Note that if a ‘value’ statement was implied in the original construct (which was rare) then the interviewee was laddered *downwards* instead (e.g. “in what way are these organisations _____?”). In all cases, only constructs that could be characterised as organisational attributes were included; also, the interviewer checked (with the interviewee) that each new construct was actually new and not a repetition of a construct already captured elsewhere in the grid. Constructs resulting from laddering are noted on the grid by ‘(L)’, as can be seen on the second construct on the grid form.

After each new construct was identified the interviewee was asked to rate each of the elements on the construct using a seven point scale, where a score of seven indicated those elements most like the statement at the emergent pole. Note that for some constructs this resulted in a 'negative' scoring, i.e. with the favoured attribute scoring one - care was taken that the interviewee understood this. In the analysis phase, this meant that some of the scoring had to be reversed (i.e. a 1 transcribed to a 7) and poles swapped in order to directly compare constructs.

Next the interviewee was asked if any further constructs came to mind from the current triad and, if not, the interviewer then moved on to the next triad in the sequence and the process was repeated. When an interviewee was unable to produce any constructs from a particular triad (for example, [5 6 7] in the case of the Grid shown), the next one was presented and so on until it became clear that the interviewee was running out of constructs. At this point the full context form was employed, with the element cards all laid out together, and this led to some further constructs in some cases – as in the case of the example shown (figure 3.2) with the construct 'can work own way'. The average time taken for the grid interviews was 91 minutes (with a range from 55 to 160).

3.9 Analysis

As Slater (1977, p53) comments, “a single grid may contain as much data as a postgraduate student might not long ago, have collected in the course of a research project for a doctorate” – it was necessary, therefore, to be highly focussed in selecting the data on which to conduct any detailed analysis.

Five approaches to analysis were investigated and employed, to differing degrees:

- Calculating the descriptive statistics of the interview set
- Analysing each individual grid, so that analyses *across* the thirty-two individual grids could be conducted
- Conducting a content analysis
- Exploring differences between male and female interviewees

The details of these four approaches are given below. First though, a word on sex differences; clearly one of the main foci of the analysis was to investigate whether or not there are sex differences present. Fransella and Bannister (1977, p100) confirm that “no overall differences in the degree of structure in grids have been manifest as between sexes”, so any differences found in the analysis should, therefore, be content-specific. It is interesting also to note Kelly's (1955, p79) own view that “none of us would claim....that men and women construe all aspects of life in the same way”.

3.9.1 Descriptive Statistics for Interview Set

Fransella and Bannister (1977, p73) provide a “reminder to those in danger of being caught up in the number game, that there are many interesting things that can be done working directly with the grid's raw data”. A ‘manual’ review was, therefore, conducted

of the interview set. Specifically, both the number of constructs and the incidence of the Firm in the element sets were calculated.

It is proposed that this basic assessment is close to the useful limit of ‘manual’ analysis for this project. Smith and Stewart (1977), Fransella and Bannister (1977) and others extol the virtues of manual analysis – for some applications – but “this process of calculations can be very time consuming, especially with large grids” and “it is often this aspect alone which leads the user to seek an appropriate computer package” (Pope and Keen, 1981, p53). Computerised analysis is particularly advantageous when faced with a large number of grids and is of course able to offer a number of additional, advanced calculations that are not feasible at the manual level.

One way of categorising the Rep Grid computer packages available is by the type of analysis they produce: cluster analysis (e.g. dendritic) or principal components analysis (PCA). There is some debate in the literature about the relative merits of each approach (Slater, 1974); however, Easterby-Smith (1980b) concludes that a PCA type package “may be preferable in ‘research’ applications”. PCA was selected for this project as it provided all the types of analysis required, and appeared to be the more widely used, and thereby the best supported in terms of the literature and the computer packages available (Shaw, 1981). The best-known PCA software is the Grid Analysis Package (GAP), developed by Patrick Slater – the best-known programme of this package being INGRID, which is used to analyse individual grids. INGRID was developed in the Sixties, for the mainframe computer, and is not very user friendly in these days of the Personal Computer. A search was conducted, therefore, for an appropriate PC-based package. The PCP Home Page at the University of Giessen (Germany) Department of Medical Psychology provides a very useful review of available Rep Grid computer programmes (<http://www.med.uni-giessen.de/psychol/contents.htm>). After some trials, the GridLab package was selected for this project, GridLab is described on the Giessen site as “essentially Slater’s package adapted for PCs and in WINDOWS format. It is beautifully simple to use and decidedly user-friendly.” An example of the analysis provided by this package is given below.

3.9.2 Analysis of Individual Grids

Before it is possible to analyse across grids, it is necessary to create the individual grids themselves. As described above, the GridLab package was selected for this purpose. The output from GridLab (as per INGRID) can be divided in to two sections: descriptive statistics and analysis of component space. An illustrative example will be provided here by way of the analytic data for one of the interviews: ‘BM12 Italian’ (male studying Italian, 12th interview at Birmingham).

The descriptive statistics provide an analysis of the ratings of the constructs and of the elements, which helps to identify those that are the most important to the interviewee. Whilst both mean and variance scores are provided, it is the latter which are regarded as the prime indicator of salience - of having the most meaning regarding constructs and of being the most distinctive regarding elements (Smith, 1986b). The descriptive statistics for the constructs of BM12 Italian are shown in figure 3.3:

Construct	Mean	Variation	As %
1	4.1	24.9	5.54
2	5.1	18.9	4.2
3	5.1	10.9	2.42
4	3.4	36.4	8.09
5	4.2	29.6	6.58
6	4	16	3.56
7	4	10	2.22
8	3.4	54.4	12.09
9	3.8	27.6	6.14
10	3.8	25.6	5.69
11	5.2	13.6	3.02
12	3.7	32.1	7.14
13	4.3	28.1	6.25
14	3.4	26.4	5.87
15	3.5	6.5	1.45
16	3.5	18.5	4.11
17	4.3	16.1	3.58
18	3.5	24.5	5.45
19	4.8	21.6	4.8
20	3.7	8.1	1.8

Figure 3.3 Descriptive Statistics for Constructs, BM12 Italian

The important information on variability of scoring is provided in a useful percentage form in the final column. From the data in figure 3.3, it can be seen that the most important constructs for this interviewee are numbers 8, 4 and 12, as these are the constructs showing the greatest variability and therefore the ones on which he most discriminates between elements (organisations):

~ number 8: ‘city job, rat race, sole interest is to working money’ – ‘fresh air every now and then, not trapped in rat race’

~ number 4: ‘purely self-interest/success of the company’ – ‘ethically sound and benefiting society’

~ number 12: ‘being sat in front of computer all day’ – ‘intellectual stimulation’

The descriptive statistics for the elements are presented in a similar way (figure 3.4):

Element	Total	Sum of Squares	As %
1	12.2	41.82	9.3
2	-27.8	51.22	11.39
3	-11.8	24.62	5.47
4	-2.8	17.62	3.92
5	33.2	78.62	17.48
6	21.2	69.62	15.48
7	-12.8	27.62	6.14
8	27.2	67.42	14.99
9	-25.8	45.02	10.01
10	-12.8	26.22	5.83

Figure 3.4 Descriptive Statistics for Elements, BM12 Italian

The ‘total’ column shows the sum of the normalized grades for each element, “it is difficult to interpret” (Smith, 1986b), but shows here that element number 5 – Ideal Employer – received the highest scores and the ‘top three’ (i.e. most favoured) elements (8, 1, and 6) all received above average scores (as all have a positive total), as might be expected. The Sum of Squares column represents the variability of scoring and, again, is presented as a percentage in the final column. The elements with a high percentage are those that are most distinctive to the interviewee; however, “this information is not very helpful unless the vast majority of constructs have some quality such as goodness or bigness in common” (Smith, 1986b).

The descriptive statistics also show the relationships between elements and between constructs. The relationships between the elements for the BM12 Italian grid are shown in figure 3.5; GridLab (INGRID) displays these as distances between the elements (after some statistical scaling corrections). A distance greater than 1 shows that the elements are not related while a distance less than 1 shows that they are related (Smith, 1986b).

Element	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	0	1.17	0.99	0.9	0.69	0.87	1.02	1.02	1.12	0.99
2	1.17	0	0.72	0.78	1.56	1.44	0.52	1.43	0.14	0.56
3	0.99	0.72	0	0.48	1.22	1.14	0.62	1.09	0.68	0.64
4	0.9	0.78	0.48	0	1.08	1.04	0.6	1.05	0.74	0.6
5	0.69	1.56	1.22	1.08	0	0.62	1.35	0.76	1.51	1.32
6	0.87	1.44	1.14	1.04	0.62	0	1.3	0.75	1.42	1.28
7	1.02	0.52	0.62	0.6	1.35	1.3	0	1.19	0.48	0.2
8	1.02	1.43	1.09	1.05	0.76	0.75	1.19	0	1.39	1.18
9	1.12	0.14	0.68	0.74	1.51	1.42	0.48	1.39	0	0.5
10	0.99	0.56	0.64	0.6	1.32	1.28	0.2	1.18	0.5	0

Figure 3.5 Relationships Between Elements, BM12 Italian

In this grid, it can be seen that elements 2 (KPMG) and 9 (Arthur Andersen) are very closely related, as are elements 7 (Morgan Stanley Dean Witter) and 10 (ABN Amro). Those related to the Ideal Employer (element 5) are elements 1, 6 and 8 - the 'top three' elements - with distances of 0.69, 0.62 and 0.76 respectively. These results can also be seen graphically in the cognitive map below (figure 3.8).

A calculation of the correlations between the constructs is also provided by GridLab, and in the case of interviewee BM12 Italian the data show that there are very high (> 0.9) correlations between a large number of constructs (14 pairs in all) including:

- 1 and 6 (0.9): ['being a chartered accountant, just another body to make money' – 'some license, independence, can change things, have a part to play in what is going on around you, you have some value'] and ['no real interaction' – 'interaction with diversity of people']
- 4 and 5 (0.92): ['purely self interest/success of company' – 'ethically sound and benefiting society'] and ['nature of work doesn't change' – 'diversity of work, work can change from day to day, requires range of skills']
- 12 and 14 (0.9): ['being sat in front of computer all day' – 'intellectual stimulation'] and ['inability to impact upon normal person/lack of general appeal' – 'ability to touch/influence people']

The remaining analysis performed by the computer program is the calculation of component space. Stewart (1997, p67) describes the basic foundation of principal components analysis (PCA) as formed in the question, "how many dimensions do we need to describe all the relationships within this matrix" [of correlations between elements]? The computer program looks for recurrent trends and then identifies what percentage of information in the grid is accounted for by each. The analysis for BM12 Italian is shown below in figure 3.6:

Component	Root	As %	Sum
1	303.34	67.44	67.44
2	53.25	11.84	79.28
3	31.84	7.08	86.36
4	28.26	6.28	92.64
5	16.32	3.63	96.27
6	9.53	2.12	98.39
7	4.74	1.05	99.44
8	1.93	0.43	99.87
9	0.58	0.13	100

Figure 3.6 Principal Components Analysis, BM12 Italian

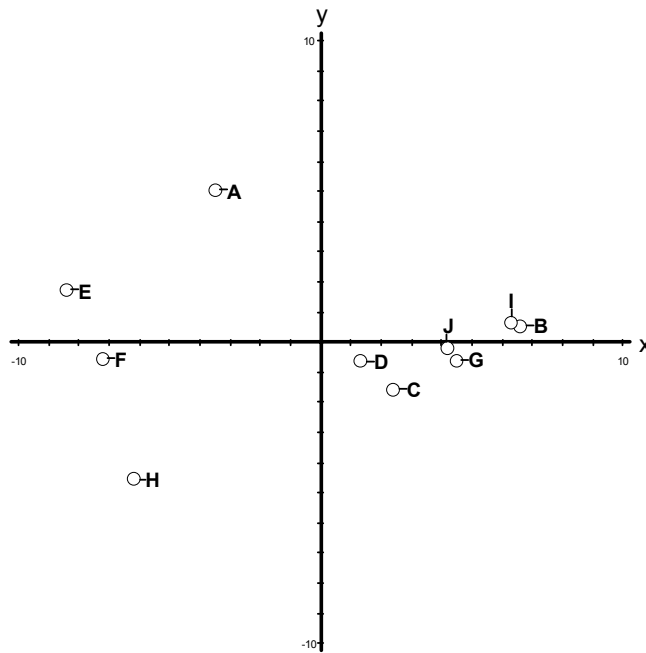
The table shows that the first component (trend) accounts for more than 67% of the information in this grid; this implies that the interviewee (BM12 Italian) is fairly simple minded in the way he considers potential employers – “the more loosely knit the constructs (the lower the correlations), the more complex is the person’s construct system” (Fransella & Bannister, 1977, p61). Smith and Stewart (1977, p215) suggest that “individuals are relatively cognitively simple” when “say 60 per cent or more of the variance is accounted for by the first factor”.

Viewing the key constructs that make up these trends (figure 3.7) it can be seen that they are quite varied and that the components cannot therefore be easily summarised or described (verbally) – as Riley and Palmer (1976, p162) comment, “there is no guarantee that [components] will be particularly easy to interpret” (contrary to the impression given by some of the literature).

Comp	Construct	Load	Var%	
1	8	-6.9	12.09	City job, rat race, sole interest is to work in money – Fresh air every now and then, not trapped in rat race
	4	-5.6	8.09	Purely self interest/success of company – ethically sound and benefiting society
	5	-5.1	6.58	Very little contact with people, nature of work doesn't change – Diversity of work, work can change day to day, requires range of skills
	12	-5.1	7.14	Being sat in front of computer all day - intellectual stimulation
2	9	-3.4	6.14	Working individually - team work important
	11	-3.1	3.02	Static, being stuck doing something, same pay – Potential to get on (eg graduate scheme), succeed, be promoted
	14	2.7	5.87	Inability to impact upon normal person/lack of general appeal – ability to touch/influence people

Figure 3.7 Principal Components, BM12 Italian

The 'loading' shown in the table above (figure 3.7) is a measure of how much of the trend (component) is contained in the construct. Loadings are also calculated for the elements and are used as co-ordinates to position the elements on the cognitive map, the axes of which represent the first two components. It is important to note that in most grids it will not be possible to accommodate 100% of the variance in two dimensions; the PCA map is, therefore, a compromise. Clearly, the lower the percentage represented by the first two components the greater the compromise and it has been suggested that 70-75% is a reasonable limit to set in this regard (Tschudi, 1998; Stewart, 1981). For BM12 Italian the figure is 79%; the cognitive map is shown below in figure 3.8:



X-axis: component 1. Y-axis: component 2

Elements:

A: 1. Reuters

B: 2. KPMG (accountants)

C: 3. Shell

D: 4. Freshfields

E: 5. Ideal Employer

F: 6. Police

G: 7. Morgan Stanley Dean Witter

H: 8. Navy

I: 9. Arthur Andersen (accountants)

J: 10. ABN Amro

Figure 3.8 PCA Map, BM12 Italian

Here (figure 3.8) the relationships between the elements described above can be seen – e.g. the clustering of KPMG and Arthur Andersen and of Morgan Stanley Dean Witter and ABN Amro. This particular interviewee does not appear to distinguish too much between companies in the same industry areas (note: PCA maps can also be plotted with the key constructs as components).

It can be seen from the above analysis that, using programs such as GridLab, very rich information can be produced on each individual interviewee. This analysis at the individual grid level (provided by GridLab and others) is not an ideal match, however, with the objectives of the present study, as each individual grid is different. For example, each interviewee's PCA map (see figure 3.8) has a different set of axes: the thirty-two individual maps generated by Project One were reviewed as a group, but no themes could be discerned, nor conclusions drawn.

It is necessary, therefore, to consider how the responses can be combined (in a valid manner) to provide a cross-interviewee picture. It is at this point that Repertory Grid becomes more challenging as a method. It is not departing from the idiographic *per se* that appears to be the cause for concern: Kelly (1955, p79) himself describes “the insistence upon the exclusive use of the idiographic frame” as “a mistake”. Rather, the problems are generated by the *imposition* of constructs and/or elements (as referenced

earlier). “In essence any individual’s grid is unique” (Pope & Keen, 1981, p157) and comparisons across individual grids can only be attempted when there are some constants”, such as common elements and/or constructs (not the case here), yet “in many cases, the use of grids aligned by element and construct represents a considerable retreat from Kelly’s idea of personal constructs” (Smith, 1986b, p15) – see section 3.2.1.

“Where there are no common elements or constructs it is necessary to resort either to content analyses or to structural scores” (Easterby-Smith, 1980b, p21). A short assessment of structural differences was made in the analysis for this project, but the main approach was that of content analysis (described in the next section). Smith (1986b) suggests designing research using Rep Grid as a two-stage study, the first stage being to elicit the constructs and/or elements and the second to apply a ‘common’ subset of these to a wider sample. Administration to a wider sample might be in the form of Repertory Grid or a survey. The latter would look similar to a Semantic Differential approach - and, indeed, recommendations to use Rep Grid to generate Semantic Differential scales can be found in the marketing literature (Frost & Braine, 1967). “The principle difference between the Kelly’s test and Osgood, Suci and Tannenbaum’s (1957) *Semantic Differential* is that in the latter the same standard list of dimensions is supplied to all subjects alike” (Adams-Webber, 1979). This two-stage design was the direction chosen for this doctoral research, with stage one being encompassed by Project One.

Before closing, it should be noted that computer packages *do* exist that combine grids – for example, within the GAP software –and which would, in theory, render the efforts described above redundant. They still require, however, that the constructs and/or the elements in each grid be the same. One further alternative option that needs to be mentioned is that Grids have also been developed or aggregated by groups (Jankowicz, 1990) – i.e. the resulting Grid reflects the consensus of the group, rather than an individual. It was felt, in this case, that potential peer pressure (e.g. to conform to the majority view) might invalidate the results and this was not, therefore, selected as an approach for Project One.

3.9.3 Content Analysis

As mentioned above, the main analysis for Project One centred on content analysis. The research aimed to determine how undergraduates construe employers and whether differences appear to exist between the sexes; in order to answer these questions it was necessary to identify the constructs that are used and to be able to compare these across the groups. Content analysis provided a robust mechanism for identifying the common, and most important, constructs across the thirty-two interviews. Jankowicz (1990, p278) states that content analysis “offers a compromise between the advantages of a large aggregated sample which the conventional questionnaire format provides, and the retention of individual meaning available in a single, elicited construct grid”.

Kelly (1955) himself identifies the utility of ‘abstraction’ in this respect: “we have used the subject’s own system of axes, yet we have abstracted them in ways which permit us

to subsume them within our own system. Thus we have not bogged down [*sic*] in the particularistic approach...”, and “abstractions which are lifted from a sample of behaviours of a single person may, in turn, be used as data from which abstractions are lifted from a sample of people of a group” (*ibid*, p80). The manner in which this is done, however, clearly has the potential to severely impact the validity of any results; establishing true common meaning across constructs (in order to consolidate them) requires a highly disciplined process. The process designed for this project (based on Stewart’s [1981] recommended approach) is summarised below.

There were 545 constructs in total produced by the Rep Grid process (i.e. across all thirty two interviews). These constructs were each written on to a separate file card, together with their interview code. The cards were then sorted in to piles based on (perceived) common meanings – *not* identical wording. For example, “teamwork important” and “places a lot of stress on teamwork” were grouped together. The challenge in this process was to strike the correct balance between the necessity of moving towards some interpretation of commonality of meaning and the desire not to force-fit cards together where the nuance of meaning was clearly different.

Those cards that did not seem to fit with any others or whose meaning seemed particularly ambiguous (e.g. a card might be interpreted to fit in more than one pile) were left to one side. Honey (1979, p457) mentions the importance of being “prepared to have miscellaneous items that won’t fit ... main category headings” as a guard against “imposing an order on the raw data that wouldn’t otherwise be there”. At the end of this ‘first cut’ the cards that were left to one side were checked against the interview transcripts to clarify their intended meaning. For example, it was not clear whether the construct ‘ability to travel abroad and work’ related to travelling abroad or working abroad or both, a check of the transcript revealed that the interviewee intended the first. These cards were then re-assigned to piles, or again left to one side if they still did not appear to fit with any of the others.

Each of the piles was then reviewed (card by card) and cards re-assigned if it seemed, on a second viewing, that they would fit better in a different pile. Also, as part of this process, any further cards that it was felt could be argued to be ambiguous were taken out and checked against the relevant interview transcript before being (re)assigned to a pile (if appropriate). The ‘single’ cards (i.e. all the cards not allocated to a pile) were then checked once again to ensure that they really did not fit anywhere. A few were allocated to piles at this stage. Each pile was then reviewed again for internal consistency – i.e. to ensure that all the cards in the pile were actually saying the same thing. A few cards were reallocated as a result of this check. Titles were then allocated to each of the piles. Finally, a check was made of all the piles as a set to ensure that they were all distinct, i.e. that there were not two or more piles actually ‘saying the same thing’ and that could justifiably be combined. A couple of piles were subsumed into others at this stage.

Note that there are some examples in the literature of this type of content analysis being conducted against pre-determined groups, for example from related theory. This was not an appropriate approach here, in the first instance, as seen in the literature review (chapter 2), no well-established theoretical models exist from which to draw. Secondly,

the idea of fitting constructs into a pre-existing framework does not sit comfortably with the author nor, it is suggested, with the theory of personal constructs on which Rep Grid is based. The approach taken here – as can be surmised from the description above – is more of a ‘grounded’ one (Fournier, 1997; Fournier & Payne, 1994).

In order to ensure the absence of bias in the content analysis, it was decided to repeat the process using a second researcher. The person chosen was the co-interviewer; this choice ensured a guarding against any misinterpretations or misunderstanding of the constructs (e.g. with respect to language or terminology) as well as allowing the process to profit from the tacit understanding of the sample that was built up through the process of interviewing. It is important to note that a conscious decision was made at the beginning of the interviewing process not to attempt any early or ongoing analysis of the emerging data – in order not to risk biasing the Rep Grid process in any way. As a result, no discussions on the likely conclusions of the research had taken place between the two interviewers, at this stage, that might result in a lack of objectivity in the use of the co-interviewer for this exercise.

At the end of the first round of content analysis – by the author – the final number of piles, or groups, was ninety-seven, including sixteen ‘singles’. The first analysis conducted by the co-interviewer resulted in groupings and allocation of constructs (to those groupings) that were 73% in agreement with the author: Miles & Huberman (1994, p64) state that “at first, you usually don’t get more than 70% intercoder reliability”. A process of discussion highlighted only minor disagreements in most cases – such as the author allocating two different groups where the co-interviewer had allocated just one (e.g. the author considered the ideas of working abroad and international travel to be separate, whilst the co-interviewer had grouped them together as the same). Having reviewed the co-interviewer’s allocations, the author was able to agree with many of the differences proposed and, in this way, overall agreement was increased to 87%. The author then detailed the remaining differences, with accompanying explanations to the co-interviewer and in response it was determined that only seven constructs remained on which there was a difference of opinion. The final groupings were, therefore, agreed at the 99% level – well in excess of Kassarian’s (1977) suggested minimum of 85%. The final common constructs numbered eighty-four and are listed in figure 4.1 below (the descriptors for the common constructs were taken from the ‘positive’ poles according to the scores allocated to the constructs for the *Ideal Employer*).

Having identified the common constructs for the sample, the next step was to ascertain their relative importance. Miles and Huberman support the view that the application of quantitative techniques to qualitative data can “add power and sensitivity to individual judgement when one attempts to detect and describe *patterning* in a set of observations” (Weinstein and Tamur, 1978, in Miles and Huberman, 1994, p41). Frequency count is a commonly used (quantitative) technique for establishing importance (Macdonald & Tipton, 1993; Riley & Palmer, 1976). In the case of Rep Grid, however, it has been seen (above) that the importance of a construct to *an individual* can be measured by its variability score. To develop a more accurate picture of importance across the sample, therefore, it was decided that the frequency count should be moderated by a variability score for each common construct. Before proceeding, a check was made of all 545

constructs to ensure that the rating scale had not been used crudely in any case (i.e. scores of just 1 and/or 7), because, as Smith (1986a) explains, such an instance is “the main exception to [the] rule” that variability relates to importance.

Determining a variability score for each common construct required a weighted average to be calculated. For example, for the common construct *International Travel* the frequency count revealed that it occurred in fourteen of the individual grids, to determine a variability score for *International Travel*, then, an average of the variability scores in these fourteen interviews was needed. This calculation is complicated by the fact that, as it is expressed as a percentage, the amount of variability is dependent on the number of constructs in the grid; for example, a construct with a variability score of 5% accounts for a greater amount of absolute variability in a grid of twenty constructs than in one of ten. A weighted, rather than straight arithmetic, average was therefore needed.

On the subject of the frequency count, there were some common constructs which (as a result of the ‘abstraction’ process) occurred more than once in the same interview, i.e. the interviewee had produced two constructs that, in the context of the content analysis, were very similar. The absolute number of constructs that appeared in the *Can try variety of jobs* grouping, for example, was higher than eighteen. Whilst ‘repetition’ is arguably a measure of the importance of a given construct to a particular interviewee (Shubsachs, 1975), it is important to separate out importance as it relates to the individual and importance as related to the sample as a whole. In addition, as variability is included in the analysis (and this provides a measure of the importance of the construct at the individual level), it was concluded that including duplicate mentions of a construct from the same interviewee would be ‘double counting’ and that the more valid approach was to work with ‘unique interviewees’. So the frequency count refers to the number of *different* interviews (grids) in which this construct appeared. Note that the literature provides no guidance on this issue.

Neither has any guidance been found in the literature as to the detail of *how* to combine frequency count and variability scores in analysis. In this case, it was decided to use the variability scores to assign priorities within those common constructs that had the same frequency count. As the variability provides a measure of the importance that the interviewees placed on a construct, it follows that a construct such as *Ethical*, which appeared seven times, with a variability of 7.19% should be prioritised in the overall ranking over a construct such as *Interacting with people*, which also appeared seven times, but has a variability of just 4.07%.

This approach clearly gives primacy to the frequency count over the variability scores, but this seemed to be the more useful approach given that the ultimate objective of the study is to better understand the population as a whole. A brief review of the alternative helps to highlight the issues: taking the common constructs ranked by variability, the top three are *No further professional exams required to progress* (8.54%), *Recruitment process is welcoming* (8.43%), and *Casual dress* (7.54%), but these three have frequency counts of just 4, 3 and 3 respectively. So, whilst the construct, *No further professional exams required to progress*, was clearly key in differentiating between potential employers for those four interviewees, as a group they represent a small part of the overall sample.

Some combination of the two rankings (i.e. frequency count and variability) might provide a way of capturing these effects (e.g. averaging the two rankings), but in the absence of a proven (or obvious) methodology it was felt that the introduction of such detail to the approach would be spurious, and thereby extremely difficult to defend in terms of validity. Most importantly, for the purposes of this project, frequency provides the better match with the research objectives and was therefore concluded to be the more sound approach methodologically.

The final stage of the content analysis was to reduce the common construct list to a more manageable length. There were two key reasons for this: the planned use of a survey as a next step restricted the number of constructs that could be taken forward in to Project Two; and the number of variables that could reasonably be manipulated in the 'real life' implementation of recommendations coming out of the study were also limited. Again, there was no guidance in the literature as to how this issue should be approached. It was decided, therefore, that the following factors would serve as guides: the relative importance of the constructs to the group and the objective of the research to investigate differences between males and females. As to the length of the short-list, the target was set at twenty. The main consideration in setting this target was the need to have a workable number of items for the survey intended in Project Two. Stewart and Stewart (1981) suggest that the most items on a questionnaire that "people will agreeably complete is probably around 120". Setting the limit for constructs at twenty, therefore, allows for up to six activities (if necessary) against each construct in the survey (which it was estimated would be sufficient).

So, based on the above, the criteria for selecting the short-list of twenty common constructs were: (a) those common constructs deemed to be the most important to the interviewee group and (b) those common constructs where it appeared that there might be differences between the sexes (recognising that some constructs might fulfil both criteria). It was decided that constructs satisfying criterion (a) would be those that fell within the 'top ten' common constructs for the groups as a whole, for the female group and/or for the male group. 'Difference' for (b) was defined as either qualitative or quantitative, and is explored further in the next section.

3.9.4 Analysis of Differences

Consistent with the analysis above, the method used to explore quantitative differences between the males and females was frequency count, i.e. the frequency counts against the common constructs were reviewed and compared for females and males. The assessment of differences was necessarily crude, the nature of the data available at this stage (e.g. small sample size) not being appropriate for the analysis of *statistical significance* (this was to follow in Project Two) (Morgan, 1988, p68). Given such small numbers, a minimum cut-off was set for the exercise: only those common constructs with frequency counts of four (equivalent to 25% of the sample sizes) or more from females and/or males were included.

Wallston and Grady (1985, p22) note the call for the “inclusion of qualitative techniques to complement the use of quantitative approaches” in studies of sex and gender. It was felt to be important here, as one of the aims of the research was to gain a deeper understanding of the individuals’ construing, to include an analysis of the qualitative data available from the Rep Grid interview transcripts – to explore similarities and differences between the sexes. Bartunek and Seo (2002, p240) confirm that “qualitative approaches can help provide understanding of the underlying dynamics and meaning-making associated with constructs”.

For the qualitative analysis, only those constructs that met the minimum (frequency count) criterion (see above) were included. As the constructs were, by definition, *common* constructs it was not anticipated that differences would exist regarding definitions, but on reflecting on the interviews the author had developed an impression that males and females may ascribe different *benefits* to some organisational attributes. An initial review of the transcripts was used to develop thematic codes, relating to benefits, and then occurrences were reviewed across the male and female interviewees. As this issue (on differing benefits) did not form part of the initial research question, there was no systematic exploration of it within the interviews and, therefore, information on benefits was only available on some of the constructs and in some of the interviews. As a result, a full frequency count approach to the sex differences was not considered appropriate, rather it was decided to report ‘directional’ findings only, with a view to highlighting areas where it was felt further research would be of interest. The findings were discussed with the co-interviewer to ensure that they were not contradictory to her impressions of the interview data.

4 CHAPTER FOUR: PROJECT ONE RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive Statistics for Interview Set

Looking firstly at the number of constructs elicited, the mean across the thirty-two interviews was 17.03, within a range of 10 to 24. There are seemingly contradictory statements in the literature as to the ‘usual’ size of a grid, i.e. the mean number of constructs. On the one hand, in the context of market research, Frost and Braine (1967) refer to an “average response level” of 18, and a range of 10 to 30, clearly close to the descriptive statistics for the current sample. On the other hand, however, Slater (1977) describes grids (from “miscellaneous sources”) within a very large set with a modal number of constructs of 15 as “exceptionally large”. It is not clear, therefore, whether the grids in this study should be regarded as particularly large or not, although there do not appear to be many studies reported in the literature with grids numbering in the region of 17 or more elicited constructs. The significance of the number of constructs is its suggested relation to cognitive complexity (Hudson, 1974), “the cognitive complexity of a two-construct elicitation is likely to be less than the complexity of a twelve-construct elicitation” (Pope & Keen, 1981, p108). It is interesting that the range for this set – from 10 to 24 – is (arguably) fairly wide, suggesting, at least, a fair measure of diversity across the group (see also the comments on complexity in section 4.2 below). Male interviewees produced more constructs than the females, but the difference was small: 17.75 vs 16.31 (within the same range of 10-24).

With regard to the elements, it was interesting to review the appearance of the Firm in the sets of elements chosen by the interviewees. The Firm featured in nearly half (fifteen) of all interviews, a frequency almost twice that of any other organisation, which would seem to confirm its high profile. It was selected as one of the ‘top three’ elements on nine occasions and in the ‘bottom three’ on six occasions (across a mixture of male/female students) – it was not selected at all as one of the ‘middle three’ elements, suggesting that it might have a distinctive image (which arouses relatively strong feelings, either positive or negative).

4.2 Results of Analysis of Individual Grids

As mentioned above, the only cross-grid analysis that could be undertaken – apart from content analysis – was of structural factors, of which only cognitive complexity was of particular interest to this study. It has already been noted (in the analysis of the grid for BM12 Italian above) that an individual whose grid has its first component accounting for greater than 60% of its variance is generally considered more cognitively simple in his/her construing on that particular issue. The average percentage represented by the first component in the principal components analysis for the sample is 62.00%; the range around the mean was wide: from 33.71% to 90.05%. Similar to the finding on the number of constructs (above), this would suggest that there is a fair degree of diversity within the sample (no sex differences were apparent).

Taken overall, the descriptive statistics above (section 4.1), the findings here and those below on the frequency profile of the common constructs (section 4.3) might be interpreted as suggesting that the interviewees:

- have, in general, rich conceptual frameworks against which they think about potential employers (see mean number of constructs per interviewee)
- are relatively 'individual' and diverse as a group with respect to these frameworks (see frequency profile of common constructs)
- apply these frameworks in a relatively simple way when assessing specific (real-life) organisations (see average percentage on first component in PCA)

The second point (above) serves as a reminder of the need to be aware of the risks of assuming that all women are the same. Gherardi (1995, p70) argues that "research on women has implicitly defined gender in oppositional terms, and that this definition has given rise to a literature which minimizes the differences among women and unintentionally reinforces the image of gender uniformity". Unfortunately, it was not possible to explore the potential diversity within the female (or male) sample within the constraints of this doctoral research.

4.3 Results of Content Analysis

The table below (figure 4.1) shows the results of the content analysis:

Common Constructs	Frequency Count	Var %
Can try variety of jobs	18	6.19
Able to have a life outside work	17	5.19
International travel	14	6.46
Kudos	13	4.78
Meritocracy	12	5.32
High salary	12	5.11
Variety within job (day-to-day)	12	5.09
Dynamic	11	6.18
Freedom/control over own work	10	6.73
Opportunity for creativity	10	6.51
Personal interest in product/business area	9	7.2
Works for the public good	9	7.14
Can work overseas	9	5.54
Having common ground with colleagues	9	5.27
Fast track progress possible	9	5.17
Clear opportunities for long term career progression	9	5.08
Small and personal	9	4.61
Job security	9	4.61
Offer good training/invest in employees	9	4.54
Can gain skills to build cv on	8	7.06

Common Constructs	Frequency Count	Var %
Would be motivated/satisfied	8	5.84
Ethical	7	7.19
Not demanding/stressful	7	6.09
Care about employees as individuals	7	5.17
Would use my degree skills	7	5.05
Interacting with people	7	4.07
Exciting	6	7.15
Can see impact/result of my work	6	6.49
Challenging/stimulating	6	5.14
Internationally diverse (culture)	6	4.94
Friendly and informal	6	4.89
Organisation will use/value my skills	6	4.73
Emphasizes teamwork	6	4.43
Excellent salary prospects	6	3.71
City/London based	5	6.57
High salary, but at a price	5	6.49
Organisation/work touches general public	5	5.99
Variety of roles available as progress up hierarchy	5	5.63
Have respect for (new) graduates	5	4.7
Structured graduate training scheme	5	4.5
Sociable	5	4.49
Youthful (vibrant)	5	4.46
Employ variety of people	5	4.09
No further professional exams required to progress	4	8.54
Socially responsible	4	7.21
Very competitive entry, would feel special having been chosen	4	7.12
Not ruthless culture	4	7.1
Not in office all the time	4	6.23
Feel part of bigger picture/know where fit in	4	6.11
Have the skills needed	4	5.91
Train you to do your job	4	5.88
Don't need to have specific qualifications (eg degree type) to get in	4	5.08
Control over own career	4	4.88
Flexible hours	4	4.02
Good company name for cv	4	3.34
Recruitment process is welcoming	3	8.43
Casual dress	3	7.54
Good perks/package	3	7.31
Company has freedom over own work (not	3	6.89

Common Constructs	Frequency Count	Var %
constrained by outside influences)		
Not male dominated	3	6.57
Making a valuable contribution to society	3	6.33
Not working away from home	3	6.15
Would be working with the best	3	6.14
Nice working environment	3	5.15
Flexibility re location (UK)	3	5.08
Less accountability	3	4.68
Opportunities for external networking (future job opportunities)	3	4.67
Unconventional career choice	3	4.42
Good internal communications	3	4.08
Efficient	3	2.58
Get learning on the job	2	6.43
Can develop longer term (working) relationships	2	6.21
Will be Mentored	2	6.1
Recruitment process is not time-intensive	2	5.46
Family friendly	2	4.84
Listen to employees' ideas	2	4.82
More graduate jobs on offer	2	4.17
Good commute	2	2.63
Can get perspective from people I know there	1	6.6
More understated	1	6.02
Working with clients to help them understand needs	1	4.79
Are wanted to perform a service	1	4.69
Mutually beneficial working relationship	1	3.9
Opportunity to start new life with new people	1	2.93

Figure 4.1 Common Constructs

The table (in figure 4.1) provides a representation of the way in which undergraduates construe potential employers – the attributes they use to differentiate between these organisations. Two of the most striking features of this list of constructs are its length, and the ‘flatness’ of its frequency profile, showing that undergraduates’ views of potential employers cannot be summarised in a handful of issues. The implications of this for marketing communications targeted at this group could be quite taxing.

The results of the content analysis confirm the importance of work-life balance – discussed in the section (1.1.3) on ‘Existing Data’ above – as seen in the second construct on the list, *Able to have a life outside work*. And whilst *High Salary* also appears high on the list, there is evidence of some recognition that these two objectives

may not be compatible in the presence of the construct *High salary, but at a price*, and in the following quote from one of the Rep Grid interviews:

“These two [elements] are very large financial institutions, you are looking at really working in the centre of London with very long hours, and although they would offer high salaries and whatever they would expect you to almost sell yourself to their ideals.... I have got friends who work there and they are working very long hours and everything is dictated around their work pretty much”
(interviewee)

Interestingly, there is less sense of *International travel* being incompatible with work-life balance, rather that travel will be a way to “*broaden one’s horizons, see other cultures and other people, work with other people from other cultures..... I think it’s really important these days to be working and in contact with other countries*”
(interviewee)

In the light of the discussion in the literature review on person-organisation fit (chapter 2), the construct *Having common ground with colleagues* is interesting. Interviewees worried that “*the culture there might not be compatible with me,*” and “*it’s a matter of sort of being relaxed when you are at work.... and not maybe worrying about the way you are acting because it doesn’t seem to fit with the sort of norm.*”

The inclusion of *Kudos* near the top of the list of common constructs demonstrates the importance to these undergraduates of what other people think – as one interviewee said, “*we all want to be socially prestigious*” – and thereby, indicates that peer pressure may play a part in the organisational choice process:

“What makes a company attractive is, ok if you say to a friend I am working for McDonalds or say the BBC the reaction would be very different, it’s the image other people have.....” (interviewee)

It could be argued that the results do not provide any support for the expectancy element in Vroom’s Expectancy Theory (see ‘Literature Review’). This might be surmised from the low ranking (importance) of the construct, *More graduate jobs on offer* and the higher ranking of the construct, *Very competitive entry, would feel special having been chosen*.

Another subject that does not come high up on the common construct list is that of the sex of an organisation’s employees: the *Male dominated* construct was produced by only a small number of interviewees (perhaps not surprisingly, all women). This suggests that it is not an *explicit* issue for these undergraduates, perhaps because most have not yet had direct experience of the implications of male (or female) dominated workplaces.

4.4 Results of Analysis of Differences

The tables below (figures 4.2 and 4.3) show the results of the ‘quantitative’ analysis of differences between the male and female interviewees. The complete ranked lists of constructs for the males and females can be found in Appendix A.

Common construct	Frequency count	
	Females	Males
Can try variety of jobs	11	7
Opportunity for creativity	6	4
Care about employees as individuals	5	2
Small and personal	5	4
Offer good training/invest in employees	5	4
Not demanding/stressful	4	3
Would use my degree skills	4	3
Internationally diverse (culture)	4	2
Friendly and informal	4	2

Figure 4.2 Common Constructs Employed More by Females

Common Construct	Frequency count	
	Females	Males
Meritocracy	4	8
Dynamic	4	7
Clear opportunities for long term career progression	2	7
Can work overseas	3	6
Job security	3	6
Can see impact/result of my work	1	5
Interacting with people	2	5
Socially responsible	0	4
Feel part of bigger picture/know where fit in	0	4
Excellent salary prospects	2	4

Figure 4.3 Common Constructs Employed More by Males

Clearly, with such a small sample, the results of such quantitative comparisons can be suggestive only. Nevertheless, it is interesting that, amongst those constructs employed more by the female interviewees (with a higher frequency count than that for the males),

there are a number of constructs that are associated with affiliation and relationships, i.e. *Care about employees as individuals*, *Small and personal* and *Friendly and informal*. These findings are consistent with previous studies, which show that women place more importance than men on good relationships and a sense of belonging (see section 2.2). Also consistent with previous studies are the constructs *Offer good training/invest in employees*, *Opportunity for creativity* and *Would use my degree skills*, which (as shown in section 2.3) have been more frequently associated with women than men. The latter is particularly interesting, implying that this may be a bigger barrier to applications to the Firm from female students as a whole (than males), more of whom are on arts courses (perceived by some as less relevant to the work the Firm does).

On the other hand, several of the ‘work values’ frequently found in the literature to be more important to females (see ‘Literature Review’) are *not* seen here (figure 4.2), namely:

- ‘is respected by other people’, which might be expected to be related to *Kudos* and the constructs related to cv building
- ‘permits working independently’ (*Freedom/control over own work*)
- ‘balanced life’ (*Able to have life outside work*)
- ‘moral congruence’, which is more apparent in the list of constructs favoured more by males, i.e. *Socially responsible*

The other construct that is perhaps surprising, in being employed more often by males, is *Interacting with people*, arguably this might be expected to be part of the same ‘relationship’ theme that is associated more with females. Investigating this apparent anomaly through the interview transcripts reveals that men may view interaction with people as providing an additional challenge in the workplace (perhaps an aspiration to ‘management’) and that it is important to them (partly) for that reason. For example, one interviewee saw the issue as linked to the “importance of leadership, earning people’s respect” and another felt that “it goes back to dealing with different situations, people are different, something like an investment you could almost bring it down to just numbers whereas with people you have to take other things in to consideration”. Other constructs appearing (here) more frequently for males are consistent with previous studies, in particular those related to salary, job security and advancement (see discussion on the work values literature in Chapter 2).

The ‘qualitative’ analysis of sex differences suggests that male and female interviewees might see different benefits from some of the organisational attributes. For example, on the leading construct of *Can try variety of jobs* the benefits envisaged by the males focused on skills and experience building, in essence on increased marketability, whereas for the females there was a strong sense of valuing the ability to try different areas of work as an aid to discovering their desired career paths:

“I want to be able to move around and learn different sides of the company. I want to become a well-rounded person” (male interviewee)

“Gain a big, wide business knowledge” (male interviewee)

“...a lot of opportunity to move around between different sorts of job...because obviously at this stage I don’t really know what job I want to do, not down to the details” (female interviewee)

“...gives me the opportunity to find out what I’d like to do versus being trained for a specific job” (female interviewee)

This is consistent with the themes raised already, in the literature review (Chapter 2), suggesting that women have less, or take longer to develop, concrete ideas about their careers than men.

The emphasis placed by the males on skills building is also seen, to a greater extent than for the females, in the interviewees’ descriptions around the constructs *Variety in job (day to day)* and *Offer good training/invest in employees*. In the former, both sexes talk about the need for variety to guard against boredom, but the males also talk about the benefits of the “*constant learning curve*” and “*learning new skills*”. As might be expected, these types of comments are also to the fore in the discussions on training; for the females though, there appears to be an additional meaning ascribed to training, related to a sense of feeling valued:

“it makes people themselves feel quite important as well” (female interviewee)

“it reflects in many ways a much less selfish attitude on the companies part because they are actually willing to invest in you” (female interviewee)

“training shows that they value you and you are worth investing in ... and makes you feel wanted as well” (female interviewee)

There is a similar differential observable around the construct *Small and personal*. The importance of this characteristic to the males appears to be related to a desire for themselves and their work to be noticed, not to be in an organisation that is so large that they are anonymous and no different to anyone else.

“.... large and faceless, not standing out in an organisation” (male interviewee)

“[in a very large company] you could go to sleep on the job and they wouldn’t notice, there is not a direct correlation between what you do and the company’s success” (male interviewee)

The female interviewees’ discussions around size of organisation, on the other hand, are more concerned with the idea of a smaller organisation providing a feeling of warmth and personal connection:

“I have this idea that Penguin is a little friendly place It would probably make me feel more valued ...” (female interviewee)

“I feel you get more personal treatment if you’ve got a smaller company ... easier to get to know everyone ...” (female interviewee)

The benefits the females discussed, of having *Common ground with colleagues*, also communicated a sense of personal connection, a social element almost. They talked about it making the “*day to day working environment more fun, more enjoyable*” and “*getting on well as friends and in a team*”. The sentiments expressed by the males were consistent with these, but there was a greater tendency for them to look at the issue from the negative side, i.e. the consequences of *not* having common ground with colleagues. The language used in these descriptions was surprisingly emotive, they talked about fears of feeling “*strange or alienated*”, “*isolated*” and “*cold*”.

A nuance of different emotional strengths was seen also in relation to the construct *Able to have a life outside work*, where the comments from some of the female interviewees appeared to contain an element of outrage, not picked up in the interviews with the males:

“I object to it being expected” (female interviewee)

“I went to a McKinsey presentation last night and they had a ridiculous pamphlet which showed you a typical day in the working life of one of their employees, which did actually have the famous words ‘grab lunch – 15 minutes’ and ‘leave work at 10 o’clock’” (female interviewee)

“From all I’ve ever heard of Goldman Sachs, they work you so hard that you have a heart attack within 2 or 3 years” (female interviewee)

“These big companies don’t have as much respect My friend was coming back for New Year once and they phoned him on the train and said you’ve got to come back” (female interviewee)

It is possible that this slightly different attitude on the part of the female interviewees would make them less likely to compromise on this issue. Some of the males, on the other hand, showed signs of a willingness to trade this balance factor off against different benefits. For example, one of them said he would “*be willing to be self sacrificial working for companies like that, if I felt that was what was needed to get the most from a potentially short career span*” and another commented that “*if you really like the job then you may not have a need for a social life*”.

4.5 Short-list of Constructs

The results of the short-listing process are shown in the table below (figure 4.4) – the relationship of the short-listing criteria to each of the constructs is indicated.

Constructs	Top 10 Overall	Top 10 for Females	Top 10 for Males	Qualitative Differences	Quantitative Differences	
					More for Females	More for Males
1. Can try variety of jobs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2. Able to have a life outside work	✓	✓	✓	✓		
3. International travel	✓	✓	✓			
4. Kudos	✓	✓	✓			
5. Meritocracy	✓		✓			✓
6. High salary	✓	✓				
7. Variety within job	✓	✓	✓	✓		
8. Dynamic	✓		✓			✓
9. Freedom /control over own work	✓		✓			
10. Opportunity for creativity	✓	✓			✓	
11. Care about employees		✓			✓	
12. Small and personal		✓		✓	✓	
13. Offer good training		✓		✓	✓	
14. Offer opportunities for long term career progression			✓			✓
15. Can work overseas			✓			✓
16. Having common ground with colleagues				✓		
17. Not demanding/stressful					✓	
18. Would use my degree skills					✓	
19. Internationally diverse (culture)					✓	
20. Friendly and informal					✓	
21. Job security						✓
22. Can see impact/result of my work						✓
23. Interacting with people						✓
24. Socially responsible						✓
25. Feel part of bigger picture/know where fit in						✓
26. Excellent salary prospects						✓

Figure 4.4 Short-listing of Common Constructs

The shaded portion of the table indicates the twenty constructs that were selected for the short-list. It was not possible (within the restriction of twenty) to include all those constructs where a quantitative difference was found between the sexes. It was decided, therefore, to give primacy to those constructs indicated as being more important to females – on the basis that the attraction of more females was at the heart of the research question.

5 CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF PROJECT ONE

5.1 Research Design

The use of Rep Grid worked well and was concluded to have been a good choice of method. There was a clear sense, as the interviewer observing the interviewees' reactions to the process, that the Rep Grid process was enabling them to access thoughts that would have been difficult to surface in a 'plain' interview. For example, the interviewees often were moved to comment on their answers: e.g., "*God, I'm sounding really shallow, aren't I?*". From the interviewer's perspective, the highly structured nature of Rep Grid - in particular, the repetition - requires a lot of discipline, particularly once a large number of interviews have been conducted (e.g. to resist the temptation to deviate in to an unstructured discussion). This repetition did not appear to be a problem for the interviewees (see section 3.2), although in a couple of cases the use of the laddering technique (in addition) seemed to become a little irritating. On balance, however, it was felt worthwhile including the laddering as it produced several new constructs in most of the interviews (e.g. see figure 3.2).

The use of a co-interviewer met its intended objectives (see section 3.6). In particular, having an additional guard against loss of objectivity was a great advantage. In terms of the mechanics of working together, it was found to be very important to talk to each other on every interviewing day, to review the interviews. As suggested in section 3.6 above, if the project were repeated, the author would sit in on the co-interviewer's first interviewing day, as well as *vice versa*. The major disadvantage of the co-interviewer approach was that the author was one step removed from the interview data for those interviews conducted by the co-interviewer (a large part of the issue here is the author's personal preference to be close to her data). In part, however, this is the necessary trade-off for the advantages outlined above.

Whilst there were no precedents in the literature, the (cross grid) analysis approach taken was felt to work well. The GridLab software package was easy to use and provided all the data needed. In the process, however, it also produced a large amount of data analysis that was not pertinent to the cross-grid analysis, i.e. that typically used to analyse individual grids, and it would have been easy to become absorbed in a 'fishing trip' into these additional data.

Finally, there are a number of concerns related to the research of sex differences that need to be acknowledged; most pertinent to the discussion of the research design is that of intervening variables (see sections 5.2 and 5.3 below for discussion of others). Lefkowitz (1994) explains the issue as follows: "the apparent differences between men and women in attitudes, values, preferences, and other reactions to their respective work worlds may be largely spurious effects of other variables that co-vary with sex, thus confounding the comparisons". This has been described as the "most pervasive problem in sex-related research" (Jacklin, 1983, p98). The issue of sex differentiation across university course types (i.e. arts and science) was considered to represent the greatest risk of this type in the present research. It is felt that the project design managed this

risk down to a reasonable level, by having (in the sample) an equal spread of the sexes across the most sex-differentiated university courses.

5.2 Results

Project One met its stated objective to identify which organisational attributes are used by undergraduates (specifically, those targeted by the Firm) to differentiate between potential employers in their decisions about job applications. The identification of a large number of constructs (eighty four) as pertinent to organisational choice, as compared to the shorter lists of variables usually reported in work values studies (see, for example, the widely leveraged work by Manhardt (1972)), appears to be a new finding. By definition, this results in the contribution of a large number of variables apparently hitherto unconsidered. In particular, there are a number of variables (constructs) identified here as being particularly important to respondents, that have not been found in the work values literature: *'would offer the opportunity for international travel'*, *'would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad'*, *'would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues'* and *'would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles'*. Also, no direct equivalents for the constructs *'employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common'*, *'really care about their employees as individuals'*, *'have a friendly, informal culture'* and *'offer a relatively stress-free working environment'* have been found in the literature. The approach in this study of focussing strictly at the organisational, rather than job, level has contributed a different perspective to work values, bringing in its wake organisational constructs such as those listed above. Schwab, Rynes *et al* (1987, p131) comment that "most researchers have not made any serious attempts to differentiate between [job and organisational] constructs".

The results of Project One suggest that there are differences between male and female undergraduates in the organisational attributes employed in differentiating between potential employers. Strictly speaking, the results do not directly show the (relative) importance (or valence) placed on these attributes by the undergraduates (although they reflect this) – this was to be determined in Project Two, in which any sex differences would also be analysed for *statistical* significance. In addition, this research has identified (*via* the qualitative analysis of differences) a new area for consideration in the area of work values – namely, that men and women may ascribe different benefits to organisational attributes. This may contribute to the understanding of the differences between men and women in their preferences and their mental models.

It is important to acknowledge here that the findings show considerable *similarities* between males and females, overall, as well as differences. A number of writers (including Grady, 1981; Lefkowitz, 1994; Jacklin, 1983; Wallston & Grady, 1985) have raised concerns about the tendency for researchers to 'reject' findings of no sex difference. On the other hand, however, as Deaux (1984, p113) points out, "looking around, one can surely see evidence of different patterns of behaviour by women and men". In the present research, as consistently different behaviour has been observed between men and women in the rate at which they make job applications to the Firm, it

is suggested that it is valid to look for possible sex differences in other (potentially related) variables.

The lack of any findings directly suggesting a deficit of self-confidence in the female interviewees was surprising. It had been hypothesised in the literature review on sex differences (section 2.2), that female undergraduates might be deterred from applying to some organisations because of the lack of self-confidence that has been widely reported in the psychology literature as affecting women, and college-aged girls in particular. In the above analysis on sex differences in the Project One data (section 4.4), there are no indications in the constructs 'favoured' by the women of issues related to self-confidence. It was thought possible that the construct *Not demanding/stressful* might be linked to some aspect of self-confidence, for example a fear of not being able to cope in a highly demanding environment; investigation of the interview transcripts, however, suggested this not to be the case. The underlying issue appeared, rather, more likely to be related to quality of working life, as one (female) interviewee explained: "[I] would be under more pressure [at this organisation and] it might not be as enjoyable for that reason". In fact, for the group as a whole, the results might suggest high levels of confidence, in the construct, *Very competitive entry, would feel special having been chosen*, for example. Neither was any suggestion of lack of self-confidence picked up by either interviewer in the interview discussions; it is recognised, however, that the sample represents an 'elite' group.

Another rather surprising finding was the 'top' position in the short-list for the construct *Can try variety of jobs*. In addition, this construct was found to be linked for the female interviewees to the phenomenon, covered in the literature review (section 2.2), of women being less clear about, or taking longer to clarify, their career direction. This constitutes new evidence for the different approaches that men and women take to their careers – characterised by Daniels' (1979) concept of 'dream vs. drift'. The differential benefit seen by the men (also in regard to training) of increased (personal) marketability may be related to the finding (see figure 4.3) that they appear to be more concerned with job security (Smithson & Lewis, 2000).

In the results, the most explicit reference to sex/gender is the construct *Male dominated*. Interestingly, this appears relatively low down on the list of common constructs - this is perhaps not surprising given the life-stage of the interviewees. As Gherardi (1995, p93) observes "in the course of their professional careers and lifecycle men and women change their perception of gender. Those younger in age and with less professional experience are like children who find enjoyment in each other's company. They have been brought up to obey the same rules. Competition arises later as a claim for equality in the distribution of resources (the family's assets, for example)". Smithson and Lewis (2000) found that younger workers expect that companies will act fairly (consistent with 'equal opportunities'); or perhaps young women just "assume that they will be the exception" (with regard to inequality) (Walter, 1998; see also Wood, 2001). It seems that, at a conscious level, then, the interviewees were to some extent 'gender blind'. It is interesting to note that Spence and Sawin's (1991) attempts to question 'articulate and perceptive' men and women about their conceptions of masculinity and femininity (on more general life topics) were often met with responses such as "don't know", "don't understand", "never thought about it" and even with some hostility.

On the other hand, Gherardi (1995, p11) claims that “it is a common experience on entering an organisation for the first time – as a user, consultant or researcher - to be struck by the pervasively masculine or pervasively feminine atmosphere ...”. Regardless of their ability to articulate it, or associate it with gender, there seem to be a number of ways in which a sense of gender (related to an organisation) might be communicated to potential recruits. A schema developed by Rutherford (2001) for researching gendered organisational culture serves as an illustration. She identifies the following as potentially instrumental: background of organisation (e.g. history, employee profile); physical layout and artefacts (e.g. buildings, décor); management style; informal socialising (e.g. drinking, sports); sexuality (e.g. sexualised cultures); language and communication (e.g. metaphors, humour); time management (e.g. long hours); work ideology (e.g. public/private lives); and gender awareness (e.g. equal opportunities). Even the very first stages of an undergraduate’s direct contact with an organisation (i.e. prior to submitting an application) – such as recruitment brochures, careers fairs and employer presentations - can include encounters with several of the above factors.

It is interesting to note, therefore, that (despite the lack of explicit data related to sex/gender in the Project One results) a strong *implicit* sense of a gendered organisation calls out from the ‘sex differences’ data above. Specifically, it is argued that this can be seen in the presence of a significant number of constructs (in the list of those employed more by female interviewees), which are arguably ‘feminine’ in nature: the women expressed a concern about whether organisations are ‘small and personal’, care about them as individuals and are ‘friendly and informal’. These preferences are consistent with values that are widely associated with female gender identity, as Gilligan (1982) explains, “femininity is defined through attachment”. They can also be seen to be consistent with ‘feminine’ organisational characteristics, as identified by Maier (1999), such as: concern for (and attention to) people; informal approach to human relations; growth and development (of people); collaborative orientation to others; and core values of egalitarianism, community, collaboration, diversity, partnership, intimacy and caring (see also section 2.2 above). What is perhaps seen here then is a rejection by these young women of the traditional (and, thereby, ‘masculine’) organisation. In which case, there appears to be something of a paradox revealed by the results between the greater importance placed by the females on organisational attributes that could be described as feminine in nature and the general lack of preference for (or recognition of) explicitly ‘gendered’ organisations.

5.3 Implications for the Firm

The results of Project One delivered a significant improvement to the Firm’s annual survey of its recruitment markets. This survey instrument includes a battery of ‘employer characteristics’ (which the survey respondents are asked to rate), which were internally (and therefore ‘sub-optimally’) generated; the Project One short-list provided a robust replacement for this. A comparison of the two lists of organisational attributes – those used in the Firm’s survey and those in the short-list of common constructs (above) - was conducted, to review similarities in meaning. It revealed that ten of the

twenty-six characteristics in the Firm's survey had no equivalent on the short-list and were therefore redundant, and that the meanings inherent in fourteen of the twenty short-listed common constructs were not represented in any way on the Firm's survey list, implying that much important data have been missed by the survey in the past. (Note: the analysis was not restricted to 'one-to-one' relationships).

Finally, a note needs to be made about size of (practical) effect. As Wallston and Grady (1985, p25) point out, "any size difference may be of some interest theoretically [but] when we are interested in the implications of our theories, we must take the practical significance into account"; this is arguably of particular importance where (as in present research) a contribution to practice is one of the objectives. In addition, there is a need to be cognizant of the potential to criticise 'rating and ranking studies' for being "too abstract – they typically do not provide a context for respondents to use in assessing attribute importance" (Barber, 1998, p99). These issues regarding 'practical effect' were addressed in the design of Project Two, for example, through the collection of data on undergraduates job application intentions.

PART II: PROJECT TWO

6 CHAPTER SIX: PROJECT TWO RESEARCH DESIGN

6.1 Introduction

As detailed in section 1.1.5 above ('The Research Question and Project Structure'), the main objectives of Project Two were: to explore (further) sex differences in the importance attached to the organisational attributes identified and short-listed in Project One; to identify the perceptions of the Firm against these attributes (and any sex differences therein); and to identify the impact of the above on female undergraduates' intentions to apply to the Firm. These objectives can be seen to mirror the main elements of Vroom's attractiveness model (figure 6.1) - see section 2.1 for a discussion of the model in relation to organisational choice - this model was chosen to guide the analysis in Project Two, in particular the exploration of sex differences.

$$A_j = f \sum_{k=1}^n I_{jk} V_k$$

A = attractiveness (of j)

j = choice (or attainment) of organisation

k = organisational attribute (n = the number of attributes)

I = instrumentality of j for the attainment of outcome k

V = valence of outcome k

Figure 6.1 Vroom's Attractiveness Model (adapted from Mitchell & Beach, 1977, p206)

In this research study, A is defined as the attractiveness of a given organisation (j) as an employer, with the ' j ' of interest being the Firm, and k being a given organisational attribute from the short-list identified in Project One ($n=20$). V was operationalised as the importance of a given attribute (to the undergraduate) and I as the extent to which that attribute is associated (by the undergraduate) with a given organisation (e.g. the Firm). It was decided to use the model to predict 'likelihood to apply' (to a given organisation for a job), rather than a subjective measure (by the undergraduate) of organisational attractiveness. This ensured a direct response to the research question (see 1.1.5) and a greater contribution to practice, by focusing more on behaviour than on attitude alone.

Much thought was also given to which of Vroom's models should be used – the alternative (to the attractiveness model) being the 'motivation model' (see figure 2.1 in section 2.1 above). As stated in the literature review above, the previous studies that have examined the expectancy piece (E) of the motivation model for job application decisions have found little evidence of its effect. There was also no suggestion from the

conduct and findings of Project One that ‘expectancy’ might play a major role in the decision process of the undergraduates interviewed. So, given the concern at the time of designing Project Two about the length of the questionnaire affecting response rates (see section 6.5 below), it was decided to use the attractiveness (rather than the motivation) model and thereby preclude the investigation of ‘E’ (see also ‘Potential Areas for Further Research’ above).

A further objective of Project Two (see 1.1.5 above) was to gather data to support the exploration, in Project Three, of the actions that the Firm might take to increase the number of applications received from female undergraduates. Whilst the final, detailed design of Project Three was not to be undertaken until the outcomes of Project Two were known, it was decided (at this stage) that, given the findings of the literature review (see section 2.4), its focus would be on undergraduates’ interpersonal interaction with the Firm’s employees (specifically, with UAT members). So, it was decided to gather data (as part of Project Two) to explore the relationships between internal, external and construed organisational images, per figure 6.2 below (specified further from figure 2.7 above). The n organisational attributes (the short-list from Project One) were used (collectively) to define (and operationalise) ‘image’ in each case, allowing comparisons to be made between the three types.

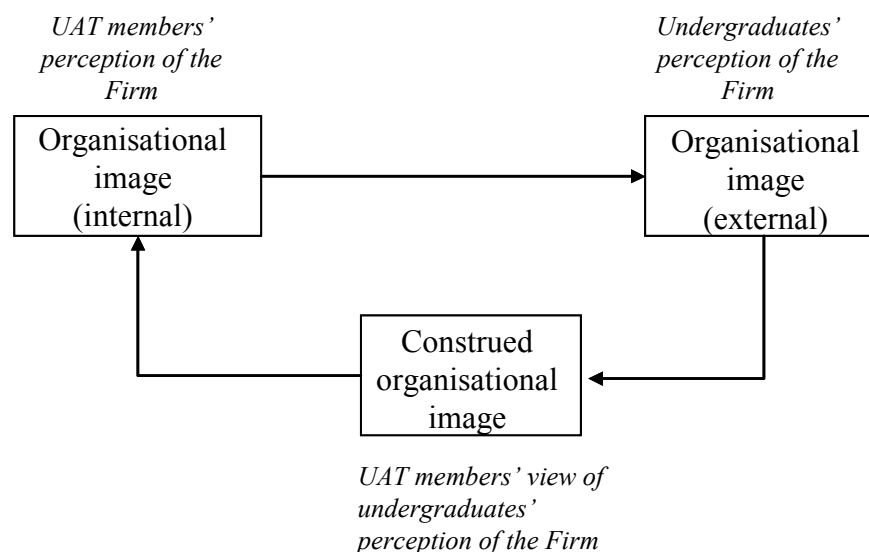


Figure 6.2 Internal, External and Construed Organisational Images (adapted from Dukerich and Carter, 2000, p104)

It should be noted here that internal organisational image (see figure 6.2) is different from, and is not an attempt to operationalise, identity (see section 2.5) – the n organisational attributes not having been derived for this purpose (see Davies, Chun *et al*, 2001, for a discussion of the challenges of operationalising identity. It should also be

noted that the use of the n organisational attributes to ‘define’ internal organisational image is itself sub-optimal as the attributes were derived from undergraduates’ (and not UAT members’) constructions.

6.2 Propositions

Based on the findings of Project One (chapter 4), the literature review (chapter 2) and the objectives of Project Two (section 6.1), a number of propositions were developed for Project Two, and these formed the foundation of the research design for Project Two.

The first proposition followed from Vroom’s attractiveness model (figure 6.1) as applied above (see section 6.1).

Proposition One (P1): attractiveness scores [A] for the Firm, and the other organisations researched, will be positively correlated with likelihood to apply (for a job)

Secondly, consistent with the findings of Project One, it was proposed that some attributes would be more important to female respondents than to males, in their selection of potential employers, and *vice versa*. Further, it was proposed that those attributes which it is suggested are consistent with feminine organisational characteristics (see section 2.2) would be more important to the female respondents, specifically: ‘have a friendly, informal culture’, ‘really care about their employees as individuals’, and ‘would require you to work standard working hours only’.

Proposition Two (P2): some organisational attributes [k] will be more important [V] to the female respondents than to the male, and vice versa, with those attributes consistent with feminine organisational characteristics being more important to the female respondents

The findings of Project One suggested that male and female interviewees might see different benefits from some of the organisational attributes (see section 4.2. above). It was decided to use a factor analysis to explore this finding further, with the proposition being that different factors would be identified for males and females (based on their ratings of the importance of the attributes). Stewart (1981), in his paper on the “application and misapplication of factor analysis in marketing research”, stresses the value of using factor analysis to “identify the important *qualitative* distinctions in the data” (emphasis added), i.e. rather than a focus solely on the quantitative. He highlights the potentially different uses of language by different groups such as men and women and the fact that this can lead to differences in factors between such groups. (Note: he also stresses that the suspicion of such differences between ‘users’ and ‘non-users’ of a product – approximating in this study to those likely and not to apply to the Firm – is *not* generally warranted).

Proposition Three (P3): different factors will be identified (regarding the importance of attributes) for the male and female respondents

As mentioned in the literature review (section 2.4), images of an organisation have been found to differ across different subject groups. McGuire (1976) suggests that information processing in individual image formation is divided into the following phases (in relationship to stimuli): exposure, attention, comprehension, acceptance, and retention. The processing during the comprehension and acceptance phases is a function of an individual's existing conceptual models (on the pertinent subject matter). In the current instance, it is suggested here that such a conceptual model (i.e. regarding potential employers) is likely to be impacted by the organisational attributes favoured (or not) in an employer – for example, this may generate an element of 'selective perception' (Breaugh, 1992, p96). "How one experiences his [sic] environment is a quite *active* process: a person selectively notices different aspects of his environment;and he evaluates what he is experiencing in terms of his own needs and values" [*italics in the original*] (Porter *et al*, 1975, p48). Thus, if these attributes are different for male and female respondents (see P2) they may develop different images of the Firm (even when they are exposed to the same stimuli). Feather (1987, p41) agrees that "if some values [which influence assessment of valences] are more important for women than for men and vice versa, then there should be differences between men and women in the way they perceive or appraise situations once the relevant values have been aroused or engaged". Given this, and the fact that men and women respond differently to the Firm in their application behaviour, it was proposed that male and female respondents would hold different images of the Firm.

Proposition Four (P4): male and female respondents will have different perceptions of the Firm [I], and of the other organisations researched

Referring to P2 and P4 above, it was proposed that if sex differences existed in each of *V* and *I* (see figure 6.1) then males and females would also differ in the attributes that most influence their likelihood to apply to the Firm.

Proposition Five (P5): there will be differences between the male and female respondents in the attributes [k] that most influence their likelihood to apply to the Firm

With regard to the attributes that most influence female respondents' likelihood to apply to the Firm (see P5) - and with reference to the attractiveness model (figure 6.1) - it was proposed that differences in the valence [*V*] and/or instrumentality [*I*] of these attributes would exist between those females who are and who are not likely to apply to the Firm.

Proposition Six (P6): there will be differences between the females who are and are not likely to apply to the Firm on the valence [V] and/or instrumentality [I] of key attributes

Turning next to consider the UAT members and the 'system' represented in figure 6.2 above, it is interesting to question whether, if differences exist between male and female *undergraduates* in their perceptions of the Firm (P4), there are likely to be differences in the internal images held of the Firm by male and female *UAT members*. This understanding could be important in developing effective action plans (in Project Three). The concept of socialization (Jablin, 2001; Schneider *et al*, 1995; Van Maanen, 1976; Cable & Parsons, 2001) is key here - the effects of socialization would suggest

that employees would develop similar views over time, as expressed in proposition seven.

Proposition Seven (P7): female and male UAT members will hold the same 'internal images' of the Firm

Given the discussion in the literature review (section 2.5 above) about the increasing permeability of the boundary between the inside and outside of organisations, and Kennedy's (1977) finding that employees and external groups had very similar perceptions of a company, it was proposed that the internal and external images of the Firm (see figure 6.2) would be the same.

Proposition Eight (P8): the perceptions of the Firm against each of the (n) attributes will be the same for the undergraduate respondents and UAT members

As shown in Dowling's model of creating corporate images (figure 2.6 above), there will be a variety of inputs that impact both UAT members' and undergraduates' perceptions of the Firm (internal and external images in figure 6.2), so it is important to recognise that the process illustrated in figure 6.2 is not a 'closed system'. This means that even if P8 is supported it is still possible for there to be differences between the external and construed images and between the construed and internal images. It was important to understand whether such differences existed as an input to action planning in Project Three. For example, as discussed in the literature review (section 2.5), it seems likely that the construed image will be different from the external image as the former is seen through a 'lens' of identity. If they are different, however, inappropriate remedial action might be taken by UAT members. Consequently, the research design incorporated the gathering of data against all three 'images' (note: no guidance was found in the literature on this point: no studies were found that have operationalised these three variables together).

6.3 Methodology

At its most fundamental, of course, one of the key drivers for the selection of methodology must be, "what kind of question is being asked?" (Bouma & Atkinson, 1999, p133). It can be seen from the propositions above, that the objectives of the Project Two research were concerned, largely, with quantification. In terms of efficiency, the case for a survey methodology for meeting these objectives is strong – surveys are favoured by 'who', 'what' and 'how many' questions (Yin, 1994, p6). As a further motivation for adopting a survey approach, the Firm's (i.e. the sponsor's) expectations for the research were particularly pressing when Project Two was being conceived, specifically the need to present quantitative data to 'confirm' the findings from Project One (this being seen as a necessary element of any internal business case for investment to effect change). The consideration of methodology for Project Two began, therefore, with a critical review of surveys.

6.3.1 Survey

The type of highly structured design suggested by the objectives of Project Two is very amenable to a survey approach (assumed in this discussion to be self-administered, as lack of resources would preclude any other approach). As already mentioned, a survey is also an efficient route – being relatively cheap and quick, and can be convenient to administer (Neuman, 2000, p271). The quantitative nature of (most) surveys also makes them highly amenable to analysis by computer – another time saver. There is no doubting the attraction of all these qualities to the part-time student! Although, it should also be noted that the success of a survey is usually the function of considerable up-front investment of time and effort in design – indeed, lack of preparation is particularly high risk with a survey approach as there are usually few ‘second chances’. As implied above, a survey approach also has the advantage of delivering what the Firm expected: large samples and ‘scientific’ output, for example through the possibilities it affords to cover a wide geographical range of respondents (Neuman, 2000, p271) - in this case, a large number of universities.

There are also substantial potential *disadvantages* to survey research. For example, refusals (to complete the survey) can cause bias in the sample. Even for those surveys returned, there is no guarantee that these will have been completed by the people to whom they were sent (Neuman, 2000, p272). Certainly, there is scope for lack of truthfulness (or spontaneity) in the responses: usually, respondents can read ahead through the survey before starting to complete it; they have plenty of opportunity (if so motivated) to create ‘socially desirable’ answers. If the survey is long, tedium may cause them to complete later questions without much thought (or even at random) (Brown, 1992; Bryman, 1989, p43). They may also simply misunderstand the researcher’s intentions or definitions or the language and terminology used, as it will not be the respondent’s own (Goffin, 1994; Huff, 1990, p306). These particular disadvantages have to be weighed against the advantage that (self-completion) surveys afford of negating interviewer bias, through anonymity and the absence of an interviewer. The consequent need for simple and unambiguous questions can also significantly detract from the richness of the data (Brown, 1992; Bryman, 1989, p51). These are all issues that can be addressed (to some degree) through the detailed design of the research (see section 6.5).

As stated above in the discussion on the research design for Project One (Chapter 3), a key argument against the survey approach centres on its validity: the results might look impressive, but do they actually represent what they purport to represent? The results of a survey might claim to describe respondents’ perceptions of the Firm, but arguably all they actually tell us is the extent to which respondents agree with the researcher’s own descriptors for the firm (as designing the survey requires judgements to be made about what is important and what is not) (Huff, 1990, p308). (There is also a concern that “the research itself can shape attitudes – when respondents are presented with the attributes of an image object, they start to think about them” (van Riel, 1992, p88)). In Project Two, however, the attributes to be used had been identified through a ‘grounded’ process (in Project One), rather than from the researcher *per se* (see section 6.8 below for a more detailed discussion on reliability and validity).

6.3.2 Multiple Methods

As repertory grid (the main method employed in Project One) is considered to be a ‘qualitative’ method (Cassell & Symon, 1994; Marsden & Littler, 1998), it was necessary, in considering the use of a survey approach in Project Two, to review the implications of adopting a multiple methods approach – and this discussion (on multiple methods) can be found in section 1.3.2 above.

It is suggested that the proposal to adopt a *quantitative* method in Project Two is a form of triangulation of methods, and as such improved the quality of the research by virtue of increased validity and reliability (Gill & Johnson, 1997, p160). It is recognised, however, that it was only a basic form of triangulation as the quantification in Project Two would not produce directly “comparable data” with those in Project One (Jick, 1979), rather, the data from Project Two would build on and extend that from Project One.

The design of this research can be likened to design ‘3’ in figure 3.1 below: Project One constituted a (primarily) qualitative, exploratory study, which led to the development of an (quantitative) instrument in Project Two. To complete the picture (although it was not yet confirmed), the selection of method for Project Three was expected to be qualitative, in order (as suggested in the figure) to deepen and test the findings of Project Two (albeit probably with just UAT members).

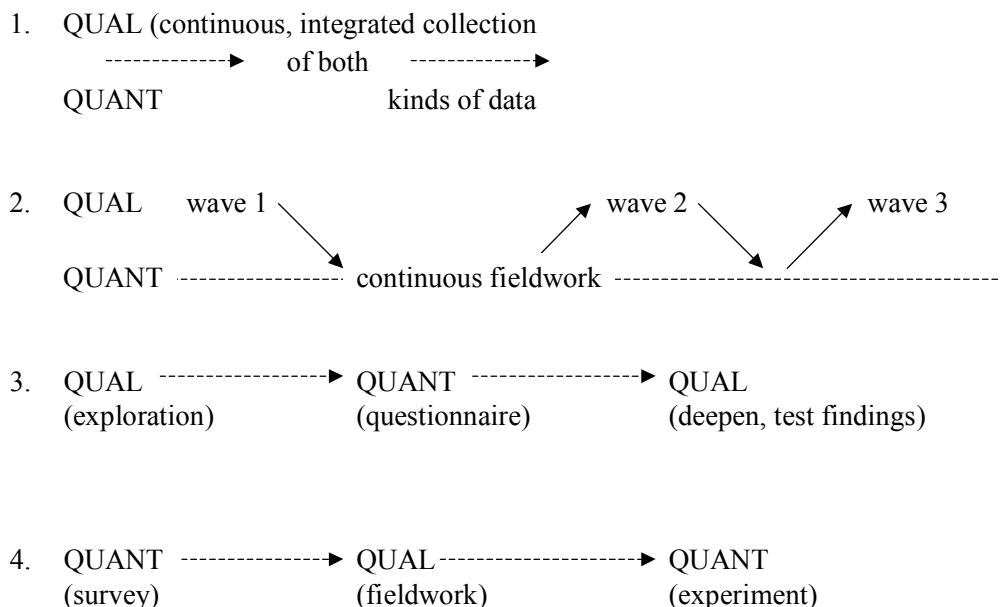


Figure 6.3 Illustrative Designs Linking Qualitative and Quantitative Data (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p42)

In conclusion, it was decided to employ two surveys in Project Two: the first to an *external* audience of final year undergraduates and the second to an *internal* audience of UAT members.

6.4 Sample

6.4.1 External Survey

“The first step in the design of a sample is to define as closely as possible the population to be covered by the enquiry” (Chisnall, 1997, p108). The target population for the external survey was defined as final year undergraduates (see Appendix B for list of universities included), looking to start their careers shortly after graduating (i.e. actively looking at potential employers during their final year). Third-party commercial research data (obtained by the Firm) suggest that the number of final year students planning to start work shortly after they graduate is surprisingly small – perhaps as few as 27% for those graduating in 2001. Given this small number, it was felt that a plain list of all final year undergraduates (assuming such a list could be obtained, which was unlikely given data protection requirements) would not be the best approach to accessing this population. Instead, it was decided that university careers services would offer the best ‘window’ on to the target population, as they deal with students who are actively looking for a job. The third-party research reported that 74% of all students have used their university careers service at least once by the middle of their final year, suggesting that the relatively small number actively looking for jobs are likely to be users.

Sampling theory is very clear that if a sample is to be representative of a population, it needs to be (statistically) random in nature – that is, “it should be so drawn that every member of that population has a specified non-zero [usually equal] probability of being included in the sample” (Oppenheim, 1992, p39). The “mathematics of probability” (and the range of associated statistical techniques) can only be applied with true legitimacy to results from a random (or ‘probability’) sample (Chisnall, 1997, p112). There are a number of different types of random sample, those most commonly used include (Black, 1999, p118):

- Simple Random: random sample from whole population, e.g. using random number tables, (the ‘ideal’)
- Stratified Random: random samples taken from identifiable groups (strata) making up the population, thus ensuring that specific groups are represented (even proportionately)
- Cluster: random samples of identified smaller groups - clusters of subjects, for example, by institution or location – thereby enabling random selection even when no single list of population members exists
- Stage: combination of cluster and random or stratified sampling, a good choice when lists are very localized and would be difficult to combine

The starting point for all these approaches is the development of a sampling frame, i.e. whatever is being used to identify the elements in the population. Examples of sampling frames (dependent on the population of interest) might include voting registers,

membership lists and school enrolment records. “Such lists and records will always contain mistakes” (Schofield, 1996, p28), e.g. the problems of ‘over-registration’ (where the sampling frame contains more members than actually exist) and ‘under-registration’ (where some population members are missing) (Black, 1999, p120). These mistakes will be a source of bias in the survey results and attempts should, therefore, be made to minimise them.

No ready-made sampling frame existed for the population of interest for this external survey. As mentioned above, it was decided that campus careers services would be the most likely source of such a list. Exploratory discussions were held with the careers officers at six of the largest universities to determine (a) whether such population lists existed and (b) whether it would be possible to get access to them. It transpired that the careers services did not hold complete lists of all those in the university actively job-seeking (not surprising perhaps), but that some offered an ‘alert’ service, whereby students signed up to receive messages from the careers office with relevant news, such as dates for employer presentations. Some of the careers offices were prepared to consider providing access to these ‘alert’ lists. As sampling frames, it was understood that these lists would be likely to suffer from under-registration: the careers services reported that these ‘alert’ services had high take-up amongst students (although they could not provide a percentage figure), but it was clear that not all students in the target population would have registered with them (indeed it was not possible to be confident that all population members had contact, of any sort, with the careers service). Having discussed the task (of developing a sampling frame) with the careers officers in some detail, however, the conclusion was that these ‘alert’ lists would be the best (and probably only) available solution.

Having identified a potential source for developing a sampling frame, the next steps were to determine the most effective sampling method and the desired sample size. Given that there are nearly fifty universities in the population (see Appendix B), it was quickly concluded that the task of creating one, complete sampling frame for the population was unrealistic with the resources available. Cluster sampling was selected, therefore, as the most appropriate method. The process was designed as follows:

- Random selection of a subset of the total population of universities. The number of universities to be selected was determined from sample size considerations (see below). The aim, however, within these parameters, was to maximise the number of universities included as this would help to reduce the standard error introduced by the clustering approach. “A clustered sample reduces precision and increases the standard error because elements within a cluster tend to be alike” (Gilbert, 1993, p90) – i.e. in this case, there is a chance that students from the same university may have similar characteristics
- As the universities are not of equal size, it was decided that a ‘probability proportionate to size (pps)’ approach should be used; this ensures that “each final sampling unit or student will have an equal probability of being selected” (Neuman, 2000, p212). It was to be achieved by a weighting being applied to each university based on its size (note: the measure used to represent size was that of the published total number of undergraduates at each university, as the number of final year undergraduates was not readily available for all of the universities and it was felt reasonable to assume that the number of final year

students would be approximately equally proportional to the 'total students' number at each university)

- A random number table was then employed in the selection of the universities for the 'short list'
- Once the 'short list' had been selected, the intention was to adopt a random stratified approach to select students from each university's list – in this way, care was taken, in the design, to apply the principle of random sampling "to each stratum in turn" (Oppenheim, 1992, p40). The advantage to a stratified approach is "that one can be sure that specific groups are represented in proportion to their appearance in the population, particularly when subpopulation characteristics are the variables" (Black, 1999, p121) – in this case, ensuring the correct representation of genders (and course type – see section 3.3 above). "Building stratification into a sample design is recommended because it increases precision for very little additional cost" (Gilbert, 1993, p87) – assuming, however, that the universities have data on gender and course type included in their lists.
- Once selected, the intention was that each student would receive a communication from the careers service requesting their participation in the survey – it was hoped that this endorsement would have a beneficial effect on response rates. As an incentive to the universities to participate, it was proposed to include a question about university careers services in the survey – to the design of which the participating universities could have input – and to share with each participant university the results of both their own ratings and those of the group (of universities) as a whole (this proposal had been seen as attractive by those universities that were contacted as part of the exploratory stage of the design).

Whilst the above sampling approach appeared feasible in theory (and based on the exploratory phone conversations), in practice it faltered at an early stage. It quickly transpired that those universities involved in the exploratory phone discussions – perhaps because they were larger (and thereby possibly better funded) than average – were unusual in having student information 'alert' systems. Of the seven universities that were eventually identified (through the above process) as having suitable student lists, only three were willing and able to participate in the survey – and in one case their list was limited in size to just four hundred students. Given the sample size that was sought (and a concern about having so few universities included in the cluster – see above), there was significant concern about pursuing this route. As an alternative, a number of universities offered to position a pile of the surveys in their careers office (with an invitation for students to take and complete one), but this was considered an option of 'last resort' because of concerns (apart from the obvious non-random nature of the sampling) about likely low response rates and the difficulties of investigating the characteristics of non-respondents.

At about this time, the author became aware of a new service, called targetedGRAD, which was being set up by a consortium of university careers services to provide (for a fee) graduate employers with email access to student job seekers. Similar to the alert services described above, students sign up to targetedGRAD to receive information (via email) from potential employers (screened by targetedGRAD to match the student's declared interests). After some investigation, it was concluded that, under the

circumstances, targetedGRAD offered the best way forward for distributing the survey. The targetedGRAD consortium –and the service’s student audience - is made up of twenty-two universities (all on the original target list), thus providing a good representation of the university population: Aston, Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Cardiff, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Imperial, Leeds, LSE (London School of Economics), London (Goldsmiths, King’s, Queen Mary, Royal Holloway, UCL), Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oxford, Sheffield, Southampton, UMIST, and York. It is able to provide information on students’ course type (the Firm does not specify degree type in its acceptance criteria so all degrees were included in the sample) and year of study, but not gender (as this is prohibited by anti-discrimination legislation).

Clearly using the targetedGRAD service would not produce a random sample. The disadvantages of this can easily be inferred from the discussion above as to the importance of random sampling. As Bryman (1989, p113) reports, however, “there is a sense in which much of the discussion of random sampling is redundant, because there is a widespread recognition among organizational researchers that investigations using sample surveys are rarely based on probability samples”. Mitchell (1985) also reports, from his analysis of 126 studies published in the *Academy of Management Journal*, *Journal of Applied Psychology* and *Organizational Behaviour and Human Performance*, that less than 20% of studies used a random sample (see also Eysenck, 1975). One of the key concerns about a non-random sample is the extent to which it can be said to be representative of the population, but “the fact that a random sample is not feasible due to the absence of a sampling frame (or the cost and difficulty involved in constructing one) need not mean that samples with a high level of apparent representativeness cannot be contrived” (Bryman, 1989, p117). Bryman (*ibid*) suggests that a greater sense of generalizability ensues when research is conducted on a wide range of organizations – the targetedGRAD list, with its very wide university representation, offered distinct advantages in this regard. With regard to its detailed characteristics, the targetedGRAD list cannot be taken to reflect the student population exactly (e.g. the gender breakdown is unknown), so it was accepted that a weighting procedure would possibly need to be introduced in to the analysis phase of the project in order to adjust the data accordingly.

With regard to sample size, Neuman (2000, p217) states that the most frequent method used (to determine sample size) is “rule of thumb”, with “practical limitations (e.g. cost)” playing a role. Where (as in the present study) the aim is to compare groups, Black (1999, p136) states that “the prime concern of the researcher is to ensure that cell sample size is as high as can be afforded”. The overriding consideration being to ensure that the sample is sufficiently large for the nature of the analysis required, for example crosstabulations can increase the size requirement quite dramatically if contingency tables containing a large number of variables are required (Bryman, 1989, p111). Ultimately, though, it is important to remember that “a sample’s *accuracy* is more important than its size” (Oppenheim, 1992, p43).

In terms of the size of the ‘list’ to which the survey should be sent (as opposed to the sample achieved), the key factor is likely response rate. No data were found as to likely responses to an Internet-based survey (such as intended here), but de Chernatony (1989)

reports a very wide range of 13% to 84% for postal surveys (which are, similarly, self-complete in design) and Neuman (2000, p268) states that “a response rate of 10 to 50 percent is common for a mail survey”.

The challenges, outlined above, in obtaining an appropriate sampling frame, introduced a pragmatic note in to the deliberations on sample size. Following the guidelines provided by the literature (above), the focus was largely on determining whether the TargetedGRAD service could deliver a sample of sufficient size to accommodate the desired analysis; the following issues were taken in to account in determining the minimum list and sample size required (for the external survey):

- response rate: based on the above, although significant effort was put in to the design of the survey so as to maximise responses (see section 6.5 below), it was felt prudent to rely on a response rate of no more than 15%
- resources (e.g. project management, data handling, associated costs): this was a pressing consideration under the original survey design, because of the concern of the time-consuming nature of managing multiple university relationships, but much less of an issue under the targetedGRAD approach. Also, the data entry was automated (through the website design), so this was not a concern
- cell size: this was taken to be a minimum of 30 (Black, 1999, p136). Key to the analysis was the need to compare genders so, at an absolute minimum, the final sample needed to include 30 males and 30 females (a total of 60, assuming 50/50 sex split in the population). A crosstabulation of gender with application intention was also desired, however, in particular with regard to the Firm. The results of Project One suggested that respondents might be quite polarised in their attitudes to the Firm and it was estimated that 40% of the sample might be present in each of the ‘top two’ and ‘bottom two’ boxes on their ratings of likelihood to apply to the Firm. Of those in the ‘top two’ box, it was estimated that a third would be female (based on current application rates to the Firm), with perhaps an opposite gender split in the ‘bottom two’ box. These estimates led to a conclusion that a minimum sample size of 226 would be required – split equally between males and females. Being unsure as to the gender split in the distribution list for the survey, nor able to assume that response rates would be the same for males and females, however, it was felt prudent to increase this minimum to 300. Ideally, an additional dimension of university would have been added on top of this – i.e. to examine applications by gender by university – however, a sample size of that magnitude was beyond the resources of this project.
- based on the above, the minimum size of the distribution list required for the survey was computed as 2000 (i.e. 300 as 15%)

The timing of the survey was set to be similar to that for Project One (see section 6.7 below) – both for the same reasons as the timing was selected for Project One (i.e. to intercept the students at the optimum stage of their decision making about job applications) and to achieve consistency between the fieldwork for both projects. As mentioned, targetedGRAD was a new venture and clearly this carried some risks for the project, so the mailing of the survey was left as late as possible to avoid getting caught up in any ‘teething problems’ with the service. The total number of students on the targetedGRAD database who met the survey’s criteria (i.e. being in their final year of

study) was 2351 at this stage. It was therefore decided to send the survey to all 2351 (rather than sample the list), the cost of the mailing not being dependent on its size.

Finally, some comments need to be made about non-sampling error. Non-sampling errors can arise through issues such as incomplete sampling frames (discussed above), non-response (“if there is a loss of subjects then one is in danger of having the samples described as ‘volunteers’”, Black, 1999, p132), poor questionnaire design, incomplete or invalid responses, and defective data management (Schofield, 1996, p48; Gilbert, 1993, p70). The latter items are discussed below in sections 6.5 and 6.7.

Non-response can occur in a variety of forms. In this instance, there would be a ‘refusal rate’, those people who decided not to participate in the survey, and a ‘non-completion rate’, those who started *but did not finish* the survey (the Internet-based survey was programmed such as to require all questions to be fully completed before it could be submitted) (Neuman, 2000, p267). “Procedures for dealing with non-response ... have to be established when the research is being planned” (Schofield, 1996, p49); for this survey, a follow-up ‘reminder’ email was planned and sent to the distribution list, at the appropriate time, to re-encourage responses (see ‘Administration’ below) (de Chernatony, 1989; Gilbert, 1993, p110; Chisnall, 1997, p143). In the first instance, however, it is important to try to anticipate likely reasons for refusal and design the survey and process in such a way as to minimize these obstacles (e.g. through piloting and the careful design of the introductory letter) (Gilbert, 1993, p83; Oppenheim, 1992, p106) – these issues are addressed in the following sections. Even when all reasonable actions have been taken to avoid non-response, it is still likely to occur; in order to show that this has no significant impact on external validity it is necessary to provide evidence that the non-response is not related to the research (subject) itself (Black, 1999, p134). In this instance, non-respondents were contacted in order to ascertain the reasons for their not responding – see section 6.7.

6.4.2 Internal Survey

The sampling process for the internal survey was very much simpler. The population was defined as all UAT (University Action Team) members associated with the twenty-two universities represented in the external survey. The total number of people in the population was 1,117; this was felt to be a manageable number in terms of the research process, so there was no need to ‘sample’ the list. A complete sampling frame was also readily available in the form of the (regularly checked and updated) UAT database, which lists all UAT members by university; the database also includes demographic details such as members’ gender and job level.

The timing of the internal survey was designed to coincide with that of the external survey, so that the ‘context’ for responses was the same for both – Ashforth and Mael (1996, p30) note that “perceptions of [organisational identity] are somewhat malleable in the *short-run* as a function of situation-specific cues and motivation”. As with the external survey, a reminder email was sent out towards the end of the fieldwork period to re-encourage responses. Care was also taken with the survey design, and non-

respondents were contacted to determine their reasons for non-response – details are provided in the following sections.

6.5 Questionnaire Design

6.5.1 External Survey

As stated above (section 6.1), the basis of the questionnaire was the short-list of twenty organisational attributes developed in Project One – a sufficiently succinct list to be effective in a survey (Oppenheim, 1992, p51). The questions asked were developed from the propositions (see section 6.2 above) and the maximum number of items to be completed in the questionnaire was limited to 120 (see section 3.9.3) – the final number was 106 – with a target completion time of fifteen minutes or less (Gilbert, 1993, p108).

Given that the results were to be focussed on quantification, closed questions were considered to be most suitable and also met all the needs of the project. Closed questions can be very useful for testing propositions (Oppenheim, 1992, p114), and they have a number of advantages - over open questions – being easy and quick for respondents to answer (particularly important with a ‘mail’ questionnaire (Chisnall, 1997, p141)), allowing more questions to be asked (Oppenheim, 1992, p113), and being easier to manage in terms of data handling and analysis (Neuman, 2000, p262). The disadvantages, of closed questions, include the way in which they force and restrict respondents’ answers (*ibid*), which may irritate respondents (Oppenheim, 1992, p112) (perhaps a particular danger with a well-educated audience such as for this survey) and the ability of mistaken responses (e.g. the wrong answer ‘ticked’ or a question misinterpreted) to slip through undetected (Neuman, 2000, p261). Piloting can go some way towards mitigating these risks – see section 6.6 below.

The survey was sited on the Internet. This was considered the best format to accompany the email approach to prospective respondents and enabled the automation of data entry and management (see section 6.7 below), as well as being a medium with which the target group was likely to be very comfortable. Little research has been found on the use of Internet surveys, but Chisnall (1997, p148) reports on favourable results from one computer-based study that found respondents were more inclined to give ‘frank’ answers “to the computer”. A copy of the survey, in plain text format rather than how it appeared on the website, can be found in Appendix C.

The interview transcripts from Project One were re-consulted in order to develop the attribute descriptions for the questionnaire. As far as possible, an attempt was made to create descriptions that focused on features (e.g. ‘requires you to work standard working hours only’ rather than ‘would be able to have a life outside work’) in order to avoid ‘leading’ questions (Gilbert, 1993, p105; Neuman, 2000, p254). Also, an attempt was made to include only one idea in each attribute statement, so as to avoid asking two questions in one (Gilbert, 1993, p105; Neuman, 2000, p252). In practice, in a small number of cases, the rigid application of these rules had to be waived in order to ensure that the true sense of the construct (i.e. as derived from Project One) was achieved – see ‘Pilots’ below (section 6.6). Finally, whilst best practice suggests that ‘reversed’ (or

negative) statements should be included within a battery of statements such as that employed in the questionnaire (Black, 1999, p229; Bryman, 1989, p65), a detailed examination of the Project One data suggested that the essence of each of the constructs would be best captured as a 'positive' statement and there was considerable concern that the process of 'negating' the statements could alter their meaning.

Given that the attributes were developed from repertory grids, serious consideration was given to the use of bi-polar scales (in the manner of semantic differentials (Neuman, 2000, p189)). The decision was taken not to pursue this, however, because, it was concluded that the addition of a second pole would add very little to the understanding of most of the attributes, and would have the considerable disadvantage of making the questionnaire more cumbersome.

As there was a continued desire for the Firm to remain anonymous in the research process (and it had to be named in the questionnaire), it was necessary to introduce at least one other organisation for the respondents to rate. The inclusion of more than one organisation also introduced some possibility of being able to generalise the results of the survey beyond the specific 'case' of the Firm. One of the potential obstacles to the success of the survey, however, was respondents' lack of recognition of the organisations about which they were asked to provide feedback. As mentioned previously, the Firm has a very high profile, which was confirmed by its being the most frequently mentioned employer by the Project One respondents. It was important that the other organisations in the survey were also high profile (also, Turban and Greening, 1997, found evidence that the attractiveness of employers is linked to familiarity, so it was desirable to minimise any such differential effects across the three organisations included). The two organisations selected – a major media corporation and an investment bank (hereafter referred to as 'the Media Corporation' and 'the Investment Bank') - were both amongst the second most frequently mentioned organisations in Project One, as well as within the top twenty most popular graduate employers named in a commercial third party survey. The two organisations fared rather differently in Project One in terms of their desirability, with the Media Corporation mostly being chosen as one of respondents' top three 'elements' (employers) and the Investment Bank appearing mostly as one of a 'bottom three' (the Firm's appearances were split approximately evenly between the two). Also, it appeared (from the results of the third party survey) that the Media Corporation was more likely to be preferred by female undergraduates and the Investment Bank by males. These aspects of 'contrast' were considered positive additions to the design.

A number of considerations influenced the question order. Care was taken to ensure that the first question (or two) was relatively easy for the respondents to answer – to encourage them to start the questionnaire and to build up their confidence. It was also felt important that the opening questions, in particular, should be of substantial interest to the respondents (comfort on this was based on the assumption that decisions about job applications would be very much to the fore of most undergraduates' minds during this period) (Gilbert, 1993, p108; Chisnall, 1997, p133). The Firm was placed as the first employer to be rated. This was, again, for reasons of familiarity, but also so that the Firm was likely to receive the most attention of the three employer questions from respondents (data about the Firm being more important to the study), given the risk that

boredom and/or tiredness is likely to set in towards the end of most questionnaires (Chisnall, 1997, p141). Potentially sensitive questions – such as job application intentions and gender (sex) - were left to the end in order not to jeopardize the rest of the questionnaire (Gilbert, 1993, p108; Wilson, 1996, p104; Oppenheim, 1992, p109). Other than sex, the demographic data collected (at the end of the questionnaire) included university and course type. These were potential intervening variables, although it was not expected that the sample size would be large enough to undertake any analysis by university. It is possible to conceive of other intervening variables: prior work experience was considered, for example, but it was not felt that this could be readily operationalised in any action plan. Overall, the question order was designed to have its own logic, aided by the use of linking statements (Gilbert, 1993, p108; Neuman, 2000, p251).

The attribute statements themselves were placed in a different (random) order for each question – in order to offset the risk of ‘lazy’ responding and of boredom setting in (van Riel, 1992, p88). The questionnaire had features built-in (through the website design) to manage respondents’ progress through the questions in such a way that all attribute statements (i.e. all elements of a question) had to be completed before the respondent was allowed to move on to the next question (this removed the problem of ‘lost data’ that can increase non-response rates). Also, once a question was completed, and the respondent had moved on to the next question, the website design did not allow the respondent to go back to it. The design ensured that respondents were unable to look ahead to questions (which might cause them to adjust their responses or to decide not to participate) nor to go back and review and/or adjust their previous answers due to exposure to later questions (Neuman, 2000, p265; Chisnall, 1997, p142) - practices that contribute to the problem of common method variance (Bryman, 1989, p129). The clarity of the instructions given for completing the questionnaire was carefully tested in the pilot interviews (Gill & Johnson, 1997, p82; Chisnall, 1997, p147). As almost all the questions were closed in nature and the data entry was automated, it was not felt necessary to introduce coding on to the questionnaire itself (this was an advantage as there is a danger that coding details will be confusing or distracting to respondents).

A Likert scale, rather than ranking, was chosen as the method of ‘scoring’, the interval scale facilitating the delivery of potentially greater statistical power than the non-parametric approaches necessary with ranking (in any event, ranking is problematic with greater than ten items (Oppenheim, 1992, p250)). The Likert scale is (arguably) more intuitive for respondent (and researcher) when dealing with what are essentially attitude scales (Neuman, 2000, p182). Likert scales have also “been shown to have good reliability” (Chisnall, 1997, p197). A seven-point scale was selected. The use of a fine scale has the benefit of increasing reliability, up to a point (Neuman, 2000, p182), and in this instance, where many responses were expected to occur at the positive end of the scale, it provides greater discrimination between responses (Wilson, 1996, p106). Any greater than seven points, however, is testing the limit of the average individual’s ability to discriminate (Black, 1999, p228).

A descriptor was provided for each interval on the scale (e.g. 7 = ‘*very important*’), to encourage a similar interpretation of the scores from each respondent (Chisnall, 1997, p198). Finally, a ‘positive’ numbering scale was used (i.e. 1 to 7, rather than –3 to +3)

as there was concern that associating a negative to some of the scores might bias responses (Gilbert, 1993, p264); also, it was felt that the analysis task would be eased by not having to deal with negative numbers. As there was also concern (based on the experience of Project One) that some respondents would be reluctant to offer an *opinion* about an organisation (i.e. preferring to answer questions as if they were factual), consideration was given to the use of a 6 (or even 8) point scale to remove the option of a middle (*'neither agree nor disagree'*) response. On balance, however, it was decided that it would be wrong to remove this option as some people would 'genuinely' hold this view (Neuman, 2000, p262; Black, 1999, p229). Instead, a carefully worded introduction was added to the 'organisations' section of the questionnaire to deal with the issue of reluctance to express an opinion (this was tested in the pilots).

Finally, care was taken to ensure that the layout of the questionnaire was attractive (Gilbert, 1993, p109) and facilitated its completion. To this end, the scale appeared again half way down the question (as well as at the top) to ensure that it could always be seen on the screen, the answering method was consistent throughout and questions were not split across 'pages' (*ibid*; Neuman, 2000, p269; Oppenheim, 1992, p122). The wording of the questions was polite (Oppenheim, 1992, p122) and 'thanks' were also included in both the covering note and the questionnaire (Neuman, 2000, p270; Gilbert, 1993, p109). The opportunity was also taken (at the end of the questionnaire) to secure respondents' contact details and ask them to indicate their willingness to be contacted regarding future research, in case this might be desirable in Project Three. On advice from the Firm's legal department, a disclaimer regarding the survey data was also included.

These attentions in the design of the questionnaire were introduced to address the common disadvantages of the survey method – detailed above – and to encourage a high response rate (further details regarding the questionnaire design can be found in section 6.6 below). The same considerations were drivers for the design of the email text introducing the survey to the potential respondents. As the Firm was to remain anonymous, the questionnaires were sent out as being from Cranfield – there is some evidence that university sponsorship can increase response rates, in comparison to those achieved with a market research agency name (de Chernatony, 1989), which was the other alternative. It was indicated in the email, however, that the research was sponsored by a leading employer - it was felt necessary to include this for ethical reasons, but it was also suggested by pilot respondents that this might help the response rate. The email was sent under the targeted GRAD banner with a title designed to appeal to, and engage, the recipients' interest: "What do you want in a graduate employer?" The note was kept short, to ensure that it fitted easily in to the 'opening screen' of the email.

The text (of the email) was designed to appeal to the recipient on three levels (*ibid*):

- altruism: making clear that this was doctoral research (and therefore the respondent would be helping out a fellow student). A personal element was also added through the 'signing' of the note by Professors Knox and Vinnicombe
- ego: the recipient was informed that s/he were "one of only a small number of students invited to participate" and that her/his views were important
- social utility: mention was made of respondents' helping to "make a contribution to both theory and best practice in this area", the indicated personal involvement

of the professors also added a sense of *gravitas*. In addition, the point was made that in completing the questionnaire the respondents were likely to benefit themselves by way of its potential to help them in their thinking about graduate employers

In addition, two direct incentives were offered (these were based on discussions with the pilot group); research shows that cash (and other) incentives can increase response rates (*ibid*; Chisnall, 1997, p144; Oppenheim, 1992, p104):

- a prize draw with a £250 cash first prize and twenty-five runners-up prizes of £10 amazon.co.uk vouchers. The rules of the prize draw were created in conjunction with the Firm's lawyers and included in the questionnaire as a separate page on the survey website (accessed by a click-through)
- all respondents were given a copy of a paper called *Making it to the Boardroom in Britain*, which was adapted (to make it suitable for this audience) from a paper by Professor Vinnicombe. The respondents were automatically linked to an electronic copy of the paper as soon as they submitted their completed questionnaires

The email also specified that responses would be treated as confidential (Chisnall, 1997, p142); as well as the obvious ethical issues, this was included so as to encourage frankness and discourage 'reactivity' problems such as the inclination to answer the questions in socially desirable ways (Bryman, 1989, p65; Oppenheim, 1992, p138). Finally, the recipients were assured that the questionnaire would take only ten minutes to complete, they were advised of the 'closing date' and invited to "click here" (on the *url*) to start the survey. All aspects of this email were piloted - see below - and a copy of it (and the email for the internal survey) can be found in Appendix D.

6.5.2 Internal Survey

As indicated above (section 6.1) the same short-list of organisational attributes was used for the internal survey as for the external survey, and the questions designed in a similar way (so responses from the two surveys could be analysed together). It was also Internet-based (see Appendix E for a plain text copy of the survey - not as it appeared on the screen) - the Firm's employees are well accustomed to completing electronic surveys. Again, the questions were derived directly from section 6.2 above - to investigate internal and construed images, with demographic information (similar to that for the external survey) gathered at the end. In terms of question order, it was felt that the question relating to construed image was more likely to influence responses to the question about internal image, than *vice versa*, so the latter was placed first.

The accompanying email (see Appendix D) for this survey was sent through the internal email system under the author's own name (specifying job title and job level). It followed many of the same principles applied for the external survey, expressing the importance placed on the recipient's input and that the data would help in the planning of the Firm's recruitment activities, although no further incentive was offered. Again, confidentiality was stressed, as was the very short time (five minutes) that was needed to complete the questionnaire. Again, both the questionnaire and the email were piloted - see below.

6.6 Pilots

Piloting is a “vitally important” part of the design process (Chisnall, 1997, p139) and one of the ways in which reliability can be improved (Neuman, 2000, p166). As many aspects of a design as possible should be tested in this way before it is finalised (Oppenheim, 1992, p47). Ideally, the number of people used in the pilot will be equal to approximately 10% of the planned sample, but this has to be weighed against the constraints of time, cost, practicability and resources (Gilbert, 1993, p122; Chisnall, 1997, p140). In this case, such a large pilot project (i.e. 10%) was not feasible. The more important issue, however, is that the pilot group provide as much coverage as possible of the key characteristics of the ‘real’ respondent group (a ‘purposive’ sample) (Chisnall, 1997, p140; Wilson, 1996, p103).

For the external survey, the pilot group was made up of six of the Firm’s interns (the option being available to increase the size of this group somewhat if necessary). The intern programme provides students with the chance to work at the Firm for nine months, in between their penultimate and final years at university. Clearly, it would have been ideal to use current students for the pilot, but time and resources precluded this. The interns share the same key demographics as the targeted sample, being at a similar stage in their studies, and are also still very much in touch with their friends back at university and thereby the campus mindset. Also, at the time of the pilot work, the interns had only just arrived at the Firm, so they were still in ‘student mode’ to a large degree and certainly not yet fully socialized in to the Firm. From the intern group, it was possible to select a subset (for the pilot) that represented a range of course types and universities, and both genders. Although this group differed from the real respondents in that they clearly all had positive feelings about the Firm, there was nothing in the nature of the survey *design* that it was felt would be differentially impacted by this factor. There was certainly a risk of impression management behaviours on the part of the pilot group, but they were encouraged to be frank in their feedback and there was no sense that they held back in expressing their views.

The piloting of the external survey, and the resultant improvements to it, were completed before the internal survey was created. Given that the internal survey was very similar to the external one in its design, the focus for the internal survey pilot was to ensure that the slight change to the question wordings worked and that there were no problems with the overall approach with an internal audience. Given this, it was decided that just four UAT members should be sufficient to pilot the internal survey in the first instance, with the pilot group only being expanded if a significant number of issues were raised by these individuals (in the event this was not necessary).

In the case of both surveys, the pilot test was conducted in two phases. In the first phase the pilot group were provided with a paper version of the questionnaire (and covering email) and asked to complete it - the author observed them as an additional source of data (e.g. to see if they appeared to falter at any points) (Chisnall, 1997, p141). Some changes were made to the design as a result of feedback from this phase, the revised draft was then tested in the second phase of the pilot in Internet format (i.e. exactly as

the real respondents would receive it). Through the course of these two phases, the items explored included the following (Oppenheim, 1992, p47; Chisnall, 1997, p140; Wilson, 1996, p103), as appropriate:

- text of the email (including the title and opening sentences) and likelihood of responding
- direct incentives offered
- stated sponsorship of the research
- use of Cranfield logo and professors' signatures
- instructions given throughout the questionnaire (e.g. whether clear that just one 'box' should be selected for each answer)
- proposed timing of the survey
- clarity of the questions and attribute statements: pilot participants were asked to paraphrase these back to the author
- clarity of the scales
- any concerns about confidentiality and/or disclosure of any of the information
- comprehensiveness of the demographic questions
- length and time taken
- layout/design
- tone of voice
- ease of accessing website
- ease of using the on-line version
- any technical problems ('bugs') encountered in using on-line version
- any other improvements suggested

As a result of the pilots, a number of details were changed. Some of the most important were changes to attribute wordings, a couple of these were found to be ambiguous, another one was interpreted differently from the original meaning (from Project One) and it was also discovered that it was necessary to provide a definition of 'meritocracy'. Emphasis was also added to some of the question wording, through the use of bold type, to clarify and stress intended meaning. These revised wordings (to questions and attributes) were checked in phase two of the pilots. A number of technical problems were discovered and fixed in the on-line version of the survey.

The prizes in the prize draw were also adjusted as a result of pilot feedback – the original proposal had been to have a larger first prize and fewer runners-up prizes – pilot participants pointed out that the average student would be sufficiently motivated by £250. There was positive feedback about the 'tone' of the survey – participants felt that it spoke to the intended audiences on their own level – and the 'good luck' message in the external survey was appreciated. The scales were easily understood; originally, though, they had been scored with the '7' at the right hand side (the author's personal preference) and this was reversed based on the majority view from the pilot. A test-retest was also carried out on the external survey with the pilot group – see section 6.8 below.

The main concern about the external survey was its length - although it proved to take little, or no, more than the ten minutes indicated, some participants reported that it *felt* quite long (probably because the questions are quite similar). As a result, a feature was added to the website that indicated to the respondent, at the completion of each

question, what percentage of the questionnaire they had completed. Nevertheless, it was recognised that the length was something of a risk – even though longer questionnaires have been found to be tolerated better by respondents who are more intelligent than average and/or have an active interest in the subject matter (Neuman, 2000, p265; Chisnall, 1997, p144). It was felt that the risk was worth taking for the sake of not having to cut any of the questions.

In the case of the internal questionnaire, the piloting was very straightforward – the group had very few comments other than that the questionnaire was very easy to use and understand, and they were confident that a healthy response rate would be achieved.

6.7 Administration

As has been mentioned above, the timing of the fieldwork was selected to be similar to that in Project One (see section 3.3 above). As in the previous project, the exact start and finish dates for the external survey were set to coincide (for the former) with the completion dates (on most of the campuses of interest) of the employer presentations from the Firm, the Media Corporation and the Investment Bank (i.e. the three organisations in the questionnaire) and (for the finish date) with the end of term dates. The fieldwork was started as soon as possible due to concern about exam timetables (being likely to affect response rates) and was set at four weeks; the latter was ascertained through the pilot feedback to be a generous period (and in retrospect could have been shortened) and is close to some reported averages for mail surveys (de Chernatony, 1989). The fieldwork for the internal survey was set at one week (which was identified as sufficient during the pilot) and, as already mentioned, scheduled to be very close to that for the external survey.

Reporting websites were created (for the author's use), for both the external and internal surveys, to complement the questionnaire websites (a specialist agency was used to code and host all the websites). These reporting sites automatically collated the data from the completed questionnaires as they were submitted, so the number (and characteristics) of respondents (and their responses) could be tracked very easily (Gilbert, 1993, p110). Specifically, the sites were primarily set up to track the marginal frequency distributions, this facilitated checking for possible errors in the coding (e.g. by virtue of any unusual patterns in the data) and allowed the author to develop a first sense of the data (Gilbert, 1993, p241). Using these sites, it was also easy to see when the response rate was tailing off and, thereby, the optimal timing for reminder emails (de Chernatony, 1989). For example, this was based on (forecast) decay rates for both the original mailing and the reminder mailing (plus the 'closing date', which it had been necessary to announce for the external survey because of the associated prize draw) (Chisnall, 1997, p143). As has been mentioned, polite reminder emails were sent to both the external and internal survey lists. These were sent approximately one week from the end date for the external survey and on the last day for the internal one (copies of these notes can be found in Appendix F) – the original email and *url* link to the survey were attached (*ibid*; Gilbert, 1993, p110). A table of the timings and response rate is included in Appendix G – it can be seen that the reminder notes were very effective in increasing the response rates.

As mentioned above, an email was sent out to the external survey distribution list to ask about non-response. In all cases of re-mailing, it was not possible to isolate from the distribution list those who *had* (already) completed the survey from those who had not, so the reminder and non-response notes had to be carefully worded so as to make sense to both audiences. A copy of the 'non-response' email can be found in Appendix H. This email had to be sent out very quickly after the survey deadline as there was some uncertainty about the extent to which students would have access to email during their holiday period (many had university email addresses); this approach also ensured, however, that the subject was fresh in their minds. Again, a deadline was set for answering this 'non-response' email (based on the needs of the project schedule); the response was surprisingly high, with nearly a hundred replies. In the case of the internal survey, a more personal approach was taken, with ten people selected at random from the distribution list for the survey and contacted by the author to ascertain whether they had responded to the survey and, if not, why not.

To address another aspect of non-response, a check was made on potential 'suspect' responses. The website for the surveys was programmed to disallow more than one entry from the same email address, which provided reasonable protection against a person completing the questionnaire more than once (which it is possible the prize draw might have motivated some people to do in the case of the external survey). There was still, however, the danger of completed questionnaires where one or more of the questions had not been correctly, or thoughtfully, completed. A check was run, therefore, to identify any questionnaires where the same score had been entered for all twenty attributes on any question (Black, 1999, p135).

Coding for both surveys was relatively straightforward as all but one of the questions was 'closed' and, apart from those in the last section on demographics, the answers were numerical positions on Likert scales. There was just one 'other' category in each survey: for degree type in the external survey and job level in the internal survey – there were sixty-four responses on the former and two on the latter. The degree type 'other' answers were reviewed by the author and each one coded in to 'arts' or 'science', e.g. LLB (law) to arts and M.Chem. to science; on the internal survey the 'other' responses were coded in to the appropriate job level. A codebook *per se* was not felt to be necessary, but codes for the non-scaled answers (e.g. demographics) were determined at the questionnaire design stage and each individual respondent was allocated an identifying case number (Oppenheim, 1992, p261). Finally, a separate list was created, with contact details, of all those external respondents (88%) who had expressed their willingness to be re-contacted in connection with any future research.

6.8 Reliability and Validity

6.8.1 Reliability

"Reliability is primarily a matter of stability: if an instrument is administered to the same individual on two different occasions, will it yield the same result?" (Easterby-Smith *et al*, 1991, p121). As Easterby-Smith *et al* go on to remark, one of the key

challenges in establishing reliability is the difficulty (in most cases) of establishing the condition of *ceteris paribus* across successive applications of an instrument (Bryman, 1989, p55). The time delay between the two applications needs to be such as to avoid “the likelihood that ‘real’ change may have taken place” and, at the same time, “minimise the effects of memory” (Gilbert, 1993, p128). As mentioned above, for the external survey, a ‘test-retest’ was conducted at the time of the pilot (Easterby-Smith *et al*, 1991, p122) – all members of the pilot group were asked to complete the questionnaire a second time on the day after the pilot test. In this instance, it was felt that, with so many individual ratings in the questionnaire, ‘memory’ was less of a concern than the issue (above) of ‘real’ change occurring between the two tests. The latter concern arose from the fact that the pilot group had just arrived at the Firm and, therefore, their impressions and knowledge might be forming at a rapid rate. Thus, the delay between the tests was kept very short (i.e. a day). The outcome of this test is reported in section 7.1 below. For the internal survey, one of the pilot respondents was also asked to repeat the ‘test’ (as above) and a visual inspection of the two completed questionnaires revealed them to be identical in all but one score, which was just one point out on the scale.

As well as these specific tests to assess reliability, there are several factors that can be addressed in the research design to positively influence reliability. The fineness of the scales used is one example, as mentioned above (section 6.5.1) (Neuman, 2000, p166). Others include the quality of the question wording, piloting, and ensuring that respondents have sufficient time to complete the questions (Neuman, 2000, p166; Black, 1999, p198) – descriptions of the attention given to these issues have been included in the preceding sections.

6.8.2 Validity

Whilst reliability refers to the dependability of a measure, validity is concerned with whether the measure is ‘true’ (or correct) (Black, 1999, p167) – e.g. does it measure the attribute it is supposed to measure? (Easterby-Smith *et al*, 1991, p121). A measure might meet all the requirements for reliability, but still not be ‘valid’, e.g. it could be very reliably measuring the wrong thing - on the other hand, an instrument cannot be valid if it is not reliable (Black, 1999, p198; Neuman, 2000, p171).

There are a number of different types of (measurement) validity (Neuman, 2000, p168; Black, 1999, p191; Bryman, 1989, p57; Easterby-Smith, 1991, p121; Oppenheim, 1992, p162), which should be applied as appropriate dependent on “the intended purpose or application of the instrument” (Black, 1999, p193):

- face validity: the most basic type of validity, this asks whether others judge the measure/instrument to be valid – does there *appear* “to be a correspondence between the measure ... and the concept in question?” (Bryman, 1989, p58)
- content validity: a type of face validity, this addresses whether or not the instrument adequately addresses the subject matter (does it cover all of the ground?)

- criterion validity: here validity is verified through comparison with a second, separate measure of the same subject. Criterion validity can be of the ‘concurrent’ or ‘predictive’ kind: in the former, results are checked against a parallel, pre-existing measure; and, in the latter, predictive validity assesses how well the test can forecast some future criterion
- construct validity: the definition (and application) of ‘construct validity’ is “not wholly consistent across the literature” (Black, 1999, p192), but Neuman (2000, p170) suggests that its use should be confined to measures with multiple indicators
- convergent validity: occurs when “multiple measures of the same construct hang together or operate in similar ways” (*ibid*)
- discriminant (or ‘divergent’) validity: related to the above, measures should also be *negatively* associated with *opposing* constructs

Face validity may be established by virtue of some of the similarities between the content of these (Project Two) surveys and those reported in the work values literature (see section 2.3). Content validity can be derived, for the external and internal surveys, from the link to the work in Project One; it is on the findings of Project One that the instruments used in Project Two are based. Although, as already mentioned, the practical need to reduce the constructs to a short-list (for Project Two) reduces content validity (as the survey instrument does not include all the constructs identified in Project One).

It is proposed that some measure of (concurrent) criterion validity can be derived from a comparison between the results of Project One and the results of Project Two – specifically, whether the differences found between the sexes are similar. This is also a form of convergent validity (Bryman, 1989, p60). The results of this comparison can be found in section 7.4 below. In addition, the ratings given to the attribute ‘*small organisation*’ for the organisational perceptions were checked. It was felt that the fact that the three organisations covered in the survey are very large could be taken as form of pre-existing measure with responses on this question expected to be consistent with this fact, and thereby an indication of concurrent validity (the results of this test are also included in section 7.6 below).

As with reliability, there are a number of issues that can be addressed in the research design to increase validity. Mitchell (1985), taking a “broad definition of construct validity”, suggests that proper attention to the sample is essential, in particular to the issue of whether respondents and non-respondents differ in any important way. He also highlights the problems of “response bias”, such as social desirability (see also Bryman, 1989, p66). These issues – in relation to the present research - have been discussed, and addressed, in the preceding sections. Easterby-Smith, Thorpe *et al* (1991, p133) also talk about the potential problems of becoming “method-bound” – “the strength of almost every measure is flawed in some way or other” – and present this as another benefit of adopting multiple methods (see section 6.3.2 above).

Bryman (1989, p64) claims that “validity testing is relatively rarely reported and presumably, therefore, rarely conducted” and Mitchell (1985) found “no reliability at all was reported” by 21% of the studies he analysed. Both agree that the reasons for this are

the “practical issues of doing survey research” (Mitchell, 1985) – the “time and cost involved in providing the relevant tests” (Bryman, 1989, p64). In addition, the independent information required by many of the validity tests is very often not available (Oppenheim, 1992, p146). It is certainly recognised that the tests for reliability and validity in this case have, by no means, been exhaustive; the author is comfortable, however, that they provide a reasonable level of confidence within the practical constraints (particularly of time and resources) imposed by the circumstances of the research.

6.9 Analysis

The core analysis requirements were determined as part of the initial research design, based largely on the propositions (see above) – in accordance with Oppenheim’s (1992, p49) advice on best practice – although, in fact, the process was also somewhat iterative, with the findings of earlier pieces of analysis driving the design of some further analysis. The statistical processing was conducted using the SPSS® software package (version 9.0).

6.9.1 Summary of Tests and Analysis Conducted

In the first instance, the samples were analysed; specifically, the following analysis and tests were conducted (where appropriate, the type of analysis used is indicated in parentheses, a discussion of these techniques is provided later in this section):

- response rates, including checks for ‘suspect’ responses
- content analysis on the replies received from non-respondents as to reasons for non-response (content analysis)
- comparison of sample demographics with population demographics to determine potential needs for weightings (*chi-square*)
- weighting transformations calculated and performed
- the proportion by sex of those respondents indicating that they would apply to the Firm was also calculated and compared to the sex split in ‘real life’ applications, as an additional indicator of the representativeness of the sample (*chi-square*)
- also, at this stage, other analysis relating specifically to reliability and validity was undertaken, as noted above (see section 6.8.1): test-retest data for the external survey (*t* test).

Next, *descriptive statistics* were produced for all the survey questions, for both the total sample and for the sexes separately, these included range (minima and maxima), means and standard deviations (as mentioned above, a ‘reporting’ website was already in place containing all the marginal frequency distribution data – a sample screen is provided in Appendix I).

The analysis directly associated with the propositions (see section 6.2 above) was then conducted – including *inferential statistics* (Calder, 1996, p235) - specifically:

- P1: an attractiveness score (for the Firm) was produced by multiplying together (on each attribute) the importance rating (in '*selecting those organisations to whom you will submit a graduate job application*') and the rating for the Firm (IV), and then summing these scores for all attributes (Σ IV). A correlation analysis was conducted between these attractiveness scores and the likelihood to apply to the Firm, in order to investigate the existence of a relationship between them. These analyses were subsequently repeated for the Media Corporation and the Investment Bank (Pearson's r)
- P2: mean ratings, by male and female respondents, of importance of attributes for '*selecting those organisations to which you will submit a graduate job application*' were compared for statistically significant differences (t test and Spearman's ρ). The differences found were reviewed against the list of those attributes considered to be more consistent with feminine organisational characteristics
- P3: exploratory factor analysis was conducted, for the sample as a whole and for the male and female respondents separately, on importance of attributes for '*selecting those organisations to which you will submit a graduate job application*'. The structure and content of the factors were examined and compared between the sexes; the content of the factors was also analysed against the results of the qualitative analysis of differences in Project One (factor analysis)
- P4: mean ratings for perceptions of the Firm, the Media Corporation and the Investment Bank were compared for the male and female respondents and the number of statistically significant differences between the samples was noted. The structure and content of factors for the perceptions of the Firm, the Media Corporation and the Investment Bank were also compared for males and females (t test, Spearman's ρ and factor analysis – see P3)
- P5: attractiveness scores and the ratings for likelihood to apply to the Firm were submitted to a multiple regression analysis, with the attractiveness scores (at the attribute level) as the independent variables and the likelihood to apply as the dependent variable. The regression analysis was conducted for both the total sample and for the male and female respondents separately (multiple regression)
- P6: two new samples were created (using 'top two', i.e. '*likely*' or '*very likely (or already have)*', and 'bottom two' responses, i.e. '*unlikely*' or '*very unlikely*', on 'likelihood to apply'): females who were likely and not likely to apply to the Firm. On the 'predictor' variables (for females) identified in P5, the attractiveness scores for the two samples were deconstructed in to their constituent parts (instrumentality and valence) and the means were compared (t test)
- P7: mean ratings for internal image (by attribute) were calculated for male and female (internal survey) respondents and compared for statistically significant differences (t test)

- P8: mean ratings on each attribute for internal, external and construed images were calculated (for the total samples) and then tested for statistically significant differences (between them) at the attribute level (*t* test)

The following sections provide an overview of the methods themselves.

6.9.2 Content Analysis

Robson (2002, p352) suggests that content analysis is “codified common sense”. It is a technique for analysing a text (Neuman, 2000, p292), and was used in Project One to analyse the Rep Grid data (see 3.9.3 above). Millward (1995, p288) describe three types of content analysis: qualitative, quantitative and structural. The quantitative approach is deployed here, to generate numerical values, specifically frequency counts, from the texts (i.e. the email responses from the non-respondents as to the reasons for non-response – see 6.9.1).

At the heart of content analysis is the practice of coding: “coding is analysis” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p56). Codes are applied to ‘units’, which might be, *inter alia*, individual words, themes, characters, or even whole paragraphs (*ibid*; Robson, 2002, 353). In the present case, the *themes* were the reasons given for non-response. Consistent with Project One, a ‘grounded’ approach was taken to building the specific codes (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p58), based on the author’s review of each of the email responses. Coding systems can be used to measure a number of different characteristics, such as frequency, direction, intensity, and space (Neuman, 2000, p294); as mentioned above, ‘frequency’ was applied here. Once texts have been coded, the results are commonly summarised in a coding sheet (Easterby-Smith *et al*, 1991, p107; Neuman, 2000, p299).

6.9.3 Notes on Statistical Techniques Used

The data for this project were largely *interval* data, i.e. from the scales used in the questionnaires. It should be noted that, as the numbers on a Likert scale (for example) cannot be assumed to be equidistant (for every respondent), such data should, strictly speaking, be treated as ordinal (ranked) data. “Most researchers take a pragmatic approach, however, and continue with the practice of treating ratings ... as interval data” (Calder, 1996, p228), and this is the course that is followed here. The remaining survey data were *nominal* in character, i.e. organised into categories, this includes all the demographic information that was gathered – in the case of nominal data there is no ranking (inclusion in a category is binary) (Black, 1999, p52).

As interval data are additive and exist along a continuum, the available statistical techniques for analysing them include: means, standard deviations, *t* tests and *F* tests, regression methods, analysis of variance, product moment correlation coefficients and most types of multivariate methods (Oppenheim, 1992, p285). Such *parametric* tests – “*parameter* refers to a measure which describes the distribution of a population such as

the mean or variance” (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p117) – are considerably more powerful and versatile than non-parametric techniques. Analysis of nominal data (which are really no more than frequencies in discrete categories) is restricted to non-parametric devices, such as percentages and Chi-squared tests (Oppenheim, 1992, p285). In exploring the relationships within the present data, there were occasions where the two types of data (interval and nominal) were combined in analysis, the appropriate test (or variation) for these cases is noted where appropriate.

Statistical analysis techniques can be categorised on the basis of the number of variables involved. *Univariate* statistics, as the name suggests, describe one variable, for example by way of a frequency distribution (Neuman, 2000, p317). In most research, however, the interest lies in the relationships between variables and to investigate these relationships *bivariate* or *multivariate* statistical analysis is required, and it is necessary, for each test, to identify the *dependent* and *independent* variables (Oppenheim, 1992, p282). Bivariate analysis techniques include scatter diagrams, cross-tabulations and correlation coefficients; and for multivariate analysis there are factor analysis and multiple regression techniques (Neuman, 2000, p322; Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991, p545) – these are reviewed in more detail below. As more variables are introduced, and the complexity of the tests increases, the demands on *sample size* also tend to increase. Some techniques require a minimum sample (or cell size), e.g. some commentators suggest that factor analysis requires a sample of at least 100 and a minimum of five subjects per variable (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p279). The final sample sizes in this study (totals of 862 for the external survey and 593 for the internal survey) were sufficiently large for the analysis to utilise all the desired statistical techniques. As an additional check (as to the precision of the sample), the standard error for each test was visually inspected in order to identify any that might be unacceptably high (Gilbert, 1993, p78).

Further (and related) to the preceding points, it is important, at this stage, to make some general comments about *statistical significance*. Inferential statistics use probability theory to: test hypotheses formally, permit inferences from a sample to a population, and test whether descriptive results are likely to be due to random factors or a real relationship (Neuman, 2000, p338). Statistical significance provides a measure of the likelihood of such results not occurring simply by chance, e.g. if results are reported as being significant at the 0.05 level (normally reported as $p = 0.050$) this means that the probability of the results being based on chance alone are 0.05 or 5% (or, in other words, one can be 95% confident that the results are due to a real phenomenon in the population). As Black (1999, p399) notes, “to play the game of statistical inference honestly, the decision about the significance level should really be made *before* the statistical test is carried out”.

The decision as to the appropriate significance level should include a consideration of the consequences of drawing an incorrect conclusion from the research. There are two types of error that can occur: Type I when it is concluded that a relationship exists when in fact it does not (more likely when significance levels are set lower), and Type II when it is concluded that a relationship does not exist when in fact it does (more likely to occur with high significance levels) (Neuman, 2000, p339; Calder, 1996, p238). From a statistical viewpoint, it should be noted that increasing the required significance

level will decrease the potential power of a test, and thus Black (1999, p397) recommends that a more stringent approach only be taken “if there are severe consequences for making a Type I type error”. The practical implications of different types of errors for this study might be very broadly summarised as the risk of undertaking an unnecessary investment (to address an issue that does not exist) from a Type I error (e.g. concluding that males and females differ in some way that they do not in reality), and the risk of not fixing a problem (or addressing the cause of a problem) and, for example, not improving the application rate to the Firm from women, if a real difference between males and females is ignored as a result of a Type II error. The latter was considered to be less desirable in the context of this study and thus a less demanding significance level was selected: specifically, 95% rather than 99% (although 99%, and higher, levels are still reported). In practice, Neuman (2000, p339) states that “being 95% confident of results is the accepted standard for explaining the social world”. It should be remembered, of course, that at “the 5 per cent level of statistical significance, one in every twenty crosstabulations will be ‘statistically significant’ by pure chance” (Oppenheim, 1992, p284).

One further decision that needs to be made is whether to use one- or two-tailed tests, i.e. whether to check for differences in one direction or both (an advantage of the one-tailed test is its increased power (Black, 1999, p395)). This largely depends on whether one is able to make a ‘hypothesis’ about the *direction* as well as the existence of a relationship (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p110). P2 is the only proposition in this study that contains a strong directional statement and, therefore, was the only one considered for a one-tailed test. On balance, however, it was felt more valuable to remain open to the possibility of unexpected results and consequently two-tailed tests were used throughout the analysis (Black, 1999, p395). Finally, it is important to note that “the level of significance has nothing to do with the size or importance of a difference” (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p113), for example in terms of academic or practical effect, it simply tells the researcher what is likely (Neuman, 2000, p338; Black, 1999, p56). This issue is revisited in the discussion of the results (in chapter 8) below.

As a last comment, before going on to look at the statistical techniques in more detail, a note needs to be made of some data transformations. Firstly, some recoding of data was undertaken, as already noted above (see section 6.7). Also, in order to employ the Spearman rank correlation techniques, interval data were transformed in to ordinal data (see below). Arguably the most significant transformation, however, was that of weighting. The demographic make-up of both the internal and external samples was compared with that of their related populations - population characteristics for the external survey were calculated using data provided by UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service). In the case of the external survey, it was concluded that the sample and population demographics were sufficiently dissimilar as to raise some potential concerns about the representativeness of the sample; as a way of mitigating this risk, it was decided that statistical weighting should be applied to the sample in order to boost the underrepresented cells (Oppenheim, 1992, p106). Whilst weighting is a common approach to addressing this type of issue (Chisnall, 1997, p403), there is a significant assumption underlying it: namely, that non-response is not related to the research (subject) itself. As mentioned above, this was investigated as part of the research: the outcome can be found in section 7.1.1 below.

6.9.4 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics focus on the description, including the classification and summarizing, of the data presented (Sanders, 1995, p6). Figure 6.4. below is an illustration of the descriptive statistics output of SPSS®, showing (univariate) data from the present study (note: only partial results are included in this section of the report). The table shows the sample size (*N*), the minimum and maximum ratings recorded and the means and standard deviations.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q1_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	544	3	7	6.12	.812
Q1_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	544	3	7	6.09	.871
Q1_8: really care about their employees as individuals	544	3	7	5.98	.921
Q1_13: would offer variety in your daily work	544	2	7	5.90	.872
Q1_15: have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	544	2	7	5.85	.868
Q1_4: have a friendly, informal culture	544	1	7	5.56	1.047

Figure 6.4 Example of SPSS® Output: Descriptive Statistics

6.9.5 Bivariate Analysis

One of the most common situations in research is the desire to compare two groups, or more specifically the means of two groups. “Perhaps the most common method of ‘comparing two means’ is to employ the *t* test” (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991, p301) (Student’s *t* test), which tests whether the difference between two means is significant or not. The two-sample *t* test is quite a flexible technique and “fairly robust to departures from normality” (SPSS, 2000). The SPSS® output for this procedure is illustrated in figures 6.5 and 6.6 below:

D2: Gender		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Q1_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	Male	602	5.52	1.08	4.39E-02
	Female	679	5.62	1.19	4.56E-02
Q1_2: employ people with whom you feel will have things in common	Male	602	5.16	1.18	4.81E-02
	Female	679	5.31	1.12	4.30E-02

Figure 6.5 Example of SPSS® Output: t test (part one)

The table above shows: the number of cases in each group (*N*), their means, their standard deviations and standard errors. The test determines if the means of the two unrelated samples differ by comparing the difference between the two means with the standard error of the difference in the means of different samples. As the latter is not known for the population in question it has to be estimated and the way this is done depends on whether the difference in the variances of the two samples is statistically significant – this information is provided by Levene’s test for equality of variances. As can be seen from figure 6.6. below, two sets of test results are produced; if Levene’s test is significant (using 0.050) then the variances are unequal and the second result in the table (figure 6.6.) is used (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p141).

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q1_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	Equal variances assumed	2.467	.117	-1.440	1279	.150	-.917E-02	6.37E-02	-.22	3.32E-02
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.449	1278.778	.148	-.917E-02	6.33E-02	-.22	3.25E-02
Q1_2: employ people with whom you feel will have things in common	Equal variances assumed	.410	.522	-2.367	1279	.018	-.15	6.43E-02	-.28	-2.61E-02
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.359	1242.138	.018	-.15	6.45E-02	-.28	-2.56E-02
Q1_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	Equal variances assumed	.686	.408	-.436	1279	.663	-2.27E-02	5.20E-02	-.12	7.93E-02
	Equal variances not assumed			-.435	1250.743	.663	-2.27E-02	5.21E-02	-.12	7.95E-02
Q1_4: have a friendly, informal culture	Equal variances assumed	5.474	.019	-3.198	1279	.001	-.18	5.65E-02	-.29	-6.99E-02
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.176	1211.768	.002	-.18	5.69E-02	-.29	-6.91E-02

Figure 6.6 Example of SPSS® Output: t test (part two)

In this illustrative example (figure 6.6.), for Q1_1 Levene's test is not significant (0.117), so the first set of results (relating to 'equal variances assumed') is used. For the purposes of this study, the key item of interest is the 'Sig. (2-tailed)' result, in this example the value is 0.150, indicating that the difference between the means is not significant (as $0.150 > 0.050$).

A variation of this *t* test, for two *related* means, was also used during the analysis, for comparing two means from the same person (e.g. for the test-retest). "The difference between a related and unrelated *t* test lies essentially in the fact that two scores from the same person are likely to vary less than two scores from two different people" (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p152). To account for this, a different method of calculating the standard error of the differences in means is used.

The other key area of bivariate statistics is the exploration of relationships between two variables. One of the "simplest and most frequently used ways" of doing this is with a technique called **crosstabulation** (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p161). A contingency table is created from the crosstabulation of two or more variables – the table distributes cases into the categories of multiple variables at the same time and "shows how the cases, by category of one variable, are 'contingent upon' the categories of other variables" (Neuman, 2000, p325). An illustration of the SPSS® output on crosstabulation is provided below as figure 6.7:

			D2: Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
D3: For which type of degree are you studying?	BA or MA	Count	82	68	150
		% within D3: For which type of degree are you studying?	54.7%	45.3%	100.0%
		% within D2: Gender	35.5%	49.3%	40.7%
		% of Total	22.2%	18.4%	40.7%
	BSc, MSc, BEng or Meng	Count	149	70	219
		% within D3: For which type of degree are you studying?	68.0%	32.0%	100.0%
		% within D2: Gender	64.5%	50.7%	59.3%
		% of Total	40.4%	19.0%	59.3%
Total		Count	231	138	369
		% within D3: For which type of degree are you studying?	62.6%	37.4%	100.0%
		% within D2: Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	62.6%	37.4%	100.0%

Figure 6.7 Example of SPSS® Output: Crosstabulation

The cells show the number of cases and three percentage figures, the first relating to the rows and the second to the columns so that the far right hand column ('total') shows the totals for the rows and the bottom row ('total') shows the totals for the columns. So, for example, we can see here that 68% of the science students are male - but is this finding statistically significant? In order to answer this question, the **chi-square** (χ^2) test "is widely used in conjunction with contingency tables" (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p168). The chi-square test is based on the differences between the actual observed frequencies in the cells and the frequencies that would be expected if there were no association between the variables (Calder, 1996, p239). In order to relate the chi-square value to the significance level, the number of degrees of freedom (*df*) associated with the crosstabulation are taken in to consideration (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p170). The results of the *chi-square* test in SPSS® (associated with the illustrative example above) are shown below in figure 6.8:

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig (2-SIDED)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.797 ^b	1	.009	.012	.006
Continuity Correction ^a	6.238	1	.013		
Likelihood Ratio	6.765	1	.009		
Fisher's Exact Test					
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.779	1	.009		
N of Valid Cases	369				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 56.10.

Figure 6.8 Example of SPSS® Output: Chi-square Tests for Crosstabulation

In this instance, the *chi-square* value (Pearson chi-square) is 6.797, with 1 degree of freedom and the (two-tailed) significance level is 0.012. So the result is statistically significant and it can be concluded (to a 95% confidence level) that the sex difference within the science sample has not occurred simply by chance. What a chi-square test does not tell us, however, is anything about the *strength* of the relationship – a correlation analysis can be used to ascertain this.

Measures of **correlation** indicate both the strength and the direction of the relationship between pairs of (ordinal, interval or ratio) variables, they are measures of association and are expressed in a single figure, a correlation coefficient (Calder, 1996, p252) – two types will be discussed here: linear correlation (using interval variables) and rank correlation (ordinal variables) (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p172). If two variables are

found to be associated, they can be said to co-vary, if not then they are independent, i.e. there is no relationship (Neuman, 2000, p322). Variables may be positively correlated (where a high value on one variable is associated with a high value on another variable) or negatively correlated (i.e. a high value on one is associated with a low value on another), or sometimes even follow a curvilinear relationship – scatter diagrams (which plot each individual case on a graph) are useful tools for understanding these different relationships. Figure 6.9 below shows an example of a scatter diagram, on which are plotted the responses to two of the survey questions.

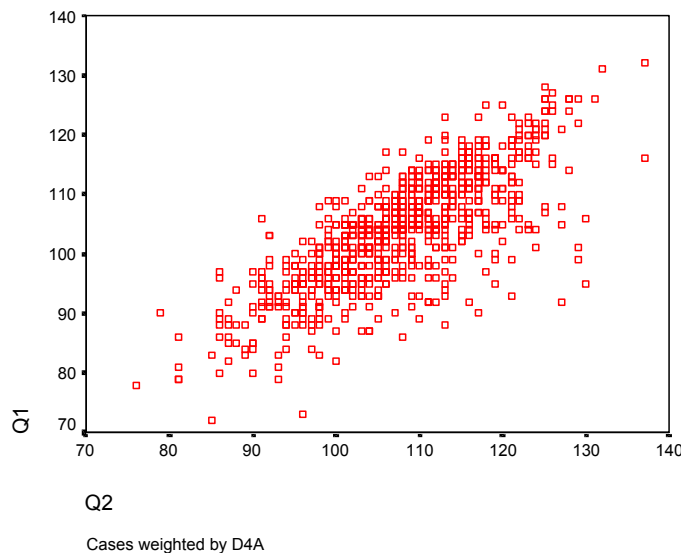


Figure 6.9 Example of SPSS® Output: Scatter Diagram

The most commonly used correlation coefficient for interval data is **Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient r** , which ranges in value from -1 to $+1$ depending on the strength and direction of the relationship it is measuring (Calder, 1996, p253). A number of 'rules of thumb' can be found for interpreting the coefficient, for example a correlation coefficient of greater than 0.7 might be taken as high (and above 0.9 as very high) and a coefficient of lower than 0.4 is considered by some to be low (below 0.2 as very low) (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p178). It is important to note, however, that r will be meaningless unless there is a linear relationship between the variables, so the associated scatter diagram should always be checked as part of the test in order to ensure that this is the case (*ibid*). Another issue that will confound a correlation analysis is the presence of a few extreme cases/data points; "these are most likely to occur when samples are small" (Black, 1999, p654), nevertheless, again, a check of the associated scatter diagram is prudent. An illustrative example of the SPSS® output on Pearson correlation is provided below in figure 6.10:

		Q2_1: would offer the opportunity in the early years to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	Q2_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	Q2_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	Q2_4: have a friendly, informal culture	Q2_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel	Q2_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	Q2_7: would use your degree skills	Q2_8: really care about their employees as individuals	Q2_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	Q2_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad
Q1_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.733** .000 1281	.096** .001 1281	.141** .000 1281	.084** .002 1281	.387** .000 1281	.272** .000 1281	-.005 .852 1281	.133** .000 1281	.101** .000 1281	.378** .000 1281
Q1_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.114** .000 1281	.690** .000 1281	.060* .033 1281	.224** .000 1281	.041 .138 1281	.140** .000 1281	.091** .001 1281	.226** .000 1281	.031 .261 1281	.037 .186 1281
Q1_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.142** .000 1281	.049 .081 1281	.656** .000 1281	.137** .000 1281	.137** .000 1281	.161** .000 1281	.021 .457 1281	.151** .000 1281	.131** .000 1281	.136** .000 1281

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Figure 6.10 Example of SPSS® Output: Correlations

It can be seen that significance levels are also provided in the table above. “Like all other statistics, if the aim of getting the correlation coefficient in a sample is to test hypotheses about an unknown population correlation coefficient, then the correlation coefficient r must be tested for statistical significance” (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991, p254); the calculation of significance is strongly affected by the number of cases (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p179). The significance level and r need to be interpreted together – the latter indicates the strength (and direction) of any relationship, but the former provides an indication of how likely it is to exist in ‘reality’ (in the population) (*ibid*). So in the example above, we can see that there is a high correlation between Q1_1 and Q2_1 ($r = 0.733$) and the result is statistically significant ($p = 0.000$); there is an extremely low correlation between Q1_3 and Q2_2 ($r = 0.049$), but this finding is not statistically significant ($p = 0.081$).

When data are in ranked form (ordinal), then **Spearman’s ρ** is used instead of Pearson’s r – Spearman’s r_s is essentially the same as Pearson’s r , but just used with ranked numbers (Black, 1999, p639; Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991, p286). Even with interval data, “if there is nothing sacrosanct about the particular scale employed”, it might be desirable to transform the data in to rankings so that Spearman’s ρ can be used – “ranking the scores is one form of transforming the data to reduce skewness” and “such transformations tend to increase the accuracy of statistical analyses” (*ibid*). An example of the SPSS® calculation for Spearman’s ρ can be found in Appendix N.

6.9.6 Multivariate Analysis

“Nowadays, regression, in the form of multiple regression, is the most widely used method for conducting multivariate analysis, particularly when more than three variables are involved” (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p256). The principle of (simple linear) regression is based on the fact that if a straight line can be found that ‘fits’ the data in a scatter diagram then it can be used to make predictions about the behaviour of one variable from the other – it is this predictive element that differentiates regression from correlation (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p195). The idea of regression is to find the line that fits the data most closely – the ‘line of best fit’ (Calder, 1996, p254; Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p190). **Multiple regression** is a straight extension of the ideas of linear regression so as to allow one variable to be predicted from a combination of several others (taking into account any ‘inter-correlation’), rather than just one – this is very useful in this study where there are multiple attributes involved in the analysis. Multiple regression provides two main pieces of information: firstly, the R-squared (R^2) measure expresses how well the set of independent variables ‘explain’ the dependent variable; secondly, the standardised regression coefficient, *beta* (B), provides a measure of the size and direction of the effect of each variable (independently of the others) on the dependent variable (Neuman, 2000, p337). It is this ability to establish the relative importance of the independent variables that makes multiple regression so useful. An illustration of the output of SPSS® for multiple regression is provided in figure 6.11 below:

Model	R	R Square	ADJUSTED R SQUARE	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.569 ^a	.323	.313	1.72

a. Predictors: (Constant), Q3_20, Q3_7, Q3_17, Q3_9, Q3_1, Q3_10, Q3_4, Q3_12, Q3_3, Q3_6, Q3_16, Q3_2, Q3_11, Q3_13, Q3_14, Q3_15, Q3_8, Q3_18, Q3_19, Q3_5

ANOVA^b

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	1781.235	20	89.062	30.137	.000 ^a
Residual	3724.960	1260	2.955		
Total	5506.195	1280			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Q3_20, Q3_7, Q3_17, Q3_9, Q3_1, Q3_10, Q3_4, , Q3_12, Q3_3, Q3_6, Q3_16, Q3_2, Q3_11, Q3_13, Q3_14, Q3_15, Q3_8, Q3_18, Q3_19, Q3_5

b. Dependent Variable: Q6_1: How likely it is that you will submit an application to the Firm

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	B	Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	-.551	.476		-1.158	.247
Q3_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different roles/areas	-2.47E-02	.051	-.013	-.487	.626
Q3_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	.402	.043	.282	9.406	.000
Q3_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	-9.65E-02	.054	-.057	-1.792	.073
Q3_4: have a friendly, informal culture	.198	.050	.125	3.927	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Q6_1: How likely is it that you will submit an application to the Firm

NB: Negative coefficient (col. 4)=negative influence, positive coefficient (col. 4) = positive influence

Figure 6.11 Example of SPSS® Output: Multiple Regression

In this example, it can be seen that R^2 is 0.323, i.e. that 32 % of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables. The ANOVA (analysis of variance) provides a measure of statistical significance for R^2 – “it is useful as a test of statistical significance for the [regression] equation as a whole” (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p261), in this case it can be seen that R^2 is statistically significant ($p = 0.000$). A measure of statistical significance is also calculated for each of the independent variables, using a t test (see the third table in figure 6.11. above): this indicates whether the contribution of each independent variable is significant. Also, in the third table, are the standardised *beta* coefficients. So from these data we can see that Q3_2 and Q3_4 are significant ($p = 0.000$) ‘predictors’, and that Q3_2 has a greater impact than Q3_4 (0.282 vs. 0.125).

When, as in this case, there are a large number of variables in a study, it can be useful to ‘reduce’ them (statistically), using **factor analysis**, to a smaller set (the minimum number that can still describe the phenomena of interest without leaving a large amount of the variance unexplained) (Calder & Sapsford, 1996, p278). It is possible, in this way, to “reveal a common unobserved factor or hypothetical construct” (Neuman, 2000, p502) and this can aid understanding of the data (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p277; Oppenheim, 1992, p171). The factor analysis technique can assess the degree to which variables (e.g. attributes in this case) are tapping the same concept (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p276). Pertinent to this study, Dowling (1988) highlights factor analysis as a “useful technique” for exploring organisational images.

The form of factor analysis used here is called principal components analysis (PCA) – also used in Project One. The procedure starts by creating as many components as there are variables and then seeking to make some of the components account for a greater proportion of the variance (Calder & Sapsford, 1996, p278). The first component produced will attempt to explain as much of the variance as possible, the second the next largest amount of variance - that is not connected with the first (the components are said to be ‘orthogonal’ to each other) - and so on (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p281). SPSS® creates a table that shows what percentage of the variance is accounted for by each component (see figure 6.12. below). “Since the object of the factor analysis exercise is to reduce the number of variables we have to handle, this would not be achieved if we used all of them. Consequently, the next step is to decide how many factors we should keep” (*ibid*, p282). There are two main criteria used for this: *Kaiser’s criterion* (based on eigenvalues) and a screen test, a graphical technique that plots the descending variance accounted for by the components and typically includes a ‘break’ in its slope indicating a clear distinction between the more and less important components (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p282). PCA also computes the ‘loading’ of each variable on each component – i.e. how much of each variable is contained in the component.

Typically, however, the components that are first extracted in this way “may be somewhat arbitrary, may lack meaning and may be difficult to interpret” (Oppenheim, 1992, p168) – so an additional process called ‘rotation’ is used in the analysis, in this case an orthogonal rotation method called varimax. Varimax “tries to maximise the variation of the squared loadings for each component by making the loadings go to zero or to 1.00 to the extent possible. This method of rotation helps make components easier

to interpret” (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991, p550). That being said, however, it is still the case that “factor analysis is an interpretive art as much as a rigorous statistical procedure” and the computer “leaves the burden of interpretation with the researcher” (Calder & Sapsford, 1996, p280) – this is arguably true of most statistical procedures, but factor analysis is perhaps more ‘burdensome’ than most. Figure 6.12 below illustrates the output from SPSS®:

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	COMPONENT				
	1	2	3	4	5
Q3_14: Invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	.704				
Q3_12: Offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	.701				
Q3_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	.700				
Q3_15: have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	.608				
Q3_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common		.732			
Q3_7: would use your degree skills		.682			
Q3_8: really care about their employees as individuals		.622			
Q3_4: have a friendly, informal culture		.616			
Q3_17: would require you to work standard working hours only			.825		
Q3_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment			.745		
Q3_16: are a small organisation			.679		
Q3_11: offer a very high starting salary	.461		-.539		

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation.

a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.740	13.698	13.698
2	2.620	13.102	26.800
3	2.474	12.369	39.169
4	2.431	12.157	51.326
5	2.162	10.810	62.137

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Reliability Analysis

Alpha

Component 1 0.77

Component 2 0.74

Component 3 0.74

Component 4 0.76

Component 5 0.72

Figure 6.12 Example of SPSS® Output: Factor Analysis

The output shows that five components were extracted, accounting in total for 62% of the variance (the first component accounts for 14%, the second for 13% and so on). Component one is made up of Q3_14, Q3_12, Q3_20, Q3_15 and Q3_11. The relationship between each variable (Qx_y) and each component is expressed as a correlation or loading (Bryman & Cramer, 1997, p283); the variables are usually listed in terms of the size of their loadings on the component. So, the loading of Q3_14 on component one is 0.704; as can be seen with Q3_11, variables can load on more than one component (and be negative as well as positive). Also seen in figure 6.12 above ('reliability analysis') is an *alpha* value for each component, this refers to Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which is a measure of internal-consistency reliability, based on the average inter-item correlation. Internal-consistency values are generally expected to be high (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991, p51) – for example, Bryman and Carter (1997, p65) suggest a minimum of 0.8 as a rule of thumb (although they go on to describe a coefficient of 0.76, i.e. "only just short of the 0.8 criterion", as "internally reliable for most purposes").

7 **CHAPTER SEVEN: PROJECT TWO RESULTS**

7.1 **Responses**

A summary of the response rates for both the internal and external survey is provided in figure 7.1 below:

Calculation of Response Rate	External Survey	Internal Survey
Number of people to whom survey sent	2,351	1,117
Number of people starting the survey	1,032	646
Number of people completing the survey	977	593
Number of non-suspect completes	862	593
Final response rate	37%	53%

Figure 7.1 Response Rates

7.1.1 **External Survey**

The online survey method allows the researcher to keep track of the number of people starting the survey as well as those completing it; as can be seen from the table above, some people did not finish the surveys. An indication of why this occurred in the external survey can be gained from the email replies from the non-respondents as to why they did not respond to the survey: nineteen of these replies were from people who had started but not finished the survey. Their reasons for not doing so most commonly included “giving up” because the survey was too long and experiencing technical problems with the survey either during its completion or when they came to submit it at the end. It can be seen that these responses follow a similar pattern to those for overall non-response (see figure 7.2).

Figure 7.1 also identifies ‘suspect’ responses - which occurred on the external survey only. All of these suspect responses involved identical ratings being given on every attribute on one or more of questions three to five of the questionnaire, i.e. the questions related to perceptions of the three organisations. It is not possible (from the data available) to be sure that these were not genuine responses (in terms of not being thought through), but it seems reasonable to assume that this was the case. Neither were there data as to the potential reasons for such responses, although, again, it seems reasonable to suggest (given the reasons for non-response below) that a lack of time (or patience) to complete all the questions thoughtfully might be the explanation. The final response rates shown in figure 7.1 are the percentage of surveys sent out that resulted in non-suspect responses. These were pleasing results, as they were much higher than expected - for the external survey in particular.

Reasons for Non-Responses	Numbers
Not enough time	74
Experienced technical difficulties	9
Gave up, questionnaire too long	7
No benefit perceived in completing questionnaire	3
No knowledge of organisations in the questionnaire	3
Total number of responses to ‘reasons for non-response’ email	96

Figure 7.2 Reasons for Non-Response: External Survey

As can be seen from the table above (figure 7.2.), ninety-six people (again, more than expected) responded to the email sent out to ascertain reasons for non-response to the external survey (see Appendix H), and content analysis (see section 6.9.2) revealed that the main reason for non-response to the survey was lack of time. (Note: it is recognised that the ‘reasons for non-response’ email generated a new ‘non-respondents’ group in itself, but it was decided that this one level of analysis was adequate for the present purpose).

The key factor regarding lack of time (where such information was provided by non-respondents) was pressure of work, in particular end-of-term exams and course assignments. This was an anticipated, but not readily avoidable, risk of the survey timing. Some illustrative quotes from replies to the ‘reasons for non-response’ email are provided below:

“I fully intended to reply to your survey, but due to various deadlines, projects etc. I missed the due-date. Sorry!!” (email respondent)

“So much work, so little time. Got project work to do, so don’t have that much time to do other things” (email respondent)

“Apologies, it has been sitting in my inbox as something to do, unfortunately revision etc is taking priority” (email respondent)

It was concluded, therefore, that the reasons for non-response were unlikely to be related to the survey content itself and, thereby, that there should not be any concern about non-response having a serious impact on validity (see section 6.4.1). In addition, it is worth noting that Goyder (1987, p85), in his extensive study of non-respondents in sample surveys, concludes that there is no compelling evidence to suggest that females are more likely than males to respond to surveys, or *vice versa*, simply by virtue of their sex, i.e. that a sex bias is unlikely to be introduced through non-response *per se*.

Apart from the above investigations of non-response, the other main check that needed to be undertaken at this stage was a comparison of the demographics of the final sample and its related population - in order to assess the representativeness of the sample. *Chi-square* tests on the data in figures 7.3 and 7.4 (below) showed that there were

statistically significant differences (at the $p = 0.001$ level) between the sample and the population for both sex and the four sex/course combinations (see Appendix J).

Sex	Sample %	Population %
Female	60	53
Male	40	47
Total	100	100

Figure 7.3 Sample and Population by Sex for External Survey

Sex/Course Type	Sample %	Population %
Female/Science	35	23
Female/Arts	25	30
Male/Science	30	30
Male/Arts	10	17
Total	100	100

Note: derived from UCAS data for 1998 year of entry

Figure 7.4 Sample and Population by Sex/Course Type for External Survey

Given the criticality of these characteristics to the research question, it was decided that it was important to weight the data so that they more closely mirrored the population – it was felt that this could be undertaken with sufficient confidence given the lack of concern about bias (as summarised above) on non-response (see section 6.9.3). Weighting was, therefore, implemented (by simulated replication) for sex and sex/course type; and the results reported in the following sections are from these weighted data.

Although, as mentioned above (section 6.5.1), analysis at the university level was not planned, it was felt useful to gather and review these demographic data in order to be aware of any potential weaknesses in the data set. A *chi-square* test confirmed that there *were* statistically significant differences ($p = 0.001$) between the sample and the population at the university level. The differences are illustrated in figure 7.5 below (the original data can be found in Appendix J); it can be seen, for example, that Southampton is ‘over-represented’ and London ‘under-represented’ in the sample. It was decided not to weight the data by university as well (as for sex and sex/course): this would have added an extremely high, additional level of complexity to the analysis (and university-level dynamics were not an explicit part of the research question). This would be an interesting area to explore further in a later study, however, assuming a sufficiently large sample could be obtained. For example, Alvesson and Billing (1992) suggest it might be expected that people with the same education will exhibit similar

values, and there may well be university level differences in image arising from different UAT activities.

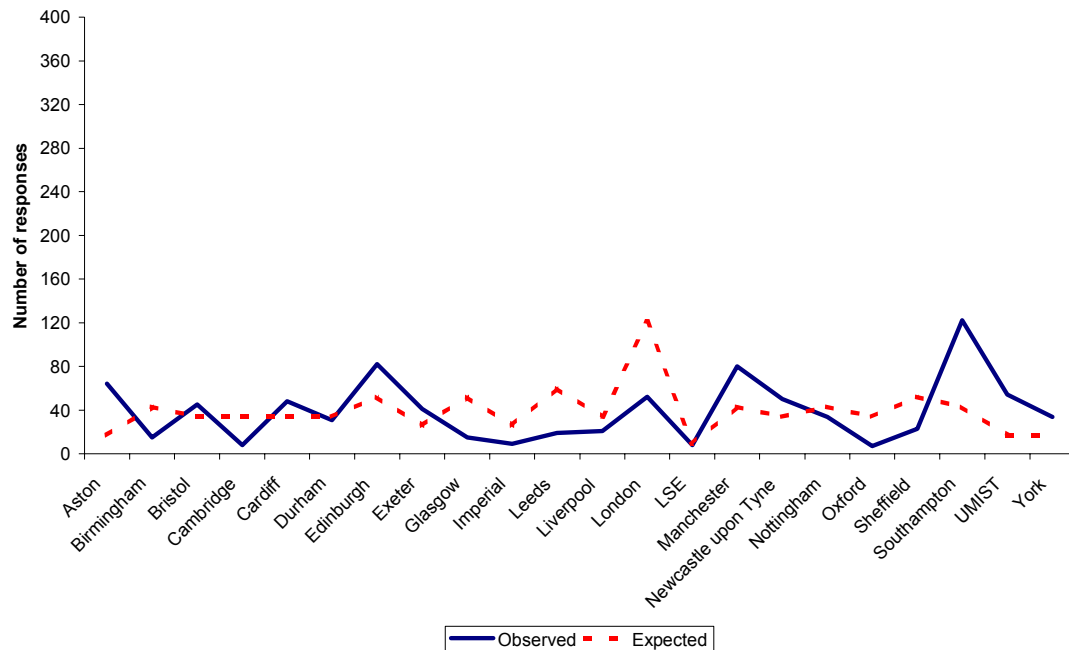


Figure 7.5 Observed vs. Expected Values for Sample (vs. Population) by University (external survey)

Finally, a check was made on the responses from the test-retest exercise – i.e. the responses given by the members of the pilot group to the survey on their first and second completions of it (see section 6.8.1 above) – the t test for related means was used (see section 6.9.5). No statistically significant differences were found on any of the paired attributes, a result which supports the reliability of the survey instrument.

7.1.2 Internal Survey

With regard to the response rate for the internal survey (see figure 7.1), a different, company-wide survey conducted at approximately the same time as the present survey achieved a 47% response in the UK, a response rate that was reportedly “fairly typical”, so the 53% for this study was considered to be a robust result.

In terms of non-response on the internal survey, four of the five people contacted (see section 6.7) who had not responded to the survey cited lack of time as a problem and the other one had ‘technical’ problems in the sense that they were unable to get direct Internet access from the location at which they were working. These issues were probably exacerbated by the relatively short fieldwork period for the internal survey. It is suggested that the technical problems cited (for both surveys) should be taken as one of the natural hazards of working on-line – servers are apt to go down periodically and problems are likely to occur at the respondent’s end as often (or more than) at the ‘survey end’. On balance, it is felt that the benefits gained from an on-line approach (e.g. speed, design and reporting) outweigh these disadvantages. Given the above, the reasons for *non-completion* on the internal survey (see figure 7.1) were surmised to be either technical problems or lack of time, the latter probably not so much due to the length of the questionnaire, but rather to interruptions occurring in the workplace during the completion of the survey. Similar to the external survey, it was concluded that the non-response did not pose any significant threat to validity, as the reasons for non-response did not appear to be related to the survey content.

To assess the ‘representativeness’ of the final sample for the internal survey, its demographics were compared to those of the UAT population – see figures 7.6, 7.7 and 7.8 below. A visual inspection of the tables shows that the two groups are closely matched and follow broadly the same patterns; the *chi-square* tests (see Appendix K) confirmed that there were no significant differences on job level or gender. Thus, it was concluded that there was no need to weight the sample data on these dimensions. As with the external survey, however, significant differences were found in the university data (at the $p = 0.050$ level); however, consistent with (the reasoning for) the external survey, it was decided not to weight the internal survey data on this dimension.

Job Level	Sample (%)	UAT Population
Associate Partner	1	1
Senior Manager	5	5
Manager	18	21
Consultant	37	37
Analyst	39	36
Total	100	100

Figure 7.6 Sample and Population by Job Level for Internal Survey

Sex	Sample %	UAT Population %
Female	35	32
Male	65	68
Total	100	100

Figure 7.7 Sample and Population by Sex for Internal Survey

University assignment	Sample %	UAT Population %
Aston	3	3
Birmingham	8	7
Bristol	6	6
Cambridge	7	8
Cardiff	1	1
Durham	6	6
Edinburgh	6	6
Exeter	1	2
Glasgow	9	8
Imperial	4	4
Leeds	5	5
LSE	3	3
London	4	5
Liverpool	2	2
Manchester/UMIST	8	8
Newcastle	2	2
Nottingham	8	8
Oxford	7	7
Sheffield	4	3
Southampton	4	4
York	2	2
Total	100	100

Note: Just one (combined) UAT exists for Manchester and UMIST

Figure 7.8 Sample and Population by University for Internal Survey

7.2 Likelihood to Apply

Using the top/bottom ‘two box’ approach described above (see section 6.9.1), two new samples were formed to represent (a) respondents likely to apply to the Firm and (b) respondents not likely to apply to the Firm. These constituted 29% and 30% of the total sample respectively, i.e. the application pattern was approximately symmetrical (as

estimated in the discussion on sample above – see section 6.4.1). These groups were then analysed by sex: the results are shown in figure 7.9 below (and in Appendix L). It can be seen that the overall sex split of the two groups combined (i.e. those likely to apply and those not likely to apply) is very close to that of the total (weighted) sample (see figure 7.3), implying that a sex bias in terms of distribution of ratings between the middle and ends of the rating scale is unlikely.

Sex	Apply %	Not Apply %	Total %
Female	37	70	54
Male	63	30	46
Total	100	100	100

Figure 7.9 Likelihood to Apply to the Firm by Sex (external survey)

Figure 7.9 shows that 37% of those within the sample of respondents likely to apply are female. This is a slightly higher percentage than would be expected in ‘reality’, i.e. usually the proportion of student job applications received by the Firm that are from females is approximately a third. This difference was not considered to be so large as to raise significant concerns about the representativeness of the sample overall, but it does suggest that the results of this study may overstate females’ attitudes to the Firm in a positive direction. The alternative possibility is that there may be a different ‘conversion rate’ between stated intentions and actions (i.e. converting a ‘likelihood to apply’ in to submitting an application form in reality) for the males and the females. This might be an interesting possibility to explore in a future study.

Another interesting topic for a future study would be differences arising from course type, e.g. between arts and science students. As has been mentioned previously, females in the population are more likely to be studying an arts subject than a science subject (with the opposite pattern for males). Course type is, therefore, a potential ‘third variable’: Sapsford (1996, p212) explains that there may be “spurious correlation” between two variables (e.g. sex and likelihood of application in this study) because both are related to a third, or because a third variable “may simply be more important” (in causal terms) or might interact with the variables being studied.

It is beyond the scope of this study to investigate all the potential interactions between sex and course type, but it was thought important to get an indication of the role that might be played by course type. The analysis below allows a high level investigation of these issues. Firstly, figure 7.10 shows the ‘likelihood to apply’ for science and arts students: it can be seen that science students are more likely (than arts students) to apply to the Firm ($p = 0.010$ level – see Appendix L).

Likelihood to Apply	Science %	Arts %
Apply	54	44
Not Apply	46	56
Total	100	100

Figure 7.10 Course Type by Likelihood to Apply to the Firm (external survey)

The tables (figures 7.9 and 7.10) also suggest that there is greater variation in likelihood to apply by sex than there is by course type, and that the former is the more ‘important’ effect. As mentioned above, however, sex and course type are related – in the sense that women are more likely to study arts and men more likely to study sciences – so this raises the question of whether the two *interact* in the context of likelihood to apply to the Firm. Treating course type as a ‘third variable’, following the approach suggested by Sapsford (*ibid*), provides an indication of the interaction effect, as illustrated in figure 7.11 below.

Likelihood to Apply	Total		Science		Arts	
	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>
Apply	34	67	40	64	30	72
Not Apply	66	33	60	36	70	28
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Figure 7.11 Sex by Likelihood to Apply to the Firm: Course Type as ‘Third Variable’ (external survey)

It can be seen that there is indeed an interaction effect, albeit not a very large one – i.e. the independent variable of course type has an effect on the other independent variable of sex, changing the extend to which the latter influences the dependent variable of likelihood to apply. Interestingly, the results are in opposite directions for males and females, i.e. a woman studying science is more likely to apply to the Firm (40% vs. 34%), and a woman studying arts less likely (30%), but a male science student is *less* likely to apply (64% vs. 67%), and a male arts student more likely (72%). A full crosstabulation of both sex and course type by likelihood to apply can be found in Appendix L.

7.3 Proposition One

Proposition One (P1): attractiveness scores [A] for the Firm, and the other organisations researched, will be positively correlated with likelihood to apply (for a job)

The results of the correlation tests for the total attractiveness scores with likelihood of application for each of the three organisations in the survey are shown in figures 7.12,

7.13 and 7.14 below. It can be seen that there is a positive correlation in each case (with results statistically significant at $p = 0.010$) and that *proposition one is, therefore, supported*.

The correlations are moderate in strength: 0.440 for the Firm, and 0.332 and 0.436 for the other organisations. It is worth noting Black's (1999, p653) observation that where respondents have generally concentrated their answers at one end of a scale, as in this case, the correlation coefficients found will tend to be reduced. In other words, items are likely to be more highly correlated than the statistical tests suggest.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The Firm	1281	147.00	846.00	501.8589	94.2960
The Media Corp.	1281	173.00	772.00	477.5742	87.1485
The Inv. Bank	1281	221.00	817.00	476.8088	91.7145
Valid N	1281				

Correlations

		Q6_1: How likely is it that you will submit an application to the Firm
The Firm	Pearson Correlation	.440**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	1281

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Figure 7.12 Correlation between Attractiveness Score and Likelihood to Apply for the Firm (external survey)

		Q6_2: How likely is it that you will submit an application to the Media Corporation
The Media Corp.	Pearson Correlation	.332**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	1281

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Figure 7.13 Correlation between Attractiveness Score and Likelihood to Apply for the Media Corporation (external survey)

		Q6_2: How likely is it that you will submit an application to the Investment Bank
The Inv. Bank	Pearson Correlation	.436**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	1281

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Figure 7.14 Correlation between Attractiveness Score and Likelihood to Apply for the Investment Bank (external survey)

7.4 Proposition Two

Proposition Two (P2): some organisational attributes [k] will be more important [V] to the female respondents than to the male, and vice versa, with those attributes consistent with feminine organisational characteristics being more important to the female respondents

The mean responses, for the total sample, on the question of the importance of the attributes in ‘selecting those organisations to whom you will submit a graduate job application’ are shown in figure 7.15 below. The figure shows that the highest mean rating (6.15) on this question was for the attribute ‘invest heavily in the training and development of their employees’.



Significant differences between males and females: a=females rate higher; b= males rate higher

* $p = 0.05$

** $p = 0.01$

*** $p = 0.001$

Figure 7.15 Mean Ratings of Attributes by Importance (external survey)

The attribute labels in figure 7.15 are marked with asterisks to indicate on which attributes there are statistically significance differences between the responses from males and females - the results of the associated *t* tests can be found in Appendix M. There are differences between males and females on nine, i.e. nearly half, of the twenty attributes and, therefore, *the first part of proposition two is supported*. A summary of those attributes on which statistically significant differences were found on the ratings between males and females is provided below in figure 7.16:

Attributes more important to:	
Females	Males
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common • Have a friendly, informal culture* • Would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues* • Would use your degree skills* • Really care about their employees as individuals* • Would offer variety in your daily work • Would require you to work standard working hours only • Offer a relatively stress-free working environment* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a very high starting salary

* also found in Project One

Figure 7.16 Attributes More Important to Females or Males (external survey)

Five of the eight attributes identified here as more important to the female respondents (marked with asterisks in figure 7.16) were also found to be more important to females in Project One (see section 4.4 above). The attribute '*would require you to work standard working hours only*' was not included in the list of constructs more important to women in Project One, but the qualitative analysis of sex differences in Project One (section 4.4) suggested that there was a stronger (emotional) reaction to the subject from the female interviewees. There is a consistency, therefore, in its identification here in Project Two. It is also consistent with findings in the work values literature (see section 2.3 above). The attribute '*offer a very high starting salary*' was not identified as more important to male respondents in Project One, but the similar, '*excellent salary prospects*', was (note: this attribute was not included in the shortlist to be taken in to Project Two). This finding is also consistent with the work values literature (section 2.3). Overall, it is suggested that the degree of similarity on these sex differences between Project One and Project Two is sufficient to provide contributory evidence of the validity of the results (see section 6.8.2 above).

All of the ‘feminine organisation’ attributes (see section 6.2), i.e. ‘*have a friendly, informal culture*’, ‘*really care about their employees as individuals*’ and ‘*would require you to work standard working hours only*’, can be seen to be rated as higher in importance by the female respondents (figure 7.16) and, therefore, *the second part of proposition two is also supported*.

In figures 7.17 and 7.18 below, the ranked attributes (on importance) for male and female respondents are illustrated separately. It can be seen that whilst ‘*invest heavily in the training and development of their employees*’ is the top rated attribute for the male respondents, for the females it is ‘*really care about their employees as individuals*’. It can be seen also, however, that the two sets of rankings are similar, and a note should be made here about this *relative* importance of the attributes to the respondents – specifically, whether this differed between the males and females. To investigate this, Spearman’s *rho* was used to compare the male and female rankings: the result was extremely high: 0.95 (see Appendix N for details of the test results).

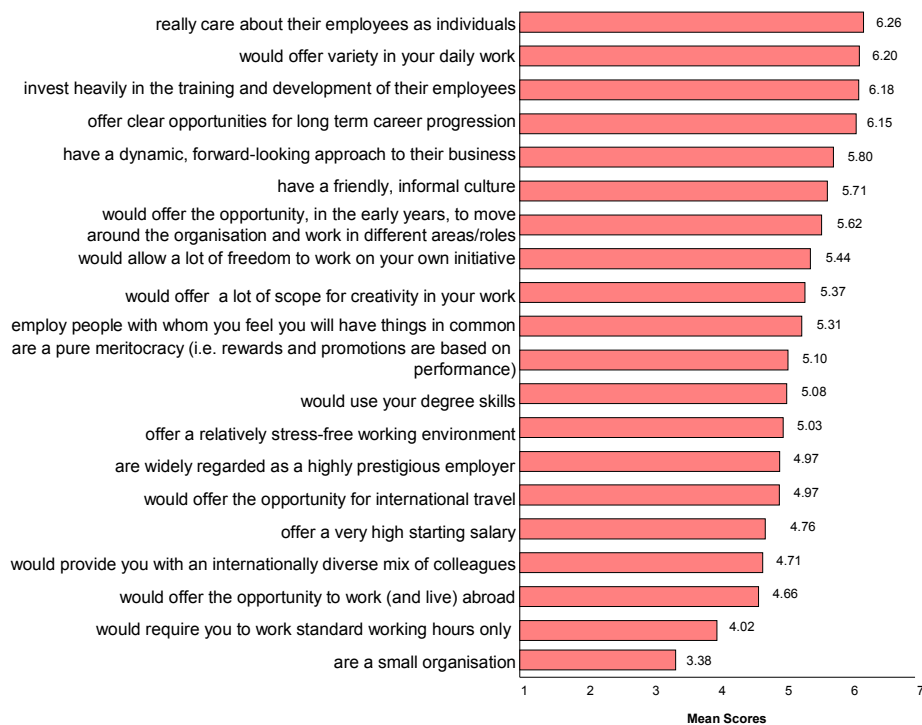


Figure 7.17 Mean Ratings of Attributes on Importance by Females (external survey)

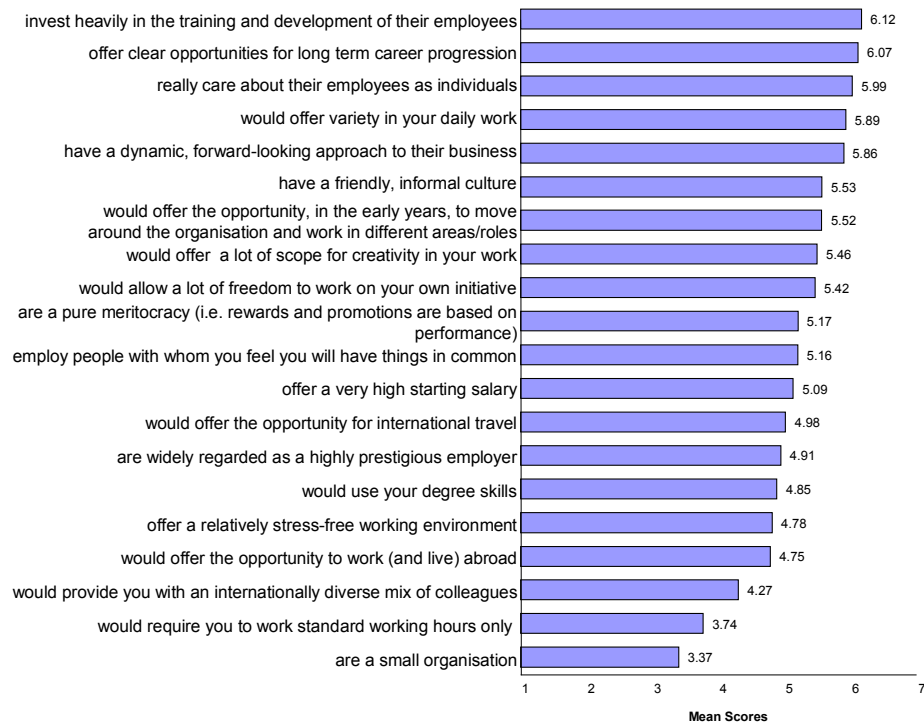


Figure 7.18 Mean Ratings of Attributes on Importance by Males (external survey)

7.5 Proposition Three

Proposition Three (P3): different factors will be identified (regarding the importance of attributes) for the male and female respondents

A summary of the factor analysis results for the importance of the attributes in 'selecting those organisations to whom you will submit a graduate job application' is shown in figure 7.19 below (full results can be found in Appendix O). The figure shows the results for the total sample and for the female and male samples separately (note: the order of presentation of the attributes and components have been adjusted, and shorter forms of the attribute names used, so as to aid review of the data).

Component	Total Sample		Females		Males	
1	work and live abroad	0.911	work and live abroad	0.915	work and live abroad	0.911
	international travel	0.889	international travel	0.891	international travel	0.901
	international colleagues	0.612	international colleagues	0.685	international colleagues	0.511
	move around	0.543	move around	0.513	move around	0.529
2	standard hours	0.732	standard hours	0.670	standard hours	0.765
	stress-free	0.681	stress-free	0.636	stress-free	0.698
	small	0.600	small	0.640	small	0.638
	use degree	0.527	use degree	0.577		
3	training	0.736	training	0.569	training	0.783
	long-term progression	0.643	long-term progression	0.544	long-term progression	0.633
	dynamic	0.519	dynamic	0.626	move around	0.421
	care about employees	0.513	care about employees	0.492		
			meritocracy	0.620		
4	care about employees	0.419	care about employees	0.523	care about employees	0.457
	things in common	0.765	things in common	0.687	things in common	0.763
	friendly, informal	0.653	friendly, informal	0.660	friendly, informal	0.692
	variety	0.547	variety	0.465	variety	0.518
5	freedom	0.826	freedom	0.831	freedom	0.785
	creativity	0.796	creativity	0.810	creativity	0.782
					dynamic	0.482
6	high salary	0.807	high salary	0.756	high salary	0.663
	prestigious	0.660	prestigious	0.766	prestigious	0.670
			long-term progression	0.514	meritocracy	0.602
7					use degree	0.803
					international colleague	0.568
% total variance explained	56%		58%		62%	

Figure 7.19 Summary of Factor Analysis: Importance of Attributes (external survey)

Firstly, the amount of total variance explained by these components should be noted, i.e. 56%, 58% and 62% (note: the *relative* size of the individual components was similar across the samples – see Appendix O). These percentages mean that there is an amount of variance that is *not* explained by these components, however, they are also sufficiently high as to warrant further analysis – Bu and McKeen (2001) state that values in the order of 55% (found in their own study on work values) are “generally considered acceptable”. The *alpha* values for each of the components can be found in Appendix O; generally, these are quite low, for example ranging (on the total sample) from 0.49 (for component 4) to 0.79 (for component 1). It is suggested that these values reflect the rigour of the content analysis process in Project One, which endeavoured to ensure that each attribute was distinct.

Looking firstly at the results for the total sample, it can be seen that some of the components are not easy to interpret in a way that is fully inclusive of all the attributes within them – what is the relation, for example, between ‘*variety*’ and the other attributes in component four? Perhaps the common theme is their contribution to an enjoyable working environment; in which case, this reveals something about the specific benefit that respondents ascribe to having variety in their day-to-day work. As another example, component one (total sample) seems to subsume two ideas (albeit not unrelated): ‘international’ and ‘mobility’. The first two attributes in the component (both of which have much higher loadings than the third and fourth attributes in the

component) are closely related to both ideas, whereas the third (‘*international colleagues*’) relates to ‘international’ but not necessarily to ‘mobility’, and the fourth (‘*move around*’) relates to ‘mobility’ but not necessarily to ‘international’. Interestingly, this international/mobility component is not a factor that has been found in the extant work values literature.

On the main issue of comparing the female and male samples, it can be seen that the components *do* vary between them. Most obviously, the male sample has produced seven components compared to the female sample’s six (this seventh component is hard to interpret, other than perhaps its possible relevance for language graduates). Also, putting the seventh male component aside for the moment, whilst there are similarities between the remaining six components across the male and female sample, there are also differences in the attributes therein for all but component(s) one and four. In sum, therefore, it is concluded that *proposition three is supported*.

The ideas of high pressure and long hours can be seen to come together in component two (for all samples), where it appears they are associated more with large organisations. For the female sample (but not the male) ‘*use degree*’ is also included in this component, possibly suggesting that the women find the idea of going in to an area about which they appear to have no previous relevant knowledge stressful. There is no supporting evidence for such a conclusion from the interviews conducted in Project One, however, Bu and McKeen (2001) found a factor in their study, which they labelled ‘simplicity/routine’, containing ‘use of specific educational background’ along with ‘clear rules and procedures’, ‘regular routine’ and ‘task variety’. The most common reason given by both sexes in Project One for the importance of this ‘*use degree*’ attribute was the desire not to ‘waste’ the investment in one’s degree course - “*I’d feel there was no point in doing the degree*” – linked to a sense of being valued as an individual, as opposed to just ‘graduate fodder’ to be (re)moulded in to the corporate ‘shape’ – “*you have to go back to the beginning and you have to start over again ...they take away from you as an individual and give you their [company name] mindset*”. Perhaps the concept of being valued for one’s individual skills/contribution is seen as more achievable in a small company and that is, then, the key link for ‘*use degree*’ within the component.

‘*Training*’ and ‘*long term progression*’ appear in component three for both females and males; the attribute ‘*move around*’ is related to these for the male sample only. This is consistent with the finding in Project One that the main benefits male interviewees saw to moving around their employing organisation focussed on skills and experience building – “in essence on increased marketability” – as opposed to the females, who saw it as an opportunity to gain a clearer sense of what direction they might wish to follow in their careers. Also, in Project One, the association on the part of the women between the attribute ‘*invest heavily in the training and development of their employees*’ and a sense of being valued by the organisation is reflected here in the inclusion (for the female sample only) of ‘*care about employees*’ in component three.

No differences were found between the males and females in the qualitative analysis in Project One with regard to the attribute ‘*meritocracy*’, both stressed the importance of being recognised, and rewarded, for their individual contributions, e.g. “*recognised for*

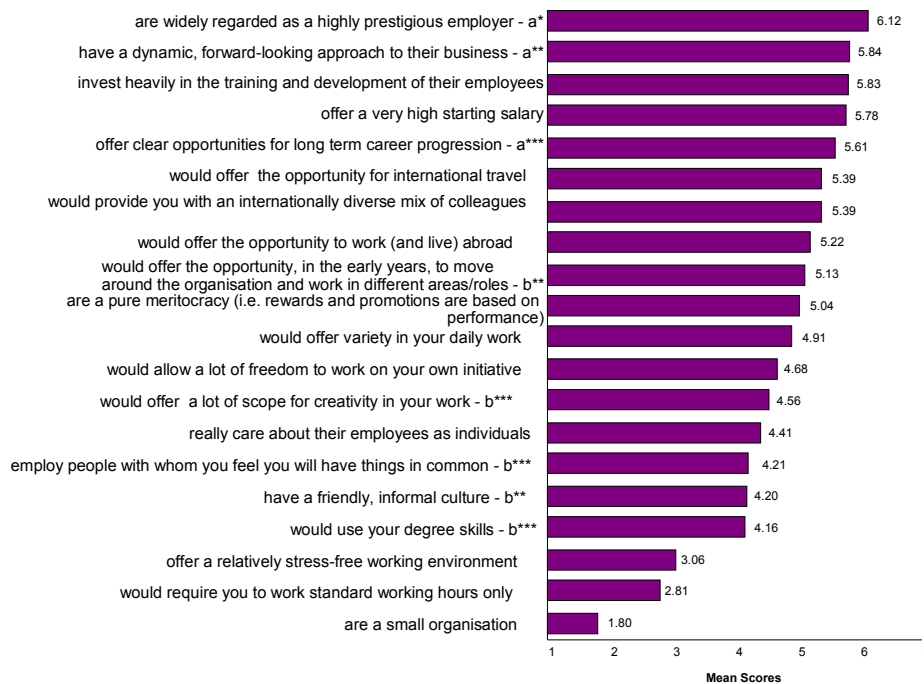
exceptional, high quality work”. The results of the factor analysis, however, suggest that the male sample (in Project Two) links this concept more explicitly, than the female, with monetary rewards. In the female sample, ‘*meritocracy*’ is linked with ‘*long term progression*’ (in component three), this, in turn, is then linked with ‘*high salary*’ in component six, so in a sense salary appears to be one step removed from performance for the female sample. Perhaps also, showing in component three, is a more specific link for the females between their being valued through the mechanism of a ‘*meritocracy*’ and the attribute ‘*really cares about its employees as individuals*’.

In summary, then, these results support the suggestion from Project One that ‘qualitative’ differences exist between the sexes as to the benefits they ascribe to attributes, but they provide direct support for differences on specific attributes in only some of the cases suggested in Project One.

7.6 Proposition Four

Proposition Four (P4): male and female respondents will have different perceptions of the Firm [1], and of the other organisations researched

The mean responses, for the total sample, on the ratings of the attributes in terms of their perceptions of the Firm are shown in figure 7.20 below. The figure shows that the highest mean rating (6.12) on this question was for the attribute ‘*are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer*’.



Significant differences between males and females: a=females rate higher; b= males rate higher

* $p = 0.05$

** $p = 0.01$

*** $p = 0.001$

Figure 7.20 Mean Ratings of Perceptions of the Firm (external survey)

At the other end of the scale, however, are found most of the attributes that have been identified above (figure 7.16) as being more important to female respondents. Specifically, those eight attributes occupy positions 7, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19 (out of 20) in the ranking of attributes for the Firm (i.e. in figure 7.20 above) – in addition, the ‘absolute’ values for most of these attributes are also low, with the last six approximating to ratings of ‘*somewhat disagree*’ or ‘*neither agree nor disagree*’.

The ratings given to each of the three organisations for the attribute ‘*are a small organisation*’ were very low (less than 2 in all cases – i.e. the mean response was to ‘*disagree*’) – see, for example, figure 7.20. As proposed in section 6.8.2 (‘Validity’) above, this result provides evidence of the survey instrument’s concurrent validity. It is also interesting to note that statistically significant differences were found to be present between different pairs of the three organisations on fifteen of the twenty attributes – see Appendix S – confirming that students are able to differentiate between potential employers even at this relatively early stage of the job search process.

On figure 7.20 above, asterisks identify those attributes on which the ratings given to the Firm were found to be (statistically) significantly different between the male and female respondents – the results of the associated *t* tests can be found in Appendix P. There are differences between males and females on seven of the twenty attributes. Differences were also found for the Media Corporation (fifteen differences between the sexes) and the Investment Bank (six differences) – the results for these other organisations are also in Appendix P – it is not clear why there are so many more for the Media Corporation, but this might be an interesting issue for future investigation. The existence of these differences, across three separate organisations, provides evidence that male and female respondents hold different images of potential employers – this is explored further, with the factor analysis, below.

A summary of those attributes on which statistically significant differences were found on the ratings between males and females for the Firm is provided below in figure 7.21. It is clear that the issue is not as simple as the female respondents having a *lower* opinion of the Firm than the male respondents on all the attributes.

Attributes on which the firm is rated more highly by:	
Females	Males
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer • Have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business • Offer clear opportunities for long-term career progression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles • Would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work • Employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common • Would use your degree skills

Figure 7.21 Difference in Mean Ratings on Perceptions of the Firm by Females and Males (external survey)

Figures 7.22 and 7.23 below show the ranked attributes on perceptions of the Firm for male and female respondents separately – for both, the top rated attribute for the Firm is ‘are widely regarded as a prestigious employer’.

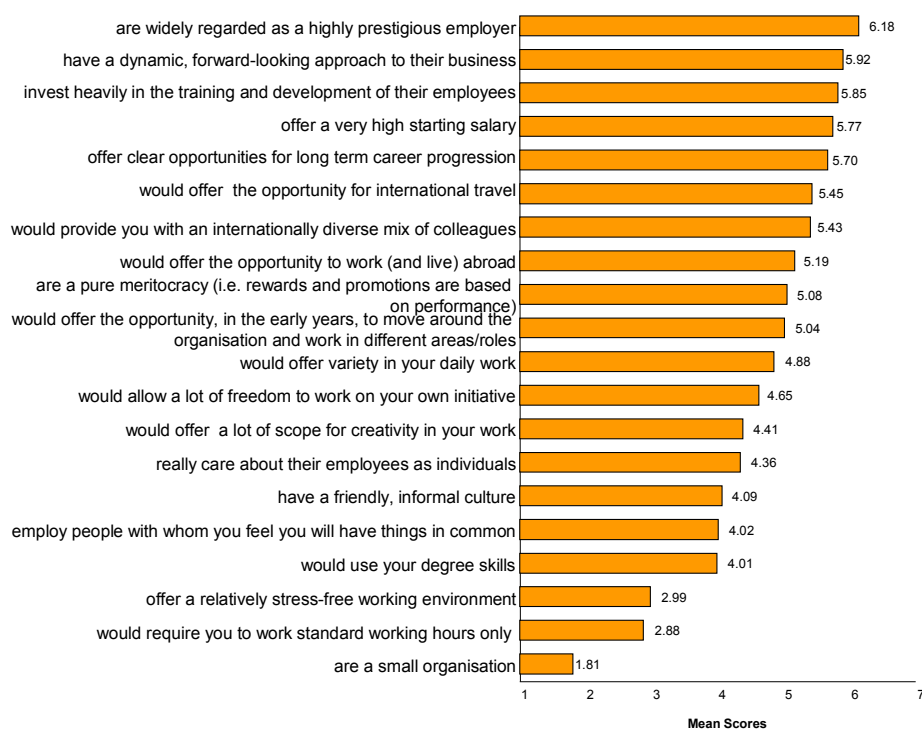


Figure 7.22 Mean Ratings on Perceptions of the Firm by Females (external survey)

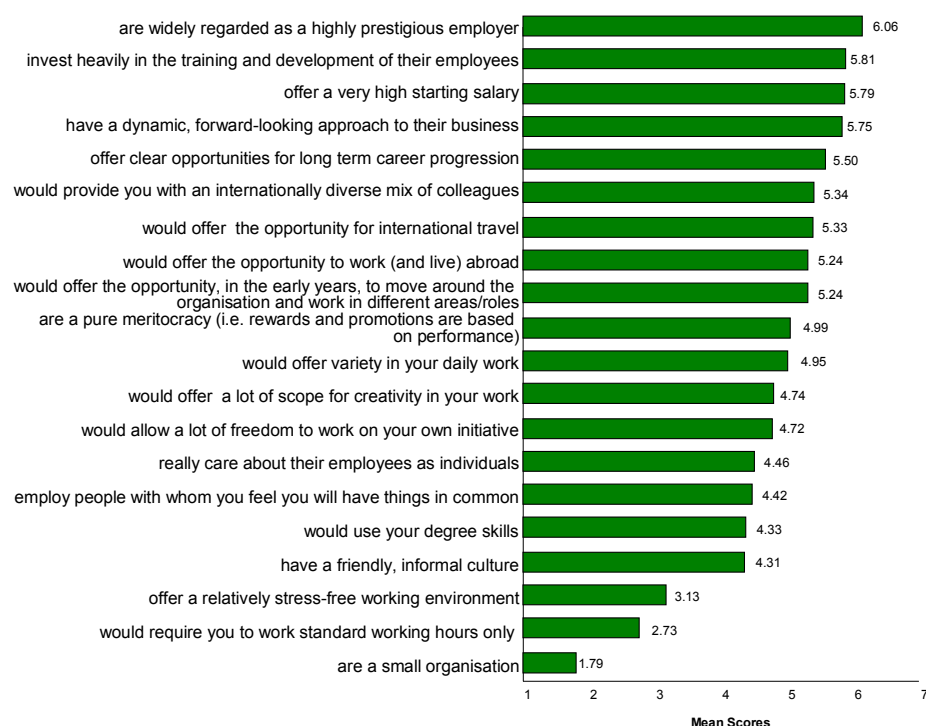


Figure 7.23 Mean Ratings on Perceptions of the Firm by Males (external survey)

On the *relative* ratings of the attributes, as with P2 above, the results of Spearman correlation tests (see Appendix Q) showed that male and female respondents *ranked* attributes very similarly, for all three organisations, with $r_s > 0.94$ in all cases.

A factor analysis was also performed on these data, i.e. on the survey responses relating to perceptions of the Firm (and the Media Corporation and the Investment Bank). The aim was, again (as in P3 above), to explore potential differences between male and female respondents. A summary of the results for the Firm (in the same format as that used for P3) is provided in figure 7.24 below (the full results for the factor analysis on all three organisations can be found in the Appendix R). The percentages of total variance explained by the factors can be seen to be similar to those in the factor analysis above (see P3); the *alpha* values, however, are considerably higher and more consistent for this factor analysis (Appendix R).

Component	Total Sample		Females		Males	
1	training	0.704	training	0.716	training	0.732
	long-term progression	0.701	long-term progression	0.708	long-term progression	0.645
	prestigious	0.700	prestigious	0.665	prestigious	0.734
	dynamic	0.608	dynamic	0.583	dynamic	0.617
	high salary	0.461	high salary	0.437	high salary	0.595
2			meritocracy	0.469	small	0.475
					international colleagues	0.405
	things in common	0.732	things in common	0.776	things in common	0.498
	use degree	0.682	use degree	0.617	care about employees	0.566
	care about employees	0.622	care about employees	0.698	friendly	0.601
3	friendly	0.616	friendly	0.610	standard hours	0.710
	creativity	0.458			stress-free	0.825
					small	0.497
	standard hours	0.825	standard hours	0.820		
	stress-free	0.745	stress-free	0.750		
4	small	0.679	small	0.700		
	high salary	-0.539	high salary	-0.562		
	work and live abroad	0.876	work and live abroad	0.868	work and live abroad	0.856
	international travel	0.859	international travel	0.842	international travel	0.853
	international colleagues	0.593	international colleagues	0.712	international colleagues	0.424
5	move around	0.458			move around	0.517
	freedom	0.697	freedom	0.718	freedom	0.749
	creativity	0.665	creativity	0.744	creativity	0.770
	variety	0.641	variety	0.725	variety	0.678
	meritocracy	0.596	meritocracy	0.500	meritocracy	0.458
% of variance explained					dynamic	0.477
					use degree	0.408
	62%		63%		57%	

Figure 7.24 Summary of Factor Analysis: Perceptions of the Firm (external survey)

Looking firstly at the components in the total sample, it is interesting to note that ‘*prestigious*’ is linked with ‘*training*’ and ‘*dynamic*’ (component one), suggesting that the Firm’s reputation for training and for leading in its own marketplace (as well as the high salaries it offers) are closely related to its high prestige as an employer.

Again, there are clear differences between the factors in the male and female samples, arguably more so than seen in P2. Possibly most interesting is the inverted relationship in component three for the female sample (but not the male) between ‘*high salary*’ and ‘*standard hours*’ and ‘*stress-free*’; this is consistent with some of the interview comments (not restricted to women) in Project One about high salaries coming “at a price”.

In summary, it is concluded that *proposition four is supported*.

7.7 Proposition Five

Proposition Five (P5): there will be differences between the male and female respondents in the attributes [k] that most influence their likelihood to apply to the Firm

A multiple regression analysis was undertaken between organisational attractiveness (with the organisational attributes as the independent variables) and likelihood to apply (as the dependent variable), for both the total sample and for the male and female samples separately. The latter enabled an investigation of whether the ‘power’ of specific attributes to predict the likelihood to apply differed between the female and male respondents. The results are summarised in figure 7.25 below (the full results can be found in Appendix T).

Total R² = 0.274		Females R² = 0.240		Males R² = 0.333	
Attributes*	<i>beta</i>	Attributes*	<i>beta</i>	Attributes*	<i>beta</i>
Employs people with whom you feel you will have things in common	0.199	Employs people with whom you feel you will have things in common	0.173	Employs people with whom you feel you will have things in common	0.178
Has a friendly, informal culture	0.110	Has a friendly, informal culture	0.136		
Offers the opportunity for international travel	0.127			Offers the opportunity for international travel	0.261
Provides you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	-0.104				
Uses my degree skills	0.96			Uses my degree skills	0.128
Really cares about their employees as individuals	0.112	Really cares about their employees as individuals	0.108	Really cares about their employees as individuals	0.130
Offers a very high starting salary	0.098			Offers a very high starting salary	0.148
Has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	0.073	Has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	0.108		
Requires you to work standard working hours only	-0.079				
Offers a lot of scope for creativity in your work	0.088				
				Widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	0.089
				Offers the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	-0.123

*statistically significant

Figure 7.25 Relationship between Attractiveness and Likelihood to Apply: Summary of Multiple Regression Results (external survey)

Figure 7.25 shows, for each of the three samples, those attributes that are significant in predicting likelihood to apply to the Firm, together with their associated *betas*, which

indicate the size and direction of their effect. The *R-squared* (R^2) values are also shown. All of these were found to be statistically significant at the $p = 0.001$ level (see Appendix T); for all three samples, however, R^2 is low. Even though “in the social sciences we are more likely to have poor predictors”, “so a total of 40 per cent is ... probable” (Oppenheim, 1992, p28), in the ‘worst case’ here (females) more than three-quarters of the variance is left unexplained by the regression analysis. It is suggested that at least part of the explanation for the ‘missing’ account (of the variance) is the reduction of the eighty four common constructs identified in Project One to the short-list of twenty for the survey in Project Two (this could be explored in a future study). It is interesting that the attributes ‘explain’ more of the ‘likelihood to apply’ in the case of the male respondents than the female respondents. Bartol (1976), in a study of “expectancy theory as a predictor of female *occupational* choice and attitude toward business” [italics added], found her data indicated “that there possibly may be some differences in expectancy theory results due to the sex factor”. In that case, the model appeared to be a weaker predictor for women, than men, of attitude towards occupations.

Figure 7.25 shows that the most important predictor of likelihood to apply, for the sample as a whole, is *‘employs people with whom you feel you will have things in common’*. This is also the most important for the female sample; it is no less important in absolute terms for the males, but another attribute is more important, in relative terms, in the male sample: *‘offers the opportunity for international travel’*. It is important to stress that prediction is not the same as causation: the true effect may in fact work in reverse, or in some other dynamic altogether. However, “this does not prevent the use of regression equations for making predictions”; it is just that “their existence does not provide support for causality” (Black, 1999, p694). This fact may help in understanding what might seem rather surprising results (in the above) of inverse relationships between ‘organisational attractiveness’ and ‘likelihood to apply’, in particular on the attribute *‘requires you to work standard working hours only’*. It is difficult to believe that most people would have as one of their criteria for selecting an employer that it *requires* them to work long hours. It is possible to see, however, how a young person, who has already determined (based on other criteria) that s/he will apply to an organisation with a reputation for intensive work hours, might decide that having to work long hours is in fact something of a ‘badge of honour’.

What conclusions, then, *can* be drawn from the results of the regression analysis? “Interpreting regression information is not an easy task” – “particularly when trying to avoid statements that sound like expressions of causality” (Black, 1999, p669). Bearing both this, and the comments above about the R^2 values, in mind, the conclusions that follow tend toward the conservative. Firstly, the results provide further evidence that there are differences between the female and male respondents in relation to their assessments of the Firm’s attractiveness and their likelihood to apply to the Firm. Specifically, the nature of the predictor attributes and their relative strengths differ between the male and female samples, and so *proposition five is supported*. Secondly, simply put, the results suggest that those women who value, and/or rate the Firm more highly on, the predictor attributes are also the women most likely to apply to the Firm. The predictor attributes being (in descending order of importance – see *beta* values) *‘employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common’*, *‘have a*

friendly, informal culture, *‘really care about their employees as individuals’* and *‘have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business’*. (Note: these results are very particular to the Firm, so cannot be compared directly with the data from some of the earlier propositions).

7.8 Proposition Six

Proposition Six (P6): there will be differences between the females who are and are not likely to apply to the Firm on the valence [V] and/or instrumentality [I] of key attributes

Whilst the regression results above do not provide any evidence relating to causality, they clearly imply that actions to address the four predictor attributes identified for women might prove fruitful in increasing the numbers of female undergraduates applying to the Firm.

A deconstruction of attractiveness in to its constituent parts provides valuable additional understanding regarding any such remedial action. Two new samples were created comprising all the female respondents not likely to apply to the Firm (attracting more applications from women being the issue under research) and all the female respondents likely to apply (see section 6.9.1 above). The mean ratings for the instrumentality (*I*) and valence (*V*) of the four predictor attributes were compared for the two samples and the differences checked for statistical significance using the *t* test (see Appendix U for *t* test results); the results are shown in figure 7.26 below.

Attribute	Valence (<i>V</i>)			Instrumentality (<i>I</i>) of Firm		
	Females unlikely to apply	Females likely to apply	Sig.* (2-tailed)	Females unlikely to apply	Females likely to apply	Sig.* (2-tailed)
Employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	5.47	5.19	*	3.28	4.96	***
Have a friendly, informal culture	5.78	5.72		3.55	4.94	***
Really care about their employees as individuals	6.22	6.24		3.89	5.21	***
Have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	5.61	6.18	***	5.65	6.33	***

**p* = 0.05

***p* = 0.01

****p* = 0.001

Figure 7.26 Differences between ‘Female Apply’ and ‘Female Not Apply’ for Four Predictor Attributes (external survey)

As can be seen, there are statistically significant differences on all of the instrumentality (*I*) ratings and two of the four valence (*V*) ratings, and *proposition six is supported*.

Arguably, changing perceptions about the Firm is a more realistic goal than attempting to change the more fundamental views that students hold as to the importance of organisational attributes. These results suggest then that, in order to attract more job

applications from female undergraduates, the Firm should focus its efforts on ‘improving’ the perceptions that this group has of it as regards the four predictor attributes.

7.9 Proposition Seven

Proposition Seven (P7): female and male UAT members will hold the same ‘internal images’ of the Firm

The mean ‘internal image’ (see figure 6.2) ratings on the attributes for male and female respondents (UAT members) on the *internal* survey were compared using *t* tests (see Appendix V). Only two statistically significant differences were found: males respondents (UAT members) rated the Firm more highly on the attributes ‘*has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business*’ and ‘*offers a lot of creativity in your work*’. It is not clear why differences should be present on these attributes in particular and this could be an interesting question to pursue in the future.

It was concluded that *proposition seven was partly supported*.

7.10 Proposition Eight

Proposition Eight (P8): the perceptions of the Firm against each of the (n) attributes will be the same for the undergraduate respondents and UAT members

Referring back to Figure 6.2 above, the perceptions (mean ratings) of the Firm against each of the attributes for internal, external and construed image are shown in figure 7.27, along with an indication of the statistically significant differences between them (full *t* test results can be found in Appendix W).

Attributes	Internal Image	Construed Image	External Image	Internal vs Construed Image	Internal vs External Image	Construed vs External Image
Offers the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	4.25	5.88	5.13	***	***	***
employs people with whom you feel you will have things in common	5.85	5.51	4.21	***	***	***
allows a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	4.99	5.13	4.68	*	***	***
has a friendly, informal culture	5.17	4.78	4.20	***	***	***
offers the opportunity for international travel	4.97	6.12	5.39	***	***	***
provides you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	5.78	5.78	5.39	-	***	***
uses my degree skills	3.85	4.78	4.16	***	***	***
really cares about their employees as individuals	4.66	4.89	4.41	**	**	***
is a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	4.58	5.51	5.04	***	***	***
offers the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	4.67	5.97	5.22	***	***	***
offers a very high starting salary	6.1	6.47	5.78	***	***	***
offers clear opportunities for long-term career progression	5.79	5.96	5.61	***	**	***
offers variety in your daily work	5.22	5.79	4.91	***	***	***
invests heavily in the training and development of its employees	5.31	6.05	5.83	***	***	***
has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	5.99	5.91	5.84	-	**	-
is a small organisation	1.59	1.91	1.80	***	***	-
requires you to work standard working hours only	1.65	2.59	2.81	***	***	***
offers a lot of scope for creativity in your work	4.55	5.09	4.56	***	-	***
offers a relatively stress-free working environment	2.81	3.02	3.06	**	***	-
is widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	6.35	6.56	6.12	***	***	***

- = Not significant

* $p = 0.050$

** $p = 0.010$

*** $p = 0.001$

Figure 7.27 Mean Ratings and Statistically Significant Differences for Internal, External and Construed Images (external and internal survey)

It can be seen that there are statistically significant differences between the internal and external images (some ratings being higher and some lower for each) on all but one of the twenty attributes. Thus, *proposition eight is not supported*.

There are also differences (see figure 7.27) on the large majority of attributes between the internal and construed images and between the external and construed images. On the former, in most cases the construed image rating is higher than the internal image rating. The two attributes on which the construed image is *lower* are *'employs people with whom you feel you will have things in common'* and *'has a friendly, informal culture'* (it is perhaps not surprising that the former is rated higher by employees than non-employees). If UAT members identify strongly with the Firm (see section 2.6), we might expect them to be motivated to address perceived weaknesses, such as the two attributes above, in their interactions with undergraduates (see section 2.6 in the literature review). Other attributes that could be interpreted, in this way, as weaknesses for the Firm are those whose absolute rating for construed image was close to three (approximating to *'somewhat unimportant'* on the 7-point Likert scale) or less. Three further attributes can be identified on this basis: *'are a small organisation'*, *'would require me to work standard working hours only'* and *'offer a relatively stress-free working environment'* (figure 7.27).

The comparisons of external and construed images show that there are only three attributes on which UAT members' assessments of undergraduates' perceptions of the Firm are accurate: *'has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business'*, *'is a small organisation'* and *'offers a relatively stress-free working environment'*. On sixteen of the remaining attributes, the rating for construed image is higher than that for external image (*'requires you to work standard working hours only'* being the exception). On the majority of the attributes, then, UAT members believe the Firm's image amongst undergraduates is better than it actually is, and these may, therefore, represent areas in which problems are not being identified or addressed. These include three of the four attributes identified above (see section 7.8) as predictors for female undergraduates' likelihood to apply to the Firm.

In summary then, as can be seen in figure 7.28, six of the eight propositions were supported, and one partly supported.

Proposition	Supported by Results?
P1. Attractiveness scores [A] for the Firm, and the other organisations researched, will be positively correlated with likelihood to apply (for a job)	Yes
P2. Some organisational attributes [k] will be more important [V] to the female respondents than to the male, and vice versa, with those attributes consistent with feminine organisational characteristics being more important to the female respondents	Yes
P3. Different factors will be identified (regarding the importance of attributes) for the male and female respondents	Yes
P4. Male and female respondents will have different perceptions of the Firm [I], and of the other organisations researched	Yes
P5. There will be differences between the male and female respondents in the attributes [k] that most influence their likelihood to apply to the Firm	Yes
P6. There will be differences between the females who are and are not likely to apply to the Firm on the valence [V] and/or instrumentality [I] of key attributes	Yes
P7. Female and male UAT members will hold the same 'internal images' of the Firm	Partly
P8. The perceptions of the Firm against each of the (n) attributes will be the same for the undergraduate respondents and UAT members	No

Figure 7.28 Summary of Propositions and Results

8 CHAPTER EIGHT: DISCUSSION OF PROJECT TWO

8.1 Research Design

It was concluded that the questionnaire design worked well and that the data that were produced were of a high quality. The response rates and resulting sample sizes were strong. The choice of a survey delivered all that was required for the external data, and the benefits of ‘triangulating’ with some of the work from Project One was tangible during the analysis phase. The author felt some frustration, however, regarding the limitations of the survey for the internal data (which was new ground): for example, it raised (unanswered) ‘why’ questions about what lay behind the numbers. Nevertheless, it was important to obtain quantitative data from both (the internal and external) groups at the same time so that they could be compared, and there was still an opportunity to investigate the ‘qualitative’ aspects of the internal data in Project Three – resource constraints would not have allowed its inclusion in Project One. As touched upon in the discussion on surveys above (see section 6.3.1), the preparation work necessary for the surveys was indeed found to be extensive, but (compared to qualitative data) the post-fieldwork stages were relatively time-efficient.

In terms of the questionnaire design, the key concern, borne out in the field, was the length of the survey. The *Ideal Employer* question had been included as a safety-check on the polarity of the attributes (as used in Project One: see section 3.9.3); with the benefit of hindsight, this was overly cautious. It would have been more beneficial to sacrifice this question and reduce the overall length of the survey, which may have resulted in an increased (non-suspect) completion rate. The experience of using the Internet to host the surveys was very positive (but it should be recognised that the target audience for both surveys was probably more Internet-savvy than many other groups). The approaches used to ‘manage’ non-response, e.g. the reminder and ‘reasons for non-response’ emails, were both efficient and effective. The piloting was found to be very valuable, providing some important insights. The key aspect of the design that the author *would* change if the project was repeated would be the fieldwork periods; the project experience suggested that the fieldwork period for the external survey could have been shortened with little ill effect and that the internal survey might have benefited from a little longer in the field. Finally, reliability and validity held up well to the tests that were conducted, but doubtless more could have been done in this area if substantially more resources and time had been available.

The importance of the discipline of developing propositions at the start of the research design process was clear during the early stages of the project (such as sample and questionnaire design), but really came to the fore during the analysis phase. With so many data available, it would have been very easy to have become lost on a ‘fishing trip’, but such problems were kept at bay by focusing on the propositions. That being said, it is clear that a rich database has been created and that additional analysis, beyond that conducted and reported here, might produce further fruitful insights (see, for example, section 1.6.2 above). Similarly, the focus gained from the use of Vroom’s attractiveness model underlined the value of conceptual frameworks in research design. Vroom’s model was used here in a between-subjects design; whilst this appears to be

the most common mode of application (including by Vroom himself), it should be noted that Baker *et al* (1989) suggest that “expectancy theory is best tested using a within-subjects design”. Kennedy *et al* (1983, p141), in their own empirical comparison of the two approaches, however, concluded that “for applied purposes the between-subjects correlation method is more useful”.

Possibly the key weakness of the study is its non-random sample; strictly speaking this means that (many of) the results cannot be generalised to the population of interest, defined above (section 6.4.1) as final year undergraduates (at targeted UK universities), looking to start their careers shortly after graduating. This is because inferential statistics require data from a random sample (Neuman, 2000, p341). As has already been mentioned, it is seemingly rare that studies do manage to achieve a truly random sample (section 6.4.1); nevertheless, it was a considerable disappointment to the author that it was not possible to implement a random sampling approach. These issues notwithstanding, it is felt that the efforts put in to managing the sampling process resulted in a sample that was robust - and the ‘fallback’ sampling solution, of using the TargetedGRAD service, was felt to work well. In sum, it is proposed that the results are a good reflection of the views of final year undergraduates, at the UK’s leading universities, with an active interest in potential employers.

8.2 Results

8.2.1 Introduction

Project Two met its stated objectives (see section 6.1): to explore (further) sex differences in the importance attached to the organisational attributes identified and short-listed in Project One; to identify the perceptions of the Firm (and sex differences therein) against these attributes; and to identify the impact of the above on female undergraduates’ intentions to apply to the Firm.

Before discussing the propositions (section 6.2), a number of general observations need to be made about the data. Firstly, it is clear that there are a number of similarities, as well as differences, between the responses from male and female respondents (e.g. the results of the Spearman’s *rho* test). The focus of the research is not on similarities or differences *per se*, however, but on the existence of differences that may explain differences in behaviour. The inclusion of the ‘likelihood to apply’ in the data set is important in this regard, although it is recognized that the stated *intention* to apply does not necessarily translate in to an actual application (see ‘Potential Areas for Further Research’). It is also important to recognise that whilst a difference may be significant in *statistical* terms, this does not necessarily mean that it is sufficiently large to have an impact in the real world (Neuman, 2000, p338; Black, 1999, p56). Again, the ability to analyse data in relation to ‘likelihood to apply’ helps to build confidence in practical significance. Translating the numbers back in to their scale ‘meanings’ can also be helpful, for example on proposition six above it can be seen that the ‘unlikely to apply’ group’s perceptions of the Firm mostly relate to answers of ‘*somewhat disagree*’ or ‘*neither agree nor disagree*’ on the questionnaire (see figure 7.26), whereas the answers

from the ‘likely to apply’ group approximate to ‘agree’, a difference which (it can be argued) has relevance with regard to practical effect.

Secondly, with regard to the key variables, the results (section 7.2) have shown that course type may be an intervening variable (between sex and ‘likelihood to apply’) - in particular the fact that women are more likely to study arts and that female arts students are less likely to apply to the Firm (than female science students). Male arts students were found to be *more* likely (than those studying science) to apply to the Firm, however, and in their meta-analysis of sex differences and similarities in job attribute preferences, Konrad *et al* (2000, p614) found that “the overall pattern was equivocal regarding the notion that women and men pursuing the same undergraduate major have more similar job attribute preferences than those pursuing different majors”. Given the above, it is proposed here that the issue may be more to do with a different attitude between men and women towards the application of their degrees than with the nature of the degree itself. Under proposition two, for example, the attribute ‘*would use your degree skills*’ was found to be more important to the female respondents (than the male) in their assessment of potential employers and the attribute also appeared from the factor analysis (figure 7.19) to have different connotations for the men and the women.

It has been beyond the scope of the present research to investigate other potential intervening variables (than course type). It would be interesting to investigate, however, whether such issues as family influences and (part-time) work experience (e.g. gained in adolescence or whilst at college) might co-vary by sex in the context of organisational attractiveness. Finally, it should also be noted that, at the most basic level, ‘sex’ as a variable can itself be called in to question: as Sagie *et al* (1996, p506) argue “it is likely that gender, race, and age do not directly impact work values but are actually surrogates for societal roles, socialization and expectations”. Sex as an overt demographic is clearly central to the research question in this instance, but (consistent with Sagie *et al*’s argument) the possibility of extending the present research to explore underlying dynamics in more depth is included in the discussion on ‘Opportunities for Further Research’ above (section 1.6.2).

8.2.2 The Propositions

The results of the research related to Proposition One show that, for the organisations included here, there is a correlation between organisational attractiveness and ‘likelihood to apply’ (see figures 7.12 to 7.14) and they, thereby, support Vroom’s attractiveness model. A test of the model *per se* was not a key objective of this study, but it was a necessary check as the research design utilised the model as a founding framework. This result does provide a contribution to the literature, however, as only one other application, of this kind, of the model to the applications stage of the organisational choice process has been found (Lawler, Kuleck *et al*, 1975) – and this earlier study did not investigate behavioural intentions (nor sex differences).

As reported above (section 7.3), the correlation coefficients (in proposition one) were moderate in value. A number of suggestions can be made as to what, therefore, is ‘missing’ from the model. Firstly, it could be that ‘expectancy’ (see section 6.1) does

indeed play some role (though perhaps not exactly as predicted by expectancy theory). For example, it is recalled that many of the students contacted regarding non-response to the survey were suffering from a heavy workload, perhaps, then, they would not want to feel they were wasting time by filling out a (lengthy) application form if they believed that their application was unlikely to progress very far with that particular organisation. Specific to the present research, it is proposed that the reduction of the (eighty four common) constructs found in Project One to a much shorter attribute list, for use in Project Two, is likely to have had an impact on the degree of correlation. In sum, however, this question (of moderate correlation) would be an interesting area for further research.

The results from proposition two showed that the importance of the organisational attributes varied between the sexes and that those attributes considered to be characteristic of 'feminine' organisations were rated as more important by the women than the men. This is consistent with the recently published meta-analysis by Konrad *et al* (2000, p604), the results of which supported their prediction that "sex differences in job attribute preferences would be consistent with gender roles and stereotypes". In addition, they found that "most of the largest sex differences were associated with the gender stereotype that interpersonal relationships are more important to women". A key difference, however, is that the findings of the present study refer to *organisational* attributes (and the gendering of same), which is a different perspective than previous studies, which appear to have focused on the level of individual jobs. In the present study, for example, females were found to place a greater importance, than males, on the following attributes, none of which have been found to have direct equivalents in the literature: *'have a friendly, informal culture'*, *'employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common'*, *'really care about their employees as individuals'*, *'offer a relatively stress-free environment'* and *'would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues'*.

Furthermore, the work done in both Project One and Project Two to probe a little deeper into respondents' preferences for the constructs/attributes – through qualitative analysis of differences (section 4.4) and factor analysis (section 7.5) – also produced apparently new insights regarding sex differences. The fact that men and women may ascribe different benefits to organisational attributes, for example, may help to explain empirical results (see comment about course type in 8.2.1 above). In addition, the finding, under proposition three, of different factors for the male and female respondents (figure 7.19) suggests that the practice of determining sex differences based on quantitative differences across a *common* set of factors (see Bu & McKeen, 2001, in the work values literature, for example) may not be warranted.

The use of Vroom's attractiveness model introduced (and helped to investigate) the issue of organisational images and perceptions, i.e. to move beyond the focus on 'importance' (of attributes) that is characteristic of the work values literature. It was found that the perceptions of the organisations researched varied between the sexes, both in terms of their ratings and in the ways in which their perceptions were 'organised' (see section 7.6). The reasons for this are not clear – there does not appear to be any comparable research reported in the literature. It was proposed, in section 6.2, above that sex differences in perception may exist because of sex differences in

valences. This may be the case, but there is no evidence of a ‘linear’ relationship to this effect: the attributes for which sex differences are present were found to be different for ‘perception’ and ‘importance’ (see figures 7.19 and 7.21). This area would be an interesting one to explore further in a future study.

The results of Proposition Five allowed identification of the specific attributes that predict likelihood to apply to the Firm (figure 7.25) – and confirmed that these were different for the male and female respondents. Further, the results of proposition nine pinpointed the areas of its image to which the Firm should attend with regard to the female undergraduates who are currently unlikely to apply to it (section 7.8). It can be seen, therefore, that the use of the Vroom model facilitated the development of highly practicable results, and this is a great strength of the study.

As suggested in section 6.2, the results of Proposition Seven (that male and female UAT members have similar perceptions of the Firm) provide some evidence to support the presence and effects of socialization (although it is recognised that it is not known whether there are sex differences in the images of the Firm on the part of those who have accepted job offers and are about to join). Although internal image is not a direct corollary for organisational identity, this finding is interesting in the context of the question posed by Ashforth and Mael (1996): “does a diverse organisational workforce impair the development and internalisation of an overarching [organizational identity]?” – possibly not.

The final tranche of results relate to proposition eight and the work done to operationalise the variables in figure 6.2 (recreated in figure 8.1).

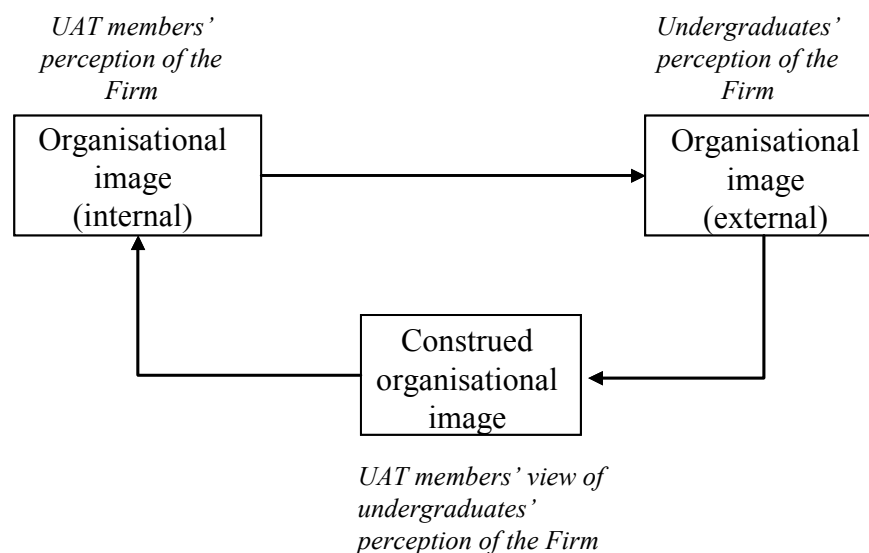


Figure 8.1 Internal, External and Construed Images (adapted from Dukerich & Carter, 2000, p104)

Firstly, proposition eight (based on Kennedy's, 1977, earlier finding; see section 6.2), was not supported – internal and external images were found to be different. As was stated above (section 6.2), the system depicted in figure 8.1 is not 'closed': Dowling's (1986) model (covered in the literature review; see section 2.5) identifies multiple inputs to both 'internal image' and 'external image'. Given this, it is not difficult to see how the two might come to differ, neither does the finding (by itself) negate findings in other studies (see section 2.4) that emphasise the importance of interpersonal interaction in forming potential recruits' image of an organisation. It does suggest an interesting question, however, as to whether employees project their own (or a different) image of their employer when they are dealing with potential recruits.

It would be interesting also to investigate whether or not differences in internal and external images fall away as recruitment progresses. Jablin (2001) examined the importance of communication during the entry process since it serves as a form of anticipatory socialization for new organisational recruits and provides them with certain expectations. He concluded that job applicants have unrealistic, 'inflated' expectations about the organisations in which they are seeking employment. This suggests that even close to the point of (organisational) entry, the system in figure 8.1 will not be stable, i.e. there will be differences still between external and internal images.

The other results relating to figure 8.1 (see section 7.10) suggest that some negative perceptions of the Firm may be going undetected, or being incorrectly interpreted, (and, thereby, not addressed) by UAT members. It was decided that these would be fruitful issues to pursue further in Project Three.

8.3 Implications for the Firm

Four predictor attributes for female undergraduates (regarding likelihood to apply to the Firm) were identified under proposition six, and it was suggested that the Firm's image on these four should form the focus for action.

It is suggested that the attribute *'have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business'* is the least critical of the four in terms of need for attention. – it can be seen in figure 7.26 that, even for those 'females unlikely to apply', the instrumentality ratings for the Firm are reasonably high (so there is less scope for improvement). It is also the Firm's second highest ranked attribute, by the female respondents (see figure 7.22); and the Firm was actually rated higher by the female, than the male, respondents on this attribute (see figure 7.21).

It seems highly likely, however, that the Firm's image regarding *'has a friendly, informal culture'* and *'really cares about its employees as individuals'* needs to be improved if it is to attract more job applications from female undergraduates. These areas could be addressed with marketing messages and programmes in a variety of ways; such messages would need to take in to account some of the findings of this study regarding sex differentials in benefits ascribed to attributes. For example, women may take investment in training as a signal that an organisation cares about its employees

(see section 4.4). Training is a strong image area for the Firm (see figure 7.20) and was also the most important attribute to the sample as a whole (see figure 7.15), so this is an area in which further ‘maintenance’ investment might be well spent. It would be recommended, however, that the ‘caring’ (investment) aspects of training be brought more to the fore in order to maximise the impact amongst female undergraduates. Bearing this example in mind, it quickly becomes clear, in thinking through potential remedial actions, that an intermediate step is needed, namely developing an understanding of what cues might lead female undergraduates to draw the conclusion that the Firm is, for example, ‘friendly’. In particular, there is a need to be aware of potential sex differences regarding such cues; for example, drinking as a way of socialising with colleagues might be seen as ‘friendly’ by (the mostly male) UAT members, but impressions of a drinking culture might not be taken as a sign of a friendly culture by females.

On both of these attributes (‘*has a friendly, informal culture*’ and ‘*really cares about its employees as individuals*’) the reality inside the Firm appears to be better than the perception outside – i.e. ratings for internal image are higher than those for external image. This suggests that there is potential for employees’ ‘stories’ in these areas to be of value. For example, during focus groups with new joiners to the Firm, conducted as part of the *Balanced Workforce* initiative (see section 1.1.3), several new employees commented on their surprise (once they got in to the Firm) at how much personal attention they received. For example, those people who had interviewed them during the recruitment process had contacted them in their first few days to welcome them and offer ongoing support. Another strong aspect of the Firm’s culture is the personal mentoring that takes place, and this may play particularly well to females’ concept of caring about employees.

Of particular importance is the need for action to address any concerns about ‘*employs people with whom you feel you will have things in common*’ – this was the key ‘predictor’ identified in the regression analysis, for the sample as a whole as well as for females in particular. It is an interesting attribute, because by its very nature it is likely to mean very different things to different segments of the talent market. It has already been mentioned that degree type may be a factor of ‘commonality’ that should be emphasised with female undergraduates; sex, of course, is the most obvious other demographic that could be addressed in this regard. This has been recognised as part of the *Balanced Workforce* programme (see section 1.1.2) and a number of initiatives are already underway in this area, for example the percentage of those UAT members presenting at campus events who are female is being monitored (it is currently 35%, equivalent to the current sex split in employees). Also, care is taken that photographs and case studies used on the Firm’s careers website and in recruitment collateral provide a good representation of the Firm’s diversity of employees. Of course, a balance needs to be struck *vis a vis* the profile for males as well, given that ‘*employs people with whom you feel you will have things in common*’ was also found to be very important to the male respondents. Again, it would be valuable to identify any further aspects of ‘commonality’ that should be highlighted, through discussion with the target group of young women.

It is also worth reviewing the differences between the male and female respondents on the subject of money. '*Offers a very high starting salary*' was found to be a more important attribute for the men (see figure 7.16) and was also identified as one of the 'predictors' of likelihood to apply to the Firm for the men, but not for the women (see figure 7.25). Salary was identified as less important for the female respondents. Furthermore, the factor analysis revealed that, in relation to their perceptions of the Firm, the female respondents saw an inverse relationship between salary and both '*offer a relatively stress-free environment*' and '*would require you to work standard working hours only*' (see figure 7.24). This is a good example of how messages targeted at one group (e.g. males) may have an adverse effect on another (e.g. females). In reality there is a limit to how much can be done to segment message delivery to avoid this – most channels to market are too broad in scope (e.g. Internet). Often the only option is to create new, segmented channels, such as the women's workshops mentioned in the 'Introduction' (section 1.1.2) or adopting a 'diversity' section on a careers website that talks explicitly to women. The difficulty with this approach is the potential negative response from female (and male) undergraduates to an explicit calling-out of issues around the gendering of organisations (see chapter 5). In terms of the practical challenges here of balancing messages so as to ensure a positive end result, it is likely that each (marketing) opportunity will need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Another implication of the findings is the need for these ratings (of valence and image etc) to be tracked on a regular basis, i.e. as part of the Firm's market research programme, and to be analysed separately for males and female undergraduates as well as for the total sample. In addition, it would be valuable to introduce the regression analysis tool employed in this study on an ongoing basis. Whilst there is clearly much that is *not* explained by the regression (see section 7.7 above), it plays a valuable role in facilitating a tighter focussing of resources on a small number of areas. This is important in terms of both efficiency (by virtue of potential budget implications) and effectiveness (e.g. through the potentially greater impact of a small number of messages). It is also true that even though the four predictor attributes identified for females may only account for a quarter of the relationship to likelihood to apply, the practical effect of securing an improvement in that figure would still be appreciable.

There are clearly potential implications from the research for the UATs; although many of the issues raised would require further investigation before any firm recommendations for actions could be made. In the first instance, raising awareness amongst UAT members of the potential impact of their actions and of the concepts and relative ratings of internal, external and construed image could have a value in itself. For example, it may be necessary to bring to their attention that the reality of the Firm's image is not, in most cases, as positive as they believe it to be (see section 7.10) – and to identify whether their actions are consistent with addressing the differences found between construed and external image. (This finding also raises a question as to whether staff recruiters themselves hold inaccurate assessments of the Firm's image amongst undergraduates, and whether these might adversely impact the effectiveness of their programme design). Secondly, a review needs to be conducted of the way in which UATs are briefed and what changes may need to be made in that regard. This would need to be supported by a consideration of the tools UATs may need to support any

desired change in their behaviour – either directly or through other elements of the marketing mix.

As discussed in the literature review (section 2.5), however, it seems unlikely that a sustainable change in external image can be achieved without a corresponding change in internal image. In other words, there is limited value in asking UAT members to express views about the Firm that they do not hold – and clear ethical issues with this as well. It is also true that, whilst the Firm wants to be seen in its best light in the recruitment marketplace, it has no interest in attracting people under false pretences, not least because that would only create a new problem of retention. It seems that in the short term, therefore, one of the most productive actions might be to identify those issues which can be addressed simply by showcasing a new or different side to the Firm. For example, the idea discussed above of raising awareness of the Firm's mentoring behaviour, or talking about other aspects of social life at the Firm than just nights at the pub or days on the golf course. Perhaps some of the UAT members themselves need to be exposed to these different aspects of the Firm.

Finally, there is evidence from the findings that attracting arts students (in particular) is part of the challenge that the Firm faces in the low levels of applications it receives from women. The female respondents were less likely than the male to see the Firm as a place that '*would value your degree skills*' (figure 7.21), and this attribute was more important to them, than to the men, in selecting potential employers for job applications (figure 7.16). The females also tended to link 'degree skills' with '*employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common*' (the leading predictor variable) in their perceptions of the Firm (figure 7.24), suggesting that course type may be one of the factors that women use to assess this characteristic in the Firm. The male respondents, on the other hand, did not; thereby, perhaps explaining why male arts students are *not* less likely to apply to the Firm than male science students (see figure 7.11). In terms of their perceptions of the Firm, 'degree skills' were also linked for the women with '*have a friendly, informal culture*' and '*really care about their employees as individuals*' (figure 7.23), and thereby with three of the four attributes revealed by the regression analysis to be predictors for the females' likelihood to apply. The implication for action here is the need to (better) explain to undergraduates the value and application of 'arts' skills in the work that the Firm does and to showcase the arts graduates within the Firm, perhaps stressing that they make up a significant proportion of the employee base.

PART III: PROJECT THREE

9 CHAPTER NINE: PROJECT THREE RESEARCH DESIGN

9.1 Introduction

The objective of Project Three, as defined with the research question in section 1.5 above, was to identify actions that the Firm can take to address the key findings in the preceding projects and, thereby, to increase the number of female undergraduates attracted to apply to it for a job. It was suggested above (chapter 8) that the Firm's image on the four attributes that were found to predict female undergraduates' likelihood to apply to the Firm should form the focus for action and this, therefore, also formed the focus for Project Three.

In particular, it was decided to pursue two issues: first, to identify tangible cues that female undergraduates associate with the four predictor attributes (i.e. *'has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to its business'*, *'employs people with whom you feel you will have things in common'*, *'has a friendly, informal culture'* and *'really cares about its employees as individuals'*) - this being a necessary intermediate step to creating effective action plans to improve the Firm's image in these areas (see section 8.3). The second issue was to identify to what extent and in what ways the UAT members' interactions with potential recruits could, and needed to, be influenced, e.g. to address such cues (above). On the latter issue, a large number of questions were suggested by the literature review (chapter 1) and the results of Project Two (chapter 7). It was beyond the scope of this final project to address all of these, so the following items were selected as most pertinent to the objective of the project:

- The motivations of the UAT members and their perception of their role
- The objectives of UAT members in communicating information about the Firm to potential recruits
- How UAT members feel about and react to negative feedback about the Firm from potential recruits
- The reaction of UAT members to (selected) results of the internal survey, and what remedial action they would suggest
- The effectiveness of the briefings and tools that UAT members receive (to assist them in their recruiting activities)

There were two main reasons for this focus on the UATs and their interaction with potential recruits, rather than, for example, other aspects of the recruitment marketing mix (see Dowling's model, figure 2.6) – there being insufficient scope in this project to explore the entire range of marketing activities related to recruitment. Firstly, as has been discussed above, employees play an important role in the development of potential recruits' perceptions of an employer's attributes (section 2.5). Secondly, the UATs have traditionally been left somewhat to their own devices and so it was felt that focussing efforts in this area would provide a particularly valuable contribution to the Firm (other marketing aspects being already in receipt of a considerable amount of management attention).

Based on the above, and given the need and desire to provide a highly tangible contribution to practice (the Firm), the ultimate goals of Project Three were to develop (and deliver) a recommended approach (building on the findings of the preceding projects) to management about increasing applications from female undergraduates (i.e. the original business issue on which this study is based), and to create an appropriate, initial intervention in the organisation to support its successful implementation

9.2 Methodology and Sample

On the first of the two issues identified above (section 9.1) – identifying tangible cues associated with the four predictor attributes – it was determined that input should be sought from the target market (i.e. female undergraduates) or a proxy thereof. Serious consideration was given to two alternatives, to conduct further research with: current final year undergraduates or with recent (graduate) new joiners (to the Firm). In both cases, it was decided that the inputs would be sought from females only, as it was the image that they (and not men) held of the Firm (on the four predictor attributes) that was of primary interest at this stage of the study.

Ideally, and consistent with the previous projects, female undergraduates would have been selected as the research participants. There were two disadvantages to this approach, however. Firstly, the necessary timing of the data gathering (within the Project Three schedule) coincided with the run up to university final exams and it was, therefore, thought likely to be very difficult to find suitable candidates to participate in the research exercise. Secondly, the objectives of the research task would have required the Firm to be identified to the participants and, in this way, led to its airing its ‘dirty washing’ in public, which was of concern to management.

One of the disadvantages of using new joiners to the Firm (as the research participants), on the other hand, was the lack of direct input from females who were *not* attracted to the Firm. Clearly, also, the new joiners’ memories of their early impressions of the Firm would now be tainted by both the passage of time and their early socialization in to the Firm. On the positive side, however, it was felt that this very knowledge of the Firm could also be an advantage: the new joiners would be somewhat familiar with the Firm and (hopefully) able to help identify missed opportunities in communicating its positive characteristics to students. (The author was cognisant, in this regard, of the findings of other ‘internal’ research, see section 8.3, where employees said they were pleasantly surprised by some aspects of the Firm once they had joined). It was also hoped that the new joiners would be able to relay, albeit second-hand, some of the reasons for negative impressions that the Firm may have made on other female undergraduates at their university (perhaps on their friends, for example). In addition, it was realised that some indirect input from undergraduates could be gleaned from the transcripts of the Project One interviews – a review of the Project One transcripts was subsequently conducted to identify comments consistent with the identification of ‘cues’ related to the four predictor attributes.

On balance, then, it was decided to pursue the input to the research of new joiners, rather than undergraduates; nine female, new graduates (from a variety of universities and course types) were identified as 'new joiners' to the Firm, having just returned from several weeks of off-site induction and initial training. As this population of new joiners was so small, all nine members were included in the research. The size of this group was smaller than had been hoped; but, in principle, it was decided that this should not be a cause for concern unless there appeared to be a lack of informed views, or a wide range of them, amongst the interviewees (Fontana & Frey, 1994).

The nature of the question to be asked, regarding cues, was such that interviews were felt to be the best approach methodologically; this approach being more conducive to the 'open' questions needed and allowing for exploratory discussion with the new joiners. Also, it was not clear to what extent the new joiners would understand, initially, what was being asked of them, and interviews (as opposed to a survey approach, for example) would allow the opportunity for clarification to be provided if necessary. Rather than conduct individual interviews, however, it was decided to conduct group interviews; the reasons for this were several fold. In the first instance, given the considerable difference in job grade between the interviewees and the author (as the interviewer), it was felt that participating as a group would give the new joiners more confidence (Gordon & Langmaid, 1988, p11; Hedges, 1985), particularly as they would feel they knew each other quite well by this stage (having undergone an intensive induction process together). Also, importantly as one of the goals of the project was to generate ideas and new thinking, "talking together with other people is stimulating" (Hedges, 1985). This can help jog memories, encourage self-analysis, aid individuals in the articulation of their perceptions and support creativity. Groups were also of course the more time efficient option (Gordon & Langmaid, 1988, p29), although this was not a major consideration. No major disadvantages were foreseen in taking a group approach since the subject was not particularly sensitive and all the interviewees were of equal standing (Gordon & Langmaid, 1988; Hedges, 1985).

As to the second main issue to be pursued in Project Three (i.e. identifying to what extent and in what ways the UAT members' interactions with potential recruits could be influenced; see section 9.1), the population of interest was that of all UAT members. (Note that in Project Two the population of UAT members was restricted to those aligned with the universities represented in the external survey; in this project, however, the emphasis was on implementation so it was felt important to include all UATs, and not necessary, given the research objectives, to match the UAT samples between Projects Two and Three). As above, the nature of the questions to be explored with this group in this project (see section 9.1) led to the selection of an interview method. It was again decided to adopt a group interview approach, primarily because of the likely difference in job grade between the interviewees and the author (as the interviewer) – and the concern that this might inhibit frank responses in a one-to-one situation.

In approaching the 'sampling' for the UAT group interviews, a distinction was first made between UAT members based on their likely quality as 'informants' (Morse, 1994). Specifically, as an important item for discussion was interpersonal interaction with undergraduates, individuals with more relevant experience in this area (those who were currently particularly active in campus events) were identified with the help of the

recruiting team, i.e. the sample was ‘purposive’ (Neuman, 2000, p198). Those UAT members who passed this ‘screen’ tended to be more junior members of staff, mostly below manager level, for example, rather than the senior executives who head up the UATs.

A quota sampling approach was then taken (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p28), with two quota categories defined: UAT and sex. A secondary objective in running the UAT group interviews was to begin the process of dissemination (see section 9.1) – diffusion being an integral part of the knowledge production process (Tranfield & Starkey, 1998). This would be achieved, through the medium of the group interviews, by sharing some of the research results (from Project Two), and surfacing some of the related issues around the UAT role and *modus operandi*, with UAT members. In this way, it was important that each UAT was represented as it was hoped that an awareness of the issues and potential solutions related to recruiting more female undergraduates would be ‘seeded’ in each team (through the group interview participants) and this would, in turn, help to influence the teams’ planning for the new academic year in the desired direction. With regard to the sex of the interviewees, although this was a qualitative study, as the demographic data were readily available, it was decided to create (if possible within the above parameters) a sample that was approximately one-third female (i.e. to mirror the sex split in the UAT population; see figure 7.7). As to sample size, it was decided to select one person from each UAT (twenty-five in total) to start with, the option being available to increase this if a saturation of data did not occur by the time these interviews were completed (Morse, 1994, p230).

9.3 Interview Design

For the new joiner group interviews, a decision was made to run two smaller groups, rather than a single large one, with the nine new joiners. It was felt that the quality of the session could be adversely affected by the difficulties of managing a larger size of group (Hedges, 1985) and the smaller size suited the focused nature of the discussion (Gordon & Langmaid, 1988, p12). Running smaller groups also delivered the advantage of running the session more than once, thus diminishing “the risk of atypicality” of just one (group) interview (*ibid*, Hughes & DuMont, 1993). For the UAT groups, the twenty-five interviewees were divided into five equally-sized groups of five people each. With regard to the number of groups, Morgan (1988, p42) comments that “the more homogenous your groups are in terms of both background and role-based perspectives, the fewer you need”.

A discussion guide was developed for both the new joiner and UAT group interviews. The guides were used to help ensure that the objectives of the interviews were met and provided a checklist of the areas to be covered (and the priorities within this) and a proposed order for the discussions. Generally speaking, however, the approach to the groups was flexible and the time allowed was generous, so that any unexpected topics of interest could be followed through (Hedges, 1985; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe *et al*, 1991).

At the start of each group interview, a ‘warm up’ period was used to ease the interviewees in to the process and get them relaxed and comfortable with contributing.

The advice provided by Hedges (1985, p79) was found to be very useful in this regard: “start by giving a quick, simple, reassuring and convincing explanation of what the whole thing is about, what is going to happen, and what you want people to do. You need to explain that the session is being taped (and why), and to clarify the status of the information in terms of confidentiality versus attributable reporting. You must also say enough about the object of the study to stop people worrying about it, although you will not always disclose the full objective immediately, for example where you want to see how salient the topic of interest is within a wider context.” Hedges also advises to go round the group at the beginning and ask each individual to respond to a simple question or two; in the case of the UAT interviews, for example, the ‘starter’ question was about how each person came to be involved with their UAT in the first instance. In the design of the discussion guides, care was also taken to ensure that any areas that might be sensitive were not introduced too early.

The discussion guide for the new joiner group interviews was structured as follows:

- The first of the four predictor attributes was written up on a flip chart (e.g. ‘has a friendly and informal culture’) and the interviewees were asked to identify organisations that they perceived, during the early stages of their job search, as very friendly and informal and those that they perceived as the opposite. It was felt that identifying organisations in this way would aid the subsequent discussion by making it more concrete and less abstract than would have been the case with a direct questioning approach.
- The interviewees were then asked to identify what it was about the organisations, and what they said and did, that gave this impression.
- In the next stage of the discussion, the interviewees were asked whether they had felt (at that pre-application stage) that the Firm was friendly and informal (or not). They were then asked what it was that led them to form this impression.
- And then the interviewees were invited (and encouraged) to provide suggestions as to how the Firm might improve its image on this attribute (e.g. ‘has a friendly and informal culture’).
- This entire process was then repeated for the next ‘predictor’, until all four had been discussed.
- Finally, the group were invited to give their views on any other ways in which the Firm could increase the number of job applications it receives from female undergraduates.

And the discussion guide for the UAT group interviews was structured as follows:

- The interviewees were asked why they had decided to become UAT members, what their motivation had been, and whether they thought UAT members had any distinctive characteristics (as compared to other employees). They were also asked about the inner workings of their UAT, e.g. how decisions were made
- Next, questions explored how important interviewees felt the role of the UATs (and their interactions with students) to be, and about their objectives when they are communicating with undergraduates (e.g. whether they have specific messages that they try to convey). Interviewees were also asked how honest they were (about their experiences of the Firm) in their conversations with undergraduates

- Interviewees were asked if undergraduates ever made negative comments to them about the Firm, and if so, how they felt about this and how they reacted
- The four predictor attributes were then shown to the group (but no explanation was provided about where they came from or their particular significance) and interviewees were asked which, if any, of these they would consider to be core to the Firm's identity, and whether any of these were messages that they currently try to convey to undergraduates
- The results of both the internal and external surveys relating to these four attributes were then revealed – i.e. the rating from undergraduates, the rating from UAT members and the rating that UAT members thought that undergraduates would give (in the format shown in figure 9.1 below) – and the group was asked for its reaction
- The interviewees were then asked what they thought the Firm could do to improve its image amongst undergraduates in these four areas, and whether they saw any barriers to doing so
- Finally, the group was asked about the briefings they receive, prior to campus events for example, and whether they considered these helpful and/or sufficient. They were also invited to provide any further comments on ways in which they felt the Firm could improve its recruiting activities

Predictor Attributes	What undergraduates think of [the Firm]	What UAT members think of [the Firm]	What UAT members think undergraduates think
Employs people with whom I feel I will have things in common	4.21	5.85	5.51
Has a friendly and informal culture	4.20	5.17	4.78
Really cares about its employees as individuals	4.41	4.66	4.89
Has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to its business	5.84	5.99	5.91

Figure 9.1 Ratings for the Four Predictor Attributes from the Internal and External Surveys (Project Two data)

The discussion guides were reviewed based on the experience of the first of the group interviews with each of the new joiners and the UAT members. In addition, the guides were talked through (beforehand) with the UK recruitment marketing lead and the recruiting lead for UAT operations, in order to reduce the risk of their not proving to be effective with the groups themselves (no changes were made as a result). This (early) direct involvement of these individuals in the project was also part of the plan to create a series of interventions to help provide the necessary foundations for successful implementation of the study's recommendations (see section 9.1). In this case, it was

hoped that by encouraging some ownership of the process amongst key stakeholders, the chances of subsequent action plans being taken-up and successfully implemented would be increased.

9.4 Administration

The (nine) new joiners were invited to take part in the group interviews, by way of a personal internal email from the author; there were no refusals (i.e. all those invited to participate did so). The interviews were positioned as working sessions, where they would be asked to share their recent graduate recruitment experiences with a view to helping with the planning of recruiting programmes for the coming academic year. No further details were given, in order to limit the risk of any interviewees “arriving with a prepared stance” (Gordon & Langmaid, 1988, p48). Two groups were held (one with four and the other with five interviewees), in early April 2002, at one of the Firm’s offices. The Firm’s UK recruitment marketing lead, who would be closely involved in implementing the recommendations ultimately resulting from these sessions, also attended both group interviews (in the role of interviewer’s aide) at the invitation of the author (as mentioned above, this was to encourage ‘ownership’).

The selected UAT members were sent invitations to attend the group interviews by email also. In this instance, it was decided that it would be best for the invitations to come from the recruiting lead for UAT operations (as she was known to the invitees). Similar to the new joiner groups, this recruiting lead attended one of the UAT interviews (as an observer), at the author’s invitation. As in the new joiner groups, few details were given of what was to be covered in the sessions, simply that they were part of some ongoing research which was going to be used to inform UAT planning for next year. The five group interviews took place over the course of approximately four weeks from mid April to mid May 2002. The only reasons given by those who declined to participate in the UAT group interviews were related to diary conflicts.

All the group interviews were scheduled to run for a maximum of two hours (most ran for closer to one and a half hours) and were audio taped and subsequently transcribed.

9.5 Analysis

The data from the group interviews were analysed using a content analysis approach (see section 6.9.2). The analysis was conducted by each of the subject sections (themes) of the discussion guides (with the meanings of responses, rather than, for example, a counting of words, being the focus of interest (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p56)), with a view to identifying convergence (or otherwise) of responses. A provision was made for additional notes of any unprompted comments outside of these subject areas (although it was not felt necessary to ‘code’ the entirety of the transcripts (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p65)). The analysis was conducted manually: “constructivist tools like NUD*IST are not essential for realism research because realism researchers do not need to map *all* the details of an interviewee’s reality, they merely *look through some parts* of that

reality at an external reality and manual coding of interview data can be adequate for this purpose” [italics in original] (Perry *et al*, 1999, p19).

Samples of analysed portions of interview transcripts can be found in Appendix X. In the presentation of the results of this data analysis, care was taken to include a generous number of quotations from the interviews, in order to help capture the ‘inside view’ and “provide a detailed account of how those being studied feel about and understand events” (Neuman, 2000, p171).

9.6 Dissemination and Implementation in the Firm

Internal dissemination of research results was an ongoing feature of this study. Key stakeholder groups were kept informed of the study’s design and emerging results throughout the process. These stakeholders included: the UK executive (top management) team, the UK recruitment and recruitment marketing groups, and the UK *Balanced Workforce* (BWF) team. The communication of results was in both written and presentation forms. This dissemination was felt to be important as it was hoped it would increase the understanding (inside the Firm) of diversity recruitment issues and stimulate remedial activity. Decisions as to the best method for sharing the results from Project Three were not finalised until the group interviews had been completed and analysed – these helped to inform, for example, the most effective way to disseminate the final content within the UATs. In addition, as part of Project Three, the intention (if appropriate) was to provide the Firm with a concrete tool, together with implementation recommendations, that would facilitate the changes that needed to be made (as a result of the study’s findings) for the next recruiting season.

10 **CHAPTER TEN: PROJECT THREE RESULTS**

The results from the two sets of group interviews and the dissemination/implementation activity are summarised below. Note that, for the ease of the reader, some of the results from the UAT group interviews are reported in the first section below (10.1).

Both sets of group interviews were felt to work well. There was full attendance and participation, and the discussion was free-flowing, constructive, inclusive and (appeared to be) candid. As hoped, the group format helped individuals to recall items of interest (particularly in the new joiner interviews), e.g. an anecdote from one interviewee would spark a second from another member of the group.

10.1 **New Joiner Group Interviews**

The first interesting output from these groups was the (unsolicited) confirmation of the importance of the four predictor attributes and of interpersonal interaction with employees. On the former, the importance of the attributes was stressed by the interviewees in the course of general discussion, before the attributes were named (per the discussion guide; see section 9.3). It can also be noted that the groups engaged very quickly and easily in the prompted discussions on each attribute (suggesting saliency). On the importance of interpersonal interaction, there were many unprompted comments, such as:

“[meeting the employees], that was what really sold me on the company” (new joiner)

“[the employees] were so enthusiastic, obviously it gave a positive image of the company, but it also made you think, ‘wow, I really want to work with them’, it was really infectious the enthusiasm” (new joiner)

“... and those presentations that had a negative effect on me, were probably down to the people that were presenting and their personalities” (new joiner)

10.1.1 **‘employs people with whom you feel you will have things in common’**

Several aspects were cited as examples of common links between potential recruits and employees; these can be illustrated through the following examples of typical comments by interviewees:

“Certainly from the people that I met, I don’t think I would be comfortable in that environment. It’s not people I would choose to socialize with” (new joiner)

“You might be afraid [that] the people who work here are all geeks, with glasses, and growing beards” (new joiner)

“I saw friends of mine who were being employed [by the Firm], it was those that I really had respect for, really valued” (new joiner)

“I remember the people [employees at the campus presentation] who had done foreign languages, so you automatically focus on what they’ve done ... because they are from the same background as you” (new joiner)

*“A lot of it is – are they like me, would I get on with them? What did they do at uni?”
(new joiner)*

The Firm’s practice of having a UAT for each university made up of alumni of that university was mentioned as a positive way in which a bond could be established (this was also picked up in the UAT group interviews, see section 10.2.1). In Project One, several of the interviewees mentioned similar items: *“like-minded people”, “personality”, “similar level of education”, “goals in common ... background in common ... common interests”*. In Project One, the interviewees also placed emphasis on the age of employees as another aspect of commonality (and one female interviewee cited the fact that an organisation had *“more women”* as attractive).

The chance to actually meet people was confirmed as important (e.g. see 10.1 above); so whilst employee profiles, in a recruiting brochure for example, were seen as performing a valuable role, what had been most influential was the chance to test the chemistry (and whether there were ‘things in common’) with a potential employer’s people through conversation. Opportunities to spend ‘quality time’ with employees were suggested as particularly valuable for this reason – the extended contact time afforded by a weekend’s course run by a potential employer, for example, was seen as a great opportunity for students to discover whether or not there was any common ground with employees.

One of the conclusions that was drawn from the above was that the more (and more diverse) of the Firm’s people that target recruits can meet, the greater the chances of their feeling that there are people at the Firm with whom they have things in common. Targeting a wider range of different groups with campus marketing programmes (e.g. societies that are stereotypically female) was also suggested (by the groups) as a way of signalling the diverse interests of the Firm and its people. And one of the suggestions coming out of the UAT group interviews was that the size of the Firm could also be leveraged to send a positive message – i.e. ‘there are so many people here, you are sure to find people that you get on with’.

One of the issues discussed at some length in both the new joiners and UAT group interviews was the phenomenon of the ‘start group’. A recruit’s start group at the Firm is the (typically) thirty to forty people who start at the same time as her/him and with whom s/he shares the experience of induction and the first few weeks of training. Strong relationships and networks are formed out of this early experience and tend to survive, and flourish, through the course of an employee’s career with the Firm. New joiners are consistently (pleasantly) surprised to find that they get on so well with all the members of their start group. The virtues of advertising this fact to potential recruits in support of sending the message of ‘having things in common’ was debated, with the potential ‘negative’ of this being that some people might interpret it as a signal that the selection process was designed to identify ‘clones’. The conclusion was that the message could

be used to good effect, but should be carefully worded and tempered by close proximity to messages stressing the general diversity of the workforce.

10.1.2 ‘has a friendly and informal culture’

The undergraduates interviewed in Project One characterised a ‘friendly and informal’ employer as one whose employees were “*friendly, down-to-earth, nice*”, not “*stuck-up or pompous*”. A place where “*I think I could have a laugh*”, with a “*less traditional atmosphere*”, “*less people in suits*”, and “*events organised for employees outside of work*”.

Many of the same themes emerged in the new joiner group interviews. The use of just first names on badges at the Firm’s campus presentations was noted – “*that was informal and seemed representative of the way it is in the firm*” – as was the informality of the dress: no suits, “*shirt sleeves rolled up*”. The informal session after the Firm’s presentation, when employees were happy to stay as long as there was interest and to mingle and chat with students over drinks, was also seen as positive. The fact that employees of the Firm gave out their email addresses and those of colleagues so that students could contact them if they had any follow-up questions was seen as friendly and very much appreciated. Suggestions were made in the group interviews to pursue new, more informal environments for future campus events, such as holding a drop-in session at a coffee bar. The participation in the formal employer presentations of junior members of staff sent a message of informality – “*put you at your ease*”. The more innovative presentation approaches were also rated highly; for example, the use of up-to-the-minute (and upbeat) music and of a sofa (on which presenters sat) in the Firm’s presentation ‘stage set’ were also commented upon.

One danger that was highlighted by participants, however, was that of “*overdoing it*” and “*trying too hard*”. Specifically, comments related to the ‘work hard, play hard’ ethos and the emphasis on drinking:

“*[] portrayed a really macho culture. Very much the emphasis on work hard, play hard ... and expecting you to go drinking until the early hours*” (new joiner)

“*You would have those sorts of presentations where there would be three guys bantering between them, male bonding ... that worked against them for me*” (new joiner)

“*I mean socialising at work is important, but I don’t think it should be taken to extremes like it was in some of the presentations*” (new joiner)

“*I think that one thing that no-one ever did was recognise that you want your own time too for females especially, I think that it is particularly attractive to have time out to process*” (new joiner)

It was suggested by the participants that the ‘friendly’ message could be better communicated by focusing on other (non-drinking) aspects of social life at the Firm,

such as the wide range of clubs and sport activities and the variety of informal social activities organised by project teams. A similar sentiment was expressed by some of the participants in the UAT group interviews:

“I think it is a poor way to market the company” (UAT member)

“We really do over-emphasise the fact: hey guys, we really do have fun, we go out and have a drink, we are trying to convince people that we do. I don’t think it’s all that necessary really” (UAT member)

“I think it would be a lot better if we emphasised other things, sporting activities and that kind of stuff” (UAT member)

The view was expressed by some other UAT members (in the group interviews), however, that this type of ‘play hard’ atmosphere is part of the Firm’s culture – and on this basis, one interviewee suggested that it should not be something that the Firm attempt to “hide” from potential recruits. Also, on balance, the majority of the UAT members believed that the offering of plenty of free drink at student events was a very effective way to entice them in to events and to build some common ground (*“it’s the university student bar scene”*):

“They thought [the Firm] was great because we were just giving them free drinks” (UAT member)

“For all the companies, they always tried to tempt you with free beer. That is just part of it” (UAT member)

There was no discernable sex difference (in UAT members’ views) regarding these two different views on ‘playing hard’.

In the more transactional aspects of the recruitment processes, other cues that were interpreted by students as evidence of a friendly and informal organisation were the personal nature, or otherwise, of an organisation’s written correspondence and its approach to the selection process. Although these are aspects that are not directly encountered until *after* the job application decision has been made some organisations were cited as having a reputation for, as an example, an adversarial approach to interviewing – and this influenced some undergraduates’ application decisions.

10.1.3 ‘really cares about its employees as individuals’

Benefits packages were found (in the new joiner group interviews) to be part of the way that organisations had built an image as caring about their employees. The type of ‘perks’ that were mentioned by interviewees in this regard included: concierge services, flexleave, maternity benefits, and accommodation arrangements. The Firm was viewed as performing very well in this area, although possibly still with capacity to improve its external image: *“I thought it was such a large company, I didn’t expect the company to take such an interest in different aspects of my life. I have been bowled over [since*

joining], getting constant emails about this policy, counselling, or healthcare”. In the UAT group interviews also, benefits packages were perceived as an effective way of communicating the ‘caring’ message.

Another key theme was whether an organisation appeared to be interested in individual viewpoints, and there had been some concern (amongst the new joiners) about the likelihood of this occurring within very large organisations. Such interpretations were made (by undergraduates) about organisations based, *inter alia*, on their application forms and interview approaches – linked in particular to whether the candidate was asked to express opinions and/or demonstrate her/his creativity in some way. Psychometric testing was quoted (in the new joiner group interviews) as a strong example of the opposite scenario – *“I had several friends, girlfriends, that didn’t apply to companies just because of the psychometric testing”*. Similar sentiments were expressed in the Project One interviews: *“the ideal employer would probably look a lot more at everything you had to offer as a person, not just a few narrow skills”*. Since joining the Firm, the interviewees had been surprised and impressed by how much opportunity there was to provide feedback, on any topic – *“whenever you get a memo, on anything, there is always a feedback button, and there is always an opportunity to express an opinion”*. This was also identified as a strength of the Firm in the UAT group interviewees.

One of the other positive observations that was made (in the new joiner group interviews) about the Firm in this area of individuality was the variety and flexibility of career paths available, and the fact that guidance was provided by a number of different people to help shape one’s career in the direction desired - *“although it is a big company, you can choose assignments that help bring out who you are”* and *“you get individualised training, everything is tailor made”*. (In Project One, investment in training and development was found to be taken as a cue, by the female interviewees, that an organisation cared about its employees: section 4.4). Whereas some other companies were perceived as wanting very similar people: *“you get the feeling that they were looking for a certain type of person, they put you through the training and you would all come out very similar”*. However, and linking again to company size, an observation was made that many (external) people also saw the Firm in this way: *“people said to me ‘they’ve got thousands of employees and you’ll just be a number’”*. And in the Project One interviews, similar concerns were expressed generally about large companies: *“you’re just one of x hundred people they’re taking and if you sink you sink and if you swim you swim”*.

Finally, some positive comments were made also about the Firm’s involvement in charity and community programmes – this was seen as an indicator of its ‘caring side’.

10.1.4 ‘has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to its business’

In the Project One interviews one of the key characteristics of a dynamic company was seen to be its willingness and ability to change – *“they know they have to remain competitive to keep the place where they are”* and are *“quickly adapting”* and *“fast moving”*. The Firm was seen as very much in this mould:

“Every time I got a brochure it had changed!” (new joiner)

“Certainly the name change and all that going on helped a lot” (new joiner)

“Also loads of [the Firm’s] people I spoke to couldn’t even remember the names of all the organisational units, because the structure was constantly changing, that was really exciting” (new joiner)

“ ... and the fact that one of them [Firm employee] said ‘I’ve got a new office building I’m affiliated to, I have no idea where it is’, that kind of thing, it’s exciting” (new joiner)

An interesting related issue was the recognition on the part of some organisations that they needed to make changes related to diversity: *“some of the big city firms were saying things like ‘we are having problems getting applications from women, from ethnic minorities, and so on’. They are actually saying we have got this problem and we are actually doing something about it”*.

Innovative recruiting programmes and practices were also taken as indicators of a dynamic organisation. Several of the positive examples given related to the use of the Internet: having application forms on-line, having a “whizzy” website. Examples were given also, however, of programmes that were just a bit different (rather than necessarily high-tech). One organisation had invited female undergraduates to a city-centre hotel for a breakfast - *“that was completely different. No other company had done that. That is quite forward thinking”*. Some of the participants in the UAT group interviews felt that the Firm could do more in this area: *“ we are still turning up doing the same stuff as the next guy, just more polished”*.

Other positive examples given in the new joiner group interviews about the Firm included its thought leadership initiatives (what was described by one Project One interviewee as *“being at the cutting edge”*): *“you get the impression that these are people who are intellectually curious about what they are doing”*. The age of (the Firm’s) employees was also a factor: *“it seemed a much younger company, in the brochures”*. Some other organisations were reported as having *“all elderly men”* involved in the recruiting process.

There was a view expressed in the UAT group interviews that this attribute, of ‘a dynamic and forward-looking approach to its business’, was ‘covered’ by the Firm’s corporate marketing activities and that the UATs (and others involved in recruitment) should really focus their efforts on the other three predictor attributes.

10.1.5 Other Findings

Other suggestions that were made in the new joiner group interviews as ways to increase the number of female applicants included having senior women (from the Firm) present at recruiting events and targeting recruitment marketing at all-female

clubs and societies at universities. It was also felt that women were more likely than men to discuss their thoughts about potential employers and their experiences at recruiting events with others – and in that way there was an additional word-of-mouth advantage in targeting women. However, several participants were unsure about the value of placing emphasis on ‘women’s issues’ *per se* – “*an afternoon of women’s issues would put me off a bit*”. On the value of having a senior female executive at one of the Firm’s presentations, for example, it was noted that “*it was a real role model, very subtly done, she didn’t stand there and say look how great it is for women to work in this company because I’ve got this far, because that wouldn’t have worked, it was just the fact that she was there*”.

Finally, an interesting comment was made by a participant in one of the UAT group interviews: “*this stuff is fundamentally really important and I don’t believe the UATs or graduate recruiting are responsible for it all, I think that a lot about our brand is very masculine, very formal. Arguably, my wife is a perfect contender for someone who should be working here, but everything she sees about the firm is always too male, too unsubtle and too in your face.*”

10.2 UAT Group Interviews

10.2.1 The UAT Role

It transpired that most of the interviewees had volunteered to become UAT members because they thought it would be fun; they had seen UAT events when they were students themselves and liked the idea of going back to their university: “*I wanted to join just to go back*”. Especially as new joiners, many still had friends at their old university (from the year below them) and liked the social side of taking part (both socialising with students and with fellow UAT members). Many had known people in their UAT when they arrived (from the year above them at university) so it was easy to get involved and of those that had not immediately volunteered, several were contacted by these friends and invited to join the UAT.

The interviewees characterised UAT members as positive about the Firm - “*you wouldn’t join if you weren’t interested*” – and as confident and sociable personalities. Whilst a typical UAT might have twenty members, each has a ‘core team’ of perhaps four or five, who make most of the planning decisions. The interviewees felt that the UATs played an important role in the overall recruiting process (see Appendix X):

“I think that’s what sold me to join [meeting the Firm’s employees]. They were reasonably honest, but each one of them I thought ... ‘I got on well with them – that is a good sign ...’” (UAT member)

“I remember going to presentations, and happened that the people I spoke to, I came out thinking ‘I do not want to work there!’” (UAT member)

The interviewees felt that their role was valuable in two aspects in particular: as a credible ('honest') source of information and, essentially, as a check for whether the Firm "employs people with whom you feel you will have things in common":

"... the fact that you are in the job and as opposed to being in recruiting ... they probably get the recruiting message too often and it's standard lines" (UAT member)

"It's nice to have someone you can actually ask the kind of questions people really want to know at university. What's it like there...get past company blurb that they get from everybody, its nice to have somebody you can actually interact with and find out the real [Firm] scene" (UAT member)

"I think it is if they like you as well. You could tell them absolutely anything ... I like that sort of person, I could work with her or work with him. If you feel that you could just fit in that's probably more important" (UAT member)

"... being able to have an alumni, people who have studied that at university as well. It's what they most value. People recognise you especially if you are a couple of years ahead so they see it as much more attainable because they know you are of the same background" (UAT member)

In response to the question as to whether the UAT members went in to their encounters with undergraduates with any particular objective in mind (e.g. any particular messages they tried to convey), there was a strong consensus of "no" in all the interviews. Interviewees stated that their only objective was to answer the questions they were asked: *"I actually get them [the undergraduates] to lead the conversation, let them ask the questions"*. One UAT member commented, *"one thing that struck me when I joined [the UAT] was just how informal and haphazard the whole process was, you literally just rock up on the day [of a campus event] and get stuck in, but actually I think it really works"*.

In answering undergraduates' questions, the interviewees said that they were honest: *"I am definitely truthful"*, *"I think it's better to be honest"*. Most placed their responses as much closer to 'what you'd tell your best friend' than the opposite approach of 'full marketing spin'. Most, however, stated that they would usually temper any comments they made about their negative experiences by contrasting them with different, more positive experiences that others in their start group may have had in a similar circumstance and/or positive work experiences that they had had themselves in other areas. A common approach was to tell an undergraduate that the job had pros and cons, was not for everyone and that they needed to make up their own minds as to what they really wanted.

Very few of the interviewees had received negative comments from undergraduates. They explained that a surprising number of the undergraduates attending the Firm's presentations and events believed that their behaviour there would influence the selection process. And anyone who was not (potentially) interested in interviewing with the Firm (and just there for the free food and drink) was unlikely to spend time talking to the Firm's employees. On the occasions where UAT members *had* received a

negative comment, the reactions varied. Several admitted that they got defensive, whilst interestingly (in the context of the literature review in section 2.6 above) another said that *“it’s fine, I don’t take it personally. I think there is a distinction between the organisation and the person. There’s the Firm and then there’s the people who work for the Firm. Certain values are in common, but if someone doesn’t like the organisation, it doesn’t affect you as a person”*.

10.2.2 The Four Predictor Attributes

Of the four ‘predictor’ attributes, only one was felt, by most interviewees, to be core to the Firm’s identity: ‘has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to its business’. Interviewees commented that the other three attributes came up often in the form of questions from students, however – *“these are the things that people want to know about”*. Suggestions from the UAT group interviews as to how the Firm could improve its image in these four areas have already been reported in the previous section (10.1). Generally, the interviewees felt the survey scores on the four predictor attributes (see figure 9.1 above) were not too bad, and that they would have expected the ratings to be worse from the undergraduates and the UAT estimates of undergraduates’ ratings to be lower. The one exception to this was ‘has a friendly and informal culture’, on which several interviewees were surprised that the undergraduates had not rated the Firm more highly.

Prior to campus events, such as the main employer presentation each year, UAT members receive a briefing document from the recruiting team. This is usually half a dozen pages long and includes information on recruiting targets, selection procedures, interviewing dates, application directions, salary and benefits offered etc. Most interviewees said they read this, although it was difficult to remember everything in it. In addition, a half-hour before the event itself starts all the UAT members (present) receive a verbal briefing from a recruiter, covering the agenda for the event and a recap on some of the items in the written briefing document.

Asked if they would be willing to “push” certain (recruitment marketing) messages, the consensus of opinion (amongst the interviewees), strongly expressed, was that they would not, indeed their reaction (to such a suggestion) would be very negative:

“I think I would be quite put off if somebody said to me ‘these are the four messages we want to get across tonight’. I think that is fairly obvious and I don’t really need telling thanks!” (UAT member)

“I think you can’t ask people to do this sort of thing or you will lose their enthusiasm and trust” (UAT member)

“We do get the Q&A, I find it awful... trying to tell you exactly what you have to say. That is not what I am going to these events for, I am just there to talk about my own experience” (UAT member)

*“In a one-to-one chat I don’t think you’d say it if you knew nobody was watching you”
(UAT member)*

There was also a view that such an approach was unnecessary and could backfire:

*“If I feel I am being ‘cared about as an individual’ then I’ll pass that message along”
(UAT member)*

*“You would be accused of a hard sell, especially if everybody’s gone round our people
and they are all getting the same message” (UAT member)*

Participants were not averse, however, to receiving factual information: *“it’s probably worth making sure that people are aware of all the different things that the company does, all the benefits and the schemes”*. Indeed there was a sense that whilst such information was powerful - *“a lot of people [potential recruits] have said, having read up on the literature, I didn’t realise that the company invests so much in you, all the different policies”* – employees (UAT members) may not be aware of it all themselves. One participant, referring to a series of recent internal emails regarding a variety of benefits, said *“I think people were surprised last week when all those emails came out about all the policies because nobody knew about any of them”*.

10.3 Dissemination and Implementation in the Firm

As a result of the above findings, it was decided to develop a (gender) diversity recruitment marketing toolkit, the design of which was informed by the output from the group interviews and the author’s understanding of internal business processes. Consistent with the objective, mentioned above, of ensuring buy-in to this initiative from those who would be required to carry out the study’s recommendations, the author invited the UK recruitment marketing lead to provide input to this toolkit document and to help to gather the ‘evidence’ material for it.

The primary audience for the toolkit was the recruiting organisation, although it was anticipated that it would be valuable also to other executives, such as those playing an active part in the Firm’s *Balanced Workforce* initiative. Given the comments made in the UAT group interviews, it was not intended that the toolkit be provided directly to UAT members: it would be not only too long, but (most importantly) too prescriptive for them. Rather, it was planned that recruiters would use the toolkit to drive their communication and planning sessions with the UATs (and in developing their other recruitment programmes).

A copy of the toolkit is provided in Appendix Y. The introductory sections of the toolkit set the scene by providing background on the challenges and issues the Firm faces (in the gender diversity area) and a summary of relevant research findings. It also explains the importance of interpersonal interaction between employees and potential recruits and of ensuring that the Firm is really ‘present’ to its target (diverse) audiences. The toolkit document then provides detailed message text for each of the four predictor variables. With each message set, a summary of supporting evidence is also provided

(e.g. information on policies and programmes); the rationale for including evidence is to strengthen the messages, by increasing their credibility and bringing them to life. The evidence is either laid out in full detail, within the next section of the document, or the reader is directed (or electronically linked) to evidence detail contained in an alternative resource within the Firm (e.g. the website or an internal database). The final section of the document provides guidance and suggestions regarding campus programmes. It can be seen that the suggestions generated from both sets of group interviews have been incorporated in the messages, evidence points and programme suggestions in the toolkit.

Note that it was concluded that none of these messages should have an *adverse* effect on the Firm's attractiveness to male undergraduates. Two of the predictor variables for females were common to the 'predictors' for males (see figure 7.25) and the remaining two – 'has a friendly, informal culture' and 'has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to its business' – were scored as 'important' to males on the generic (i.e. not Firm specific) ratings of organisational attributes (figure 7.18). From these results, it was determined that the four attributes were unlikely to be *unattractive* to males.

One of the findings of the UAT group interviews was that, whilst UAT members resist being told exactly what to say to students, they were not averse to receiving relevant factual material. Given this, it was determined that an additional (short) summary document should be produced for recruiters to distribute to UAT members, containing just the evidence material (from the toolkit) in brief. This would help the UAT members to underpin the messages in response to questions from undergraduates in these areas (and it was positioned to UAT members in this context, as a support for 'frequently asked questions'). An important second benefit was also sought with this approach, however: the hope that by reminding UAT members of the attractive benefits and programmes that the Firm offers in the areas of the four predictor attributes, the UAT members' *own* ratings of the Firm (internal image) in these areas might increase.

In addition to the above documents, a question set was developed for recruiters to use in a workshop format in their planning activities with each UAT. The questions were designed to raise, and help resolve, some of the key issues that emerged out of analysis of the UAT group interviews. The summary question set provided to the recruiters was as follows:

- How diverse is our UAT membership?
- How diverse is the input to our UAT plan?
- How diverse are our UAT programmes? Do we tend to repeat the same initiatives, targeting the same types of people, each year?
- How diverse are the audiences we reach with our UAT activities? Are we 'present' to our target minority (diversity) student groups?
- Can we find more innovative ways, than the 'play hard' message, to demonstrate that we are 'friendly and informal'?
- Can we do more to express our 'dynamism' in our UAT programmes (i.e. 'walk the talk')?
- Can we increase interpersonal contact time/opportunities with students?

Whilst, as stated above (section 9.1), other aspects of the marketing mix (apart from the UATs) were outside of the scope of this project, the opportunity was taken to incorporate the messages (and evidence) in the toolkit in to:

- the recruitment brochure for the next recruiting season
- the UK careers website, which was redesigned to introduce new ‘people pages’ highlighting the messages (with the exception of ‘dynamic’, which was felt to be well-covered in other sections of the website)
- the main campus recruitment presentation

A summary of the key relevant results from Project Three was delivered to the Firm’s UK executive team and the *Balanced Workforce* team and presented to meetings of the UAT leads (senior managers) and the recruiting organisation. Copies of the recruitment marketing toolkit were also provided to all of the above. Response to the study results and the toolkit were very positive and enthusiastic, and the recruiting organisation committed to acting on the recommendations in the next recruiting season and to dedicating more time to the UATs. Finally, the results and toolkit were also presented to the Firm’s global diversity taskforce and to the recruitment marketing leads in the Firm’s other main geographic markets, with a view to leveraging and/or replicating (elements of) this study in other countries where appropriate. As a result of the interest generated by the study’s findings, the written summary was sent on (by one of the stakeholders) to the global head of Human Resources for the Firm and sparked a discussion about potential improvements in internal communications. (The author recently took on a new role, within the Firm, of Global Director of Communications for Human Resources).

11 **CHAPTER ELEVEN: DISCUSSION OF PROJECT THREE**

11.1 **Research Design**

The interview guide was very effective in the new joiner groups. The mechanism of identifying the organisations that were perceived as ‘friendly and informal’, for example, and then the cues that made them seem so, appeared to be very helpful to the interviewees in jogging their memories and articulating their thoughts. It was concluded that simply asking, at the start, a direct question, e.g. ‘what can we do to make the Firm appear more friendly and informal?’, would not have worked as well.

The content and tone of the two new joiner groups was sufficiently consistent (and the interviewees sufficiently ‘well-informed’) as to allay concerns about the small ‘sample’. Reflecting on the results, however, it is clear that including feedback from ‘non-joiners’ (as well as joiners) might have added an additional layer of understanding. If the project were repeated, one way to secure such feedback might be to leverage the new joiners themselves by asking them to help secure their friends (who have a negative view of the Firm or simply did not apply to it) as participants for additional group interviews.

The additional use of the Project One transcripts in this project was valuable, but had some clear limitations. Most notably, the interviews in Project One were not designed to identify ‘cues’ and did not include any direct questioning on this topic. As a result, relevant references in the Project One transcripts are indirect (being made in the context of a different discussion) and do not appear consistently throughout the interview set, i.e. such comments were made in some interviews and not others. Nevertheless, this ‘health warning’ having been given, the data that *are* available from Project One provide, in many cases, a triangulation with that produced in Project Three (see chapter 10) and this increases confidence in the analysis (Cassell & Symon, 1994, p32).

Having completed the initially-assigned five UAT group interviews, it was concluded that there was a good deal of repetition amongst the groups and that no new data were being surfaced. It was decided, therefore, not to extend the sample any further. There was one surprise, particular to the design, in the UAT groups: whilst the reasons given for it were fully understandable (and credible), the author had not foreseen that the UAT members would have received so little negative feedback from potential recruits. This made one of the sections of the discussion guide largely redundant (see section 9.3).

The structured nature of the discussion guides (and the questions therein) greatly eased the content analysis task, as did the overall high level of consistency in the groups’ and interviewees’ responses - and no particular problems were encountered in the analysis phase.

11.2 **Results**

The objectives of Project Three (see section 9.1) were met. Specifically, tangible cues that female undergraduates associate with the four predictor attributes were identified,

and a greater understanding was developed of the extent and ways in which the UAT members' interactions with potential recruits could be influenced. In addition, a recommended approach (and associated intervention) was developed to action the results of the study – primarily using the toolkit as the vehicle (see Appendix Y).

In addition to the results directly related to the issues pursued in Project Three, there are a number of other observations that can be made. Firstly, there is support in the results above for the phenomenon of signalling (see section 2.4): employee' use of first names only (and rolled up sleeves) at recruiting events was taken as a signal of the informality of the organisation, for example. The results also supported the assertion (in the literature) that interpersonal interaction is important in the formation of organisational images and provided evidence of these effects related to personnel other than recruiters (see section 2.5). Furthermore, the results are consistent with Rynes *et al*'s (1991) finding that line employees had a bigger signalling impact than staff recruiters in that recruiters were not mentioned at all by the new joiners in this context (see section 2.4). Also, the disquiet felt by many of the new joiners about 'women's issues' and associated initiatives echoes the lack (or rejection) of explicit gender concerns on the part of female respondents in the Project One interviews (see 5.2). Finally, the results also provided some degree of triangulation on the Project Two results in appearing to confirm the importance of the four predictor attributes.

One of the most important findings from the UAT group interviews was the fact that UAT members, when they are at campus events talking to undergraduates, 'tell it like it is', i.e. they are frank in their responses to undergraduates' questions about what it is like to work at the Firm. Not only do they not add any 'marketing spin' to their responses, apparently they (would) also resist/resent any suggestion that they should give certain responses to questions or even emphasise certain recruiting messages. This finding supports Barber's (1998, p144) suggestion that it is a "potentially serious omission" of most previous research in this area that it fails to recognise that 'agents', such as UAT members, "have their own goals and objectives that may or may not coincide with those of the organisation" (Barber, 1998, p71) (see section 2.5). In this instance, UAT members' primary motivation was found to be their desire to maintain (social) links with their university (and have fun), and not to promote the Firm *per se*, (although the two are not necessarily mutually exclusive).

It should be noted that the frankness of employees in their discussions with students is not being proposed here as a bad thing in itself, rather there are some distinct potential benefits arising from this fact. Whilst not a planned activity, this frankness can be likened to a 'realistic job preview' (RJP), i.e. a programme "intended to deliver ... balanced information" about the job (and organisation) "revealing both positive and negative features" (Barber, 1998, p85). A considerable amount of research can be found, reported in the recruitment literature, assessing the effects of RJP's (versus the more traditional marketing approaches). The consensus of this (RJP) research appears to be that RJP's can increase retention rates. The size of effect has been found to be modest, but higher when dealing with more intelligent and more committed applicants (such as undergraduates perhaps) and for "individuals who received RJP information from job incumbents (*ibid*, p87), i.e. such as UAT members.

These findings (of UAT members' frankness) underline the criticality of the employee-external group link in Dowling's model of creating corporate images (see figure 2.6). They suggest that this (employee) channel to the marketplace is almost totally transparent in this case – i.e. the potential recruits (the external group) receive a view of the Firm that is only marginally distorted (from the employee side). By implication, this provides some support for Gioia and Thomas' (1996, p370) view that "it is unlikely that a change in image can be sustained without an associated change in identity". In addition, the findings make clear the importance of an integrated approach to internal and external communications. In particular, the messages that the Firm sends out to potential recruits need to be reinforced with its own employees.

The output from the UAT group interviews cannot be used to answer the question of how strongly members identify with the Firm, but the fact that their motivation (to become UAT members) was not directly related to the Firm (or its promotion) suggests that their membership cannot be taken, in itself, as a confirmation of their 'identification'. Indeed, given that it appeared (from the reaction in the group interviews) that UAT members were not particularly concerned about the relatively low rating of the Firm (by undergraduates) on some of the predictor attributes, it could be suggested that their identification with the Firm might not be particularly strong (Cheney, 1983; Dutton & Dukerich, 1991, 1994; Elsbach & Kramer, 1996; Erez & Early, 1993) (see section 2.6). An alternative explanation may be offered, however, by Dutton and Dukerich's (1991) finding that an "organisation's identity served as an important reference point that members used for assessing the importance of [issues]" (see section 2.6). In the present case (whilst organisational identity was not fully explored) only one of the four predictor attributes was generally agreed in the UAT group interviews to be core to the Firm's identity: 'has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to its business', on which the rating from students was good. (Although, it should be noted that this project represented only a very limited exploration of the organisational identity concept). Finally, it is worth mentioning Smidts *et al*'s (2000) finding that "perceived [external] prestige is quite strongly related to identification", so the fact of the Firm's extremely strong overall image in the recruiting marketplace might suggest that UAT members' identification would be strong. This question of identification would be an interesting issue to explore in future research.

11.3 Implications for the Firm

The project makes several significant contributions to the Firm. Firstly, it has identified specific and practical ways (messages and activities) in which the Firm can effectively improve its image amongst female undergraduates on the four predictor attributes, and thereby increase the number of applications that it receives from female undergraduates. It has also created a comprehensive tool (the gender diversity recruitment marketing toolkit) to directly support the Firm's activity in the recruitment marketplace in these areas and provided clear direction and priorities for the planning process in the next recruitment year. In addition, the internal dissemination of the project's findings raised awareness of the key issues amongst both the senior management of the Firm and those employees who have direct impact on the Firm's recruiting.

Perhaps one of the most striking contributions, however, has been the new understanding that has been developed around the role, behaviour and importance of the UATs. This has raised questions about the extent to which interactions between UAT members and potential recruits can, or should, be managed. In this case, this study suggests that the opportunities to directly 'manage' UAT members in this context are limited. However, the project has contributed recommendations as to actions that can be taken to address UAT members' interactions with potential recruits *indirectly* – primarily through influencing their own internal images of the Firm (e.g. by re-familiarising them with the employee benefits that the Firm offers). In this way, the project has demonstrated a practical application of internal marketing principles (see section 2.5) to the area of recruitment.

On a larger scale, the project results have catalysed an internal debate on the effectiveness of internal communications (in the context of employee satisfaction) and the need to take a holistic view of employer image issues – both internal and external, and the link between the two – asking questions of the current working relationships between HR, recruiting and marketing. For example, internal and external communications programmes need to be synchronised, probably requiring new levels of co-operation across organisational boundaries. Finally, however, it is recognised that, whilst these issues of perception are key, ultimately they must rest on a bedrock of organisational reality so, if internal images on the four predictor attributes cannot be improved, senior management may need to be prepared to change that reality if they are to be successful in recruiting more female undergraduates.

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APPENDICES

A. Ranked Common Constructs for Female and Male Interviewees

Female Rank	Common Construct	Female Freq. Count	Female Variance %
1	Can try variety of jobs	11	6.40
2	Able to have life outside work	9	5.49
3	International travel	7	6.78
4	Opportunity for creativity	6	6.69
5	High salary	6	6.40
6	Kudos	6	4.30
7	Variety within job (day-to-day)	5	6.65
8	Care about employees as individuals	5	5.51
9	Small and personal	5	4.43
10	Offer good training/invest in employees	5	4.35
11	Dynamic	4	7.43
12	Freedom/control over own work	4	7.40
13	Can gain skills to build cv	4	6.64
14	Personal interest in product/business area	4	6.42
15	Not demanding/stressful	4	6.39
16	Meritocracy	4	6.08
17	Would be motivated/satisfied	4	5.97
18	Would use my degree skills	4	5.91
19	Internationally diverse (culture)	4	5.75
20	Works for public good	4	5.71
21	Friendly and informal	4	5.30
22	Fast track progress possible	4	5.07
23	Have common ground with colleagues	4	4.22
24	Very competitive entry, would feel special having been chosen	3	8.98
25	Recruitment process is welcoming	3	8.43
26	Exciting	3	7.81
27	Ethical	3	7.69
28	Not ruthless culture	3	7.40
29	High salary, but at a price	3	7.20
30	Not male dominated	3	6.57
31	Have the skills needed	3	6.54
32	Train you to do your job	3	6.23
33	Can work overseas	3	5.75
34	Variety of roles available as progress up hierarchy	3	5.42
35	Job security	3	4.83

Female Rank	Common Construct	Female Freq. Count	Female Variance %
36	Challenging/stimulating	3	4.68
37	Organisation will use/value my skills	3	4.55
38	Flexible hours	3	4.02
39	Emphasizes teamwork	3	3.73
40	Casual dress	2	8.67
41	City/London based	2	8.49
42	No further professional exams required to progress	2	7.65
43	Organisation/work touches general public	2	7.34
44	Good perks/package	2	7.29
45	Clear opportunities for long term career progression	2	6.30
46	Making a valuable contribution to society	2	6.17
47	Don't need to have specific qualifications (eg degree type) to get in	2	6.04
48	Not in office all the time	2	6.00
49	Structured graduate training scheme	2	5.78
50	Good internal communications	2	5.22
51	Would be working with the best	2	5.21
52	Sociable	2	5.13
53	Family friendly	2	4.84
54	Employ variety of people	2	4.53
55	Youthful (vibrant)	2	4.35
56	Good company name for cv	2	4.32
57	Flexibility re location (UK)	2	4.17
58	Have respect for (new) graduates	2	4.06
59	Control over own career	2	3.94
60	Unconventional career choice	2	3.09
61	Excellent salary prospects	2	2.45
62	Interacting with people	2	1.64
63	Get learning on the job	1	9.81
64	Recruitment process is not time-intensive	1	8.36
65	Can see impact/result of my work	1	7.29
66	Opportunities for external networking (future job opportunities)	1	6.96
67	Can get perspective from people I know there	1	6.60
68	Not working away from home	1	5.81
69	Less accountability	1	4.88
70	More graduate jobs on offer	1	4.81
71	Nice working environment	1	4.62
72	Will be mentored	1	4.60
73	Listen to employees' ideas	1	4.10
74	Good commute	1	3.91
75	Opportunity to start new life with new people	1	2.39

Female Rank	Common Construct	Female Freq. Count	Female Variance %
76	Efficient	1	0.70
77	Socially responsible	0	n/a
78	Feel part of bigger picture/know where fit in	0	n/a
79	Company has freedom over own work (not constrained by outside influences)	0	n/a
80	Can develop longer term (working) relationships	0	n/a
81	More understated	0	n/a
82	Working with clients to help them understand needs	0	n/a
83	Are wanted to perform service	0	n/a
84	Mutually beneficial working relationship	0	n/a

Male Rank	Common Construct	Male Freq. Count	Male Variance %
1	Meritocracy	8	4.98
2	Able to have life outside work	8	4.94
3	International travel	7	6.19
4	Dynamic	7	5.82
5	Can try variety of jobs	7	5.81
6	Kudos	7	5.07
7	Clear opportunities for long term career progression	7	4.83
8	Variety within job (day-to-day)	7	4.29
9	Freedom/control over own work	6	6.39
10	Can work overseas	6	5.39
11	Job security	6	4.52
12	High salary	6	4.09
13	Works for the public good	5	9.03
14	Personal interest in product/business area	5	7.75
15	Can see impact/result of my work	5	6.39
16	Have common ground with colleagues	5	6.17
17	Fast track progress possible	5	5.23
18	Interacting with people	5	5.13
19	Can gain skills to build cv	4	7.37
20	Socially responsible	4	7.21
21	Ethical	4	6.56
22	Opportunity for creativity	4	6.25
23	Feel part of bigger picture/know where fit in	4	6.11

Male Rank	Common Construct	Male Freq. Count	Male Variance %
24	Would be motivated/satisfied	4	5.66
25	Small and personal	4	4.87
26	Offer good training/invest in employees	4	4.76
27	Excellent salary prospects	4	4.30
28	Company has freedom over own work (not constrained by outside influences)	3	6.89
29	Organisation/work touches general public	3	6.46
30	Exciting	3	6.39
31	Not demanding/stressful	3	5.74
32	Challenging/stimulating	3	5.62
33	City/London based	3	5.55
34	Emphasizes teamwork	3	5.34
35	Organisation will use/value my skills	3	5.21
36	Have respect for (new) graduates	3	5.10
37	Youthful (vibrant)	3	4.48
38	Sociable	3	4.26
39	Would use my degree skills	3	3.77
40	Structured graduate training scheme	3	3.72
41	Employ variety of people	3	3.55
42	No further professional exams required to progress	2	9.56
43	Not in office all the time	2	6.52
44	Not working away from home	2	6.39
45	Can develop longer term (working) relationships	2	6.21
46	Variety of roles available as progress up hierarchy	2	5.95
47	High salary, but at a price	2	5.75
48	Control over own career	2	5.72
49	Nice working environment	2	5.44
50	Less accountability	2	4.58
51	Care about employees as individuals	2	4.49
52	Efficient	2	4.45
53	Don't need to have specific qualifications (eg degree type) to get in	2	4.27
54	Friendly and informal	2	4.21
55	Opportunities for external networking (future job opportunities)	2	4.00
56	Internationally diverse (culture)	2	3.53
57	Good company name for cv	2	2.34

Male Rank	Common Construct	Male Freq. Count	Male Variance %
58	Would be working with the best	1	8.35
59	Will be mentored	1	8.03
60	Good perks/package	1	7.40
61	Making a valuable contribution to society	1	6.92
62	Not ruthless culture	1	6.58
63	Unconventional career choice	1	6.50
64	Flexibility re location (UK)	1	6.32
65	More understated	1	6.02
66	Listen to employees' ideas	1	5.67
67	Casual dress	1	5.13
68	Train you to do your job	1	4.84
69	Working with clients to help them understand needs	1	4.79
70	Are wanted to perform service	1	4.69
71	Get learning on the job	1	4.04
72	Mutually beneficial working relationship	1	3.90
73	Recruitment process is not time-intensive	1	3.87
74	More graduate jobs on offer	1	3.84
75	Flexible hours	1	3.64
76	Have the skills needed	1	3.61
77	Very competitive entry, would feel special having been chosen	1	3.39
78	Good internal communications	1	1.88
79	Good commute	1	1.34
80	Recruitment process is welcoming	0	n/a
81	Not male dominated	0	n/a
82	Family friendly	0	n/a
83	Can get perspective from people I know there	0	n/a
84	Opportunity to start new life with new people	0	n/a

B. Target Population of Universities

North

University of Durham

University of Newcastle upon Tyne

Yorkshire and Humberside

University of Bradford

University of Hull

University of Leeds

University of Sheffield

University of York

East Midlands

University of Leicester

Loughborough University of Technology

University of Nottingham

East Anglia

University of Cambridge

University of East Anglia

South East

University of Essex

University of Kent at Canterbury

Open University

University of Oxford

University of Reading

Royal Holloway, University of London*

University of Southampton

University of Surrey

University of Sussex

Wye College*

Greater London

Birkbeck College*

Brunel University

Charing Cross & Westminster Medical School*

City University

Goldsmith College*

Imperial College of Science Technology and Medicine*

Institute of Education*

Institute of Psychiatry (associated with Kings College London)*

Kings College London*

London Business School

London School of Economics & Political Science*

London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine*

London University – Senate Institutes*

Queen Mary & Westfield College*

Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine*

Royal Postgraduate Medical School*

Royal Veterinary College*

St Georges Hospital Medical School*

School of Oriental & African Studies*

School of Pharmacy*

United Medical and Dental Schools, Guys & St Thomas's Hospitals*

University College London*

South West

University of Bath

University of Bristol

University of Exeter

West Midlands

University of Aston in Birmingham
 University of Birmingham
 University of Keele
 University of Warwick

North West

University of Lancaster
 University of Liverpool
 University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology
 Victoria University of Manchester
 University of Salford

Wales

University of Wales, Aberystwyth**
 University of Wales, Cardiff**
 University of Wales Institute, Cardiff**
 University of Wales, College of Medicine**
 University College of Wales, Newport**
 University College of North Wales, Bangor**
 St Davids University College**
 University College of Swansea**

Scotland

University of Aberdeen
 University of Dundee
 University of Edinburgh
 University of Glasgow
 Heriot-Watt University
 University of St Andrews
 University of Stirling
 University of Strathclyde

Northern Ireland

Queens University of Belfast
 University of Ulster

* - these institutions form London University

** - these institutions form the University of Wales

Source: UCAS

C. External Survey (plain text format)

Note: Some programming instructions included

UK Grad Employer Survey

[ALL DIRECTIONS IN CAPITAL LETTERS ARE PROGRAMMING AND LOGIC INSTRUCTIONS. THESE WILL NOT BE VISIBLE TO SURVEY RESPONDENTS]

Survey Name: "UK Graduate Employer Survey" [TO APPEAR ON ALL SCREENS]

Quota: None

Sample Source: Respondents will be invited in their schools and given the web address

OPENING SCREEN

Thank you for participating - please remember to return your completed survey by December 5th 2001, the closing date for the prize draw. This survey consists of seven questions.

Cranfield
logo

[SIGNATURE GRAPHIC HERE]

Professor Simon Knox and Professor
Sue Vinnicombe

To begin, please enter your email address so we can register your participation.

Email: _____

If you have any technical questions about the survey, please contact us by email at:
richard.waterman@al.sotech.com and please refer to project number 155-033.

CLICK HERE FOR THE RULES OF THE GRADUATE EMPLOYER SURVEY PRIZE DRAW

[SHOW FOLLOWING RULES AS A POP-UP]

1. Any student enrolled on an undergraduate degree course for the 2001/2002 academic year, in their final year of undergraduate study and registered with targetedGRAD is eligible to participate in the free prize draw.
2. The closing date for receipt of completed questionnaires (via this website) is 5 December 2001.
3. Only one entry per person.
4. There is one top prize of £250 and twenty-five runners-up prizes of £10 amazon.co.uk vouchers.
5. The draw will take place on 10 December 2001 at Cranfield School of Management, Bedfordshire, and will be made by a resident professor of Cranfield University.
6. Results of the draw will be posted on www.cranfield.ac.uk/som/dba/survey/ on 17 December 2001. Any enquiries should be made by e-mail to B.Birtles@cranfield.ac.uk.

[NEXT BUTTON SHOULD SAY 'CLICK HERE TO BEGIN THE SURVEY']

QUESTIONNAIRE

- Q1 1. In selecting those organizations to whom you will submit a graduate job application, how important is it to you that they...

Please select one answer for each statement.

[SHOW SCALE VALUES; REPEAT SCALE HALF-WAY DOWN SCREEN]

		7	6	5	4	3	2	1
		Very important	Important	Somewhat important	Neither important nor unimportant	Somewhat unimportant	Unimportant	Very unimportant
_1	... would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles							
_2	...employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common							
_3	...would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative							
_4	...have a friendly, informal culture							
_5	...would offer the opportunity for international travel							
_6	...would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues							
_7	...would use your degree skills							
_8	...really care about their employees as individuals							
_9	...are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)							
_10	...would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad							
_11	...offer a very high starting salary							
_12	...offer clear opportunities for long term career progression							
_13	...would offer variety in your daily work							
_14	...invest heavily in the training and development of their employees							
_15	...have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business							
_16	...are a small organisation							
_17	...would require you to work standard working hours only							
_18	...would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work							
_19	... offer a relatively stress-free working environment							
_20	...are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer							

-----SCREEN BREAK-----

Q2 2. Now, please imagine that a graduate employer existed that was **ideal for you** personally... and then, please indicate the extent to which you would agree with the following statements: "my ideal employer..."

Please select one answer for each statement.

[SHOW SCALE VALUES; REPEAT SCALE HALF-WAY DOWN SCREEN]

		7	6	5	4	3	2	1
		Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
_1	... would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles"							
_2	... would employ people with whom I had things in common"							
_3	... would allow me a lot of freedom to work on my own initiative"							
_4	... would have a friendly, informal culture"							
_5	... would offer the opportunity for international travel"							
_6	... would provide me with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues"							
_7	... would use my degree skills"							
_8	... would really care about its employees as individuals"							
_9	... would be a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)"							
_10	... would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad"							
_11	... would offer a very high starting salary"							
_12	... would offer clear opportunities for long term career progression"							
_13	... would offer variety in my daily work"							
_14	... would invest heavily in the training and development of its employees"							
_15	... would have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to its business"							
_16	... would be a small organisation"							
_17	... would require me to work standard working hours only"							
_18	... would offer me a lot of scope for creativity in my work"							
_19	... would offer a relatively stress-free working environment"							
_20	... would be widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer"							

-----SCREEN BREAK-----

*The next three questions ask you for your perceptions of some leading graduate employers. We recognise that you may have limited knowledge of these organisations, but please complete all the questions. There are no 'right answers' – it is simply your **perceptions** of the employers mentioned that are of interest to us.*

Q3 3. Based on your **current perceptions of THE FIRM** (management and technology consultants), please tell us to what extent you agree or disagree with the following:
THE FIRM...

Please select one answer for each statement.

[SHOW SCALE VALUES; REPEAT SCALE HALF-WAY DOWN SCREEN]

		7	6	5	4	3	2	1
		Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
_1	...offers the opportunity, in the early years, to move around its organisation and work in different areas/roles							
_2	...employs people with whom I feel I would have things in common							
_3	...allows a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative							
_4	...has a friendly, informal culture							
_5	...offers the opportunity for international travel							
_6	... provides you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues							
_7	...would use my degree skills							
_8	...really cares about its employees as individuals							
_9	...is a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)							
_10	...offers the opportunity to work (and live) abroad							
_11	...offers a very high starting salary							
_12	...offers clear opportunities for long term career progression							
_13	...offers variety in your daily work							
_14	...invests heavily in the training and development of its employees							
_15	...has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to its business							
_16	...is a small organisation							
_17	...would require you to work standard working hours only							
_18	...offers a lot of scope for creativity in your work							

		7	6	5	4	3	2	1
		Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
_19	... offers a relatively stress-free working environment							
_20	...is widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer							

-----SCREEN BREAK-----

Q4 4. Based on your **current perceptions of the THE MEDIA CORPORATION**, please tell us to what extent you agree or disagree with the following: the MEDIA CORPORATION...

Please select one answer for each statement.

[SHOW SCALE VALUES; REPEAT SCALE HALF-WAY DOWN SCREEN]

		7	6	5	4	3	2	1
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
_1	...offers the opportunity, in the early years, to move around its organisation and work in different areas/roles							
_2	...employs people with whom I would have things in common							
_3	...allows a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative							
_4	...has a friendly, informal culture							
_5	...offers the opportunity for international travel							
_6	... provides you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues							
_7	...would use my degree skills							
_8	...really cares about its employees as individuals							
_9	...is a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)							
_10	...offers the opportunity to work (and live) abroad							
_11	...offers a very high starting salary							
_12	...offers clear opportunities for long term career progression							
_13	...offers variety in your daily work							
_14	...invests heavily in the training and development of its employees							
_15	...has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to its business							
_16	...is a small organisation							
_17	...would require you to work standard working hours only							
_18	...offers a lot of scope for creativity in your work							
_19	... offers a relatively stress-free working environment							
_20	...is widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer							

-----SCREEN BREAK-----

Q5 5. Based on your **current perceptions of THE INVESTMENT BANK** (investment bank), please tell us to what extent you agree or disagree with the following: THE INVESTMENT BANK...

Please select one answer for each statement.

[SHOW SCALE VALUES; REPEAT SCALE HALF-WAY DOWN SCREEN]

		7	6	5	4	3	2	1
		Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
_1	...offers the opportunity, in the early years, to move around its organisation and work in different areas/roles							
_2	...employs people with whom I feel I would have things in common							
_3	...allows a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative							
_4	...has a friendly, informal culture							
_5	...offers the opportunity for international travel							
_6	... provides you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues							
_7	...would use my degree skills							
_8	...really cares about its employees as individuals							
_9	...is a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)							
_10	...offers the opportunity to work (and live) abroad							
_11	...offers a very high starting salary							
_12	...offers clear opportunities for long term career progression							
_13	...offers variety in your daily work							
_14	...invests heavily in the training and development of its employees							
_15	...has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to its business							
_16	...is a small organisation							
_17	...would require you to work standard working hours only							
_18	...offers a lot of scope for creativity in your work							
_19	... offers a relatively stress-free working environment							
_20	...is widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer							

-----SCREEN BREAK-----

- Q6 6. Would you please tell us how likely it is that you will submit an application to these organizations (**Note:** for the purposes of answering this question, please assume that all these organisations currently have graduate job vacancies)

Please select one answer for each organization.

[SHOW SCALE VALUES; DO NOT RANDOMIZE RESPONSES]

		7	6	5	4	3	2	1
		Very likely (or already have)	Likely	Somewhat likely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Unlikely	Very unlikely
_1	THE FIRM							
_2	THE MEDIA CORPORATION							
_3	THE INVESTMENT BANK							

[NEXT BUTTON SAYS "Click here to go to the final question"]

-----SCREEN BREAK-----

DEMOGRAPHICS

7. Finally, to enable us to conduct our statistical analysis, would you please tell us...

- D1 ...at which university you are studying?

Please select only one.

- Aston 1
- Birmingham 2
- Bristol..... 3
- Cambridge 4
- Cardiff 5
- Durham 6
- Edinburgh 7
- Exeter 8
- Glasgow..... 9
- Imperial 10
- Leeds 11
- Liverpool 12
- LSE (London School of Economics)..... 13
- London (Goldsmiths, King's, Queen Mary, Royal Holloway, University College)..... 14
- Manchester..... 15
- Newcastle Upon Tyne 16

Nottingham	17
Oxford	18
Sheffield	19
Southampton	20
UMIST	21
York	22

D2 ...whether you are?

[FORCE]

Male	1
Female	2

D3 ...for which type of degree you are studying?

Please select only one.

B.A. or M.A.	1
B.Sc., M.Sc., B.Eng. or M.Eng.	2
Other, please specify:	3

-----SCREEN BREAK-----

Thank you very much for your input. If you would like to participate in the prize draw, please provide your name and details of where you can be contacted during the week of 10th December 2001.

Name: _____
 E-mail: _____
 Phone: _____

In submitting this survey, I confirm that I am currently enrolled on the final year of an undergraduate course and registered with targetedGRAD. I consent to the use of my name and contact details by Cranfield School of Management for the purposes of administering the prize draw, for notifying me should I be successful, and for the publication of my name on the winners list. I understand that my completed questionnaire together with my contact details may be retained for up to 5 years. I understand that this data may be used by the Cranfield doctoral programme in connection with a long term research project commissioned by a leading graduate employer, and will not be divulged in the form of personal data to any other third party, save to a person acting under the direction and in accordance with the instructions of Cranfield (or its doctoral programme) in the processing of the personal data. In respect of the prize draw, I accept that Cranfield has sole discretion to re-draw a substitute winning entry, if I do not reply to the appropriate person at Cranfield (to claim my prize) prior to 14th December 2001.

Good luck with your studies and your job search!

[DO NOT MAKE THIS TEXT BOLD] Note: we may be conducting further research, as part of this study, in Spring 2002, and may wish to invite you to participate in a research interview – for which we would offer you payment. If you would **not** wish to be contacted, please click this box **[D4: CHECK BOX]**

[NEXT BUTTON SHOULD SAY 'CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT YOUR SURVEY']

-----SCREEN BREAK-----

Your survey has now been submitted.

Click on the link to download your copy of Making It to the Boardroom in Britain. **[LINK TO DOWNLOAD 'MAKING IT EDIT2.DOC'; OPEN IN SEPARATE WINDOW]**

['GOODBYE' LINK SENDS TO <http://www.cranfield.ac.uk/>]

D. Emails Sent Out with External and Internal Surveys

"University EMail"

To: <cheryl.freeman.dba99@cranfield.ac.uk>

cc: <aurora@aurora.mcc.ac.uk>

Subject: targetedGRAD: What do you want in a graduate employer?

11/07/01 05:28 PM

Please respond to aurora

Take a few minutes to tell us what you want in a graduate employer and you could win £250, or be one of twenty-five lucky runners-up and win a £10 Amazon.co.uk voucher. In addition, all respondents will receive a copy of our paper, 'Making it to the Boardroom in Britain' (to help you get your career off to a flying start!).

You are one of only a very small number of students, from your university, who have been invited to participate in this survey. The survey is very easy to do, it will take you approximately 10 minutes to complete and, hopefully, will help you in your thinking about potential employers.

This research is being undertaken at Cranfield School of Management, by one of our doctoral students, and is sponsored by a premier graduate employer. (The survey website is being hosted for us by Modalis, a market research company). Your responses will be treated as confidential, i.e. the survey results will be reported in aggregate only and no individual details will be disclosed.

Your views are important, and will help to make a contribution to both theory and best practice in this area; thank you for sharing them with us. Please ensure that your completed survey reaches us by December 5th 2001- the closing date for the prize draw. Please click on this url to start the survey: <http://www.sotech.com/155033/start.asp>

Professor Simon Knox and Professor Sue Vinnicombe
Cranfield University

Cheryl Freeman

Sent by: Valerie Riding

10/12/2001 12:22

To:

cc:

Subject: Re: UAT - please respond by Friday 14th December

I was given your name by Tim Wise and am contacting you in your capacity as a UAT member to ask for a few minutes of your time to participate in a survey that we are conducting, the results of which will help us with our planning of future UK campus recruitment programmes.

The survey will take you just **five minutes** to complete and your input is important to us. Your responses will be treated as confidential, i.e. the survey results will be reported in aggregate only.

I should be very grateful if you would complete the survey by the end of this week, i.e. **Friday 14th December** - click on this url to start:
<http://www.sotech.com/155034/start.asp>

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries. Thank you for your help.

Cheryl Freeman
Associate Partner
Global Recruitment Marketing

E. Internal Survey (plain text format)

UAT Survey

[ALL DIRECTIONS IN CAPITAL LETTERS ARE PROGRAMMING AND LOGIC INSTRUCTIONS. THESE WILL NOT BE VISIBLE TO SURVEY RESPONDENTS]

Survey Name: "UAT Survey" [TO APPEAR ON ALL SCREENS]

Quota: None

Sample Source: THE FIRM employees will be invited to take the survey;
will not be seeded

OPENING SCREEN

Thank you for participating, to begin the survey please enter your Lotus Notes ID so we can register your participation.

Lotus Notes ID: _____ **[UNSEEDED DATABASE]**

If you have any technical questions about the survey, please contact us by email at: richard.waterman@al.sotech.com and please refer to project number 155-034.

**[NEXT BUTTON SHOULD SAY ‘CLICK HERE TO BEGIN THE SURVEY’]
QUESTIONNAIRE**

Q1 1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements (*note: we are interested in your personal opinion only - there are no right or wrong answers*): THE FIRM...

Please mark one answer for each statement.

[SHOW SCALE VALUES; REPEAT SCALE HALF-WAY DOWN SCREEN]

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
_1	...offers the opportunity, in the early years, to move around its organisation and work in different areas/roles						
_2	...employs people with whom I feel I have things in common						
_3	...allows a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative						
_4	...has a friendly, informal culture						
_5	...offers the opportunity for international travel						
_6	...provides you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues						
_7	...uses my degree skills						
_8	...really cares about its employees as individuals						
_9	...is a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)						
_10	...offers the opportunity to work (and live) abroad						
_11	...offers a very high starting salary						
_12	...offers clear opportunities for long-term career progression						
_13	...offers variety in your daily work						
_14	...invests heavily in the training and development of its employees						
_15	...has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to its business						
_16	...is a small organization						
_17	...requires you to work standard working hours only						
_18	...offers a lot of scope for creativity in your work						
_19	...offers a relatively stress-free working environment						
_20	...is widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer						

-----SCREEN BREAK-----

Q2 2. Now, could you please indicate the extent to which **you** believe most **undergraduates** would agree/disagree with the following: THE FIRM...

Please mark one answer for each statement.

[SHOW SCALE VALUES; REPEAT SCALE HALF-WAY DOWN SCREEN]

- | | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|-------------------|----------|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|----------|----------------------|
| | Strongly
agree | Agree | Somewhat
agree | Neither agree
nor disagree | Somewhat
Disagree | Disagree | Strongly
disagree |
| _1 ...would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around its organisation and work in different areas/roles | | | | | | | |
| _2 ...employs people with whom I feel I would have things in common | | | | | | | |
| _3 ...would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative | | | | | | | |
| _4 ...has a friendly, informal culture | | | | | | | |
| _5 ...would offer the opportunity for international travel | | | | | | | |
| _6 ...would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues | | | | | | | |
| _7 ...would use my degree skills | | | | | | | |
| _8 ...really cares about its employees as individuals | | | | | | | |
| _9 ...is a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance) | | | | | | | |
| _10 ...would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad | | | | | | | |
| _11 ...offers a very high starting salary | | | | | | | |
| _12 ...offers clear opportunities for long-term career progression | | | | | | | |
| _13 ...would offer variety in your daily work | | | | | | | |
| _14 ...invests heavily in the training and development of its employees | | | | | | | |
| _15 ...has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to its business | | | | | | | |
| _16 ...is a small organization | | | | | | | |
| _17 ...would require you to work standard working hours only | | | | | | | |
| _18 ...would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work | | | | | | | |
| _19 ...offers a relatively stress-free working environment | | | | | | | |
| _20 ...is widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer | | | | | | | |

-----SCREEN BREAK-----

3. To enable us to conduct our statistical analysis, would you please tell us...

Q3 a) ...whether you are:

Please select one.

a UAT member 1
a recruiter 2

-----SCREEN BREAK-----

Q4 **[IF Q3=1, PIPE QUESTION TEXT ‘b) ...to which university you are assigned:’ OR
IF Q3=2, PIPE QUESTION TEXT ‘b) ...for which universities you have responsibility:’]**

[IF Q3=1, ONLY ALLOW ONE SELECTION IN Q4; IF Q3=2, ALLOW MULTIPLE SELECTIONS]

- _1 Aston
- _2 Birmingham
- _3 Bristol
- _4 Cambridge
- _5 Cardiff
- _6 Durham
- _7 Edinburgh
- _8 Exeter
- _9 Glasgow
- _10 Imperial
- _11 Leeds
- _12 LSE (London School of Economics)
- _13 London (Kings, UCL, Royal Holloway)
- _14 Liverpool
- _15 Manchester/UMIST
- _16 Newcastle
- _17 Nottingham
- _18 Oxford
- _19 Sheffield
- _20 Southampton
- _21 York

-----SCREEN BREAK-----

Q5 c) ...whether you are:

- Male 1
- Female 2

Q6 d) ...your level

Please mark one answer.

- Partner 1
- Associate Partner 2
- Senior Manager 3
- Manager 4
- Consultant 5
- Analyst 6
- Other (Please specify: _____) 7

-----SCREEN BREAK-----

Thank you very much for your input.

[GOODBYE LINK GOES TO WWW.CAREERS.THE FIRM.COM AND SAYS 'CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT YOUR SURVEY']

F. Reminder Emails for External and Internal Surveys

"University EMail"

To: <cheryl.freeman.dba99@cranfield.ac.uk>

cc: <aurora@aurora.mcc.ac.uk>

Subject: targetedGRAD : What do you want in a graduate employer?

11/21/01 11:53AM

Please respond to aurora

If you have already completed this survey, thank you very much. If not please take a few minutes to tell us what you want in a graduate employer and you could win £250, or be one of twenty-five lucky runners-up and win a £10 Amazon.co.uk voucher. In addition, all respondents will receive a copy of our paper, 'Making it to the Boardroom in Britain' (to help you get your career off to a flying start!).

You are one of only a very small number of students, from your university, who have been invited to participate in this survey. The survey is very easy to do, it will take you approximately 10 minutes to complete and, hopefully, will help you in your thinking about potential employers.

This research is being undertaken at Cranfield School of Management, by one of our doctoral students, and is sponsored by a premier graduate employer. (The survey website is being hosted for us by Modalis, a market research company). Your responses will be treated as confidential, i.e. the survey results will be reported in aggregate only and no individual details will be disclosed.

Your views are important, and will help to make a contribution to both theory and best practice in this area; thank you for sharing them with us. Please ensure that your completed survey reaches us by December 5th 2001- the closing date for the prize draw. Please click on this url to start the survey: <http://www.sotech.com/155033/start.asp>

Professor Simon Knox and Professor Sue Vinnicombe
Cranfield University

Valerie Riding

14/12/2001 13:30

To:

cc:

Subject: Please respond today

Earlier this week, Cheryl Freeman sent you the attached note. I know that many people have already completed the survey - thank you if you are one of them. If you have not yet had a chance to complete it, however, I just wanted to encourage you to do so before the end of the day - it only takes a few minutes and your input is important to us. Many thanks.

Valerie Riding

----- Forwarded by Valerie Riding on 14/12/2001 13:25 -----

Cheryl Freeman

Sent by: Valerie Riding To:
10/12/2001 12:22 cc:
Subject: Re: UAT - please respond by Friday 14th December

I was given your name by Tim Wise and am contacting you in your capacity as a UAT member to ask for a few minutes of your time to participate in a survey that we are conducting, the results of which will help us with our planning of future UK campus recruitment programmes.

The survey will take you just **five minutes** to complete and your input is important to us. Your responses will be treated as confidential, i.e. the survey results will be reported in aggregate only.

I should be very grateful if you would complete the survey by the end of this week, i.e. **Friday 14th December** - click on this url to start:
<http://www.sotech.com/155034/start.asp>

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries. Thank you for your help.

Cheryl Freeman
Associate Partner
Global Recruitment Marketing

G. Timing of Responses for External and Internal Surveys

Date	Completes external survey	Percent
8/11/2001	217	22.21%
9/11/2001	268	27.43%
10/11/2001	29	2.97%
11/11/2001	23	2.35%
12/11/2001	87	8.9%
13/11/2001	45	4.61%
14/11/2001	20	2.05%
15/11/2001	6	0.61%
16/11/2001	3	0.31%
17/11/2001	1	0.1%
19/11/2001	4	0.41%
20/11/2001	4	0.41%
21/11/2001*	103	10.54%
22/11/2001	105	10.75%
23/11/2001	17	1.74%
24/11/2001	4	0.41%
25/11/2001	4	0.41%
26/11/2001	14	1.43%
27/11/2001	7	0.72%
28/11/2001	5	0.51%
29/11/2001	2	0.2%
30/11/2001	2	0.2%
1/12/2001	1	0.1%
3/12/2001	3	0.31%
4/12/2001	2	0.2%
5/12/2001	1	0.1%
TOTAL	977	100%

Date	Completes internal survey	Percent
10/12/2001	257	43.34%
11/12/2001	150	25.3%
12/12/2001	37	6.24%
13/12/2001	24	4.05%
14/12/2001*	125	21.08%
TOTAL	593	100%

**reminder email sent*

H. Non-response Email for External Survey

"University EMail"

To: <Cheryl.Freeman.Dba99@Cranfield.ac.uk>

cc: <aurora@aurora.mcc.ac.uk>

Subject: targetedGRAD : Reasons for Non-Response

12/10/01 10:37 AM

Please respond to aurora

Recently we sent you an invitation to participate in a survey ('What do you want in a graduate employer?') - see text of original message below. If you returned the survey, thank you very much. If you did not, we would be very grateful if you could tell us why - this will enable us to ensure that we have no statistical bias in our sample and also guide us in the design of future surveys.

If you would be kind enough to reply, please send an email with a few words (by Friday 14th December), as to why you chose not to participate in the survey, to email: w.t.bulbrook@cranfield.ac.uk (if you don't mind, it would also be helpful if you could indicate whether you are male or female).

Thank you very much, and best wishes for the holiday season.

Professor Simon Knox and Professor Sue Vinnicombe
Cranfield University

Take a few minutes to tell us what you want in a graduate employer and you could win £250, or be one of twenty-five lucky runners-up and win a £10 Amazon.co.uk voucher. In addition, all respondents will receive a copy of our paper, 'Making it to the Boardroom in Britain' (to help you get your career off to a flying start!).

You are one of only a very small number of students, from your university, who have been invited to participate in this survey. The survey is very easy to do, it will take you approximately 10 minutes to complete and, hopefully, will help you in your thinking about potential employers.

This research is being undertaken at Cranfield School of Management, by one of our doctoral students, and is sponsored by a premier graduate employer. (The survey website is being hosted for us by Modalis, a market research company). Your responses will be treated as confidential, i.e. the survey results will be reported in aggregate only and no individual details will be disclosed.

Your views are important, and will help to make a contribution to both theory and best practice in this area; thank you for sharing them with us.

Please ensure that your completed survey reaches us by December 5th 2001- the closing date for the prize draw. Please click on this url to start the survey: www.sotech.com/155033/start.asp

Professor Simon Knox and Professor Sue Vinnicombe
Cranfield University

I. Sample Screen from Reporting Website

1.1 In selecting those organizations to whom you will submit a graduate job application, how important is it to you that they

1.1-...would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organization and work in different areas/roles

Response	Number	Percent
Very important	180	20.88%
Important	328	38.05%
Somewhat important	220	25.52%
Neither important nor unimportant	92	10.67%
Somewhat unimportant	25	2.9%
Unimportant	15	1.74%
Very unimportant	2	0.23%
Total	862	100

1.2...employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common

Response	Number	Percent
Very important	106	12.3%
Important	269	31.21%
Somewhat important	290	33.64%
Neither important nor unimportant	139	16.13%
Somewhat unimportant	37	4.29%
Unimportant	19	2.2%
Very unimportant	2	0.23%
Total	862	100

1.3...would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative

Response	Number	Percent
Very important	86	9.98%
Important	348	40.37%
Somewhat important	315	36.54%
Neither important nor unimportant	88	10.21%
Somewhat unimportant	20	2.32%
Unimportant	4	0.46%
Very unimportant	1	0.12%
Total	862	100

1.4...have a friendly, informal attitude

Response	Number	Percent
Very important	170	19.72%
Important	344	39.91%
Somewhat important	260	30.16%
Neither important nor unimportant	66	7.66%
Somewhat unimportant	16	1.86%
Unimportant	5	0.58%
Very unimportant	1	0.12%
Total	862	100

J. Population and Sample for External Survey: Chi-square

Gender/Course	<i>Observed frequency (O)</i>	<i>Expected frequency (E)</i>	$O - E$	$(O - E)^2$	$(O - E)^2/E$
Female/Science	304	197	107	11449	58.1168
Female/Arts	216	259	-43	1849	7.1390
Male/Science	260	259	1	1	0.0039
Male/Arts	82	147	-65	4225	28.7415
Chi-square value					94.0011

Degrees of freedom = 3

Significant at the 0.001 significance level

Gender	<i>Observed frequency (O)</i>	<i>Expected frequency (E)</i>	$O - E$	$(O - E)^2$	$(O - E)^2/E$
Female	520	457	63	3969	8.6849
Male	342	405	-63	3969	9.8000
Chi-square value					18.4849

Degrees of freedom = 1

Significant at the 0.001 significance level

University attended	<i>Observed frequency (O)</i>	<i>Expected percentage</i>	<i>Expected frequency (E)</i>	$O - E$	$(O - E)^2$	$(O - E)^2/E$
Aston	64	2	17	46.76	2186.4976	126.8270
Birmingham	15	5	43	-28.1	789.61	18.3204
Bristol	45	4	34	10.52	110.6704	3.2097
Cambridge	8	4	34	-26.48	701.1904	20.3361
Cardiff	48	4	34	13.52	182.7904	5.3013
Durham	31	4	34	-3.48	12.1104	0.3512
Edinburgh	82	6	52	30.28	916.8784	17.7277
Exeter	41	3	26	15.14	229.2196	8.8639
Glasgow	15	6	52	-36.72	1348.3584	26.0703
Imperial	9	3	26	-16.86	284.2596	10.9923
Leeds	19	7	60	-41.34	1708.9956	28.3228
Liverpool	21	4	34	-13.48	181.7104	5.2700
London	52	14	121	-68.68	4716.9424	39.0864
LSE	8	1	9	-0.62	0.3844	0.0446
Manchester	80	5	43	36.9	1361.61	31.5919
Newcastle	50	4	34	15.52	240.8704	6.9858
Nottingham	34	5	43	-9.1	82.81	1.9213
Oxford	7	4	34	-27.48	755.1504	21.9011
Sheffield	23	6	52	-28.72	824.8384	15.9482
Southampton	122	5	43	78.9	6225.21	144.4364
UMIST	54	2	17	36.76	1351.2976	78.3815
York	34	2	17	16.76	280.8976	16.2934
Chi-square value						628.1834

Degrees of freedom = 20

Significant at the 0.001 significance level

K. Population and Sample for Internal Survey: Chi-square

Job Level	<i>Observed frequency (O)</i>	<i>Expected frequency (E)</i>	$O - E$	$(O - E)^2$	$(O - E)^2/E$
Associate Partner	6	6	0	0	0.0000
Senior Manager	30	30	0	0	0.0000
Manager	107	125	-17.79	316.4841	2.5414
Consultant	219	219	0	0	0.0000
Analyst	231	213	17.79	316.4841	1.4825
Chi-square value					4.0239

Degrees of freedom = 4

Not significant

Gender	<i>Observed frequency (O)</i>	<i>Expected frequency (E)</i>	$O - E$	$(O - E)^2$	$(O - E)^2/E$
Female	206	190	16	256	1.3474
Male	387	403	-16	256	0.6352
Chi-square value					1.9826

Degrees of freedom = 1

Not significant

University assignment	<i>Observed frequency (O)</i>	<i>Expected percentage</i>	<i>Expected frequency (E)</i>	$O - E$	$(O - E)^2$	$(O - E)^2/E$
Aston	18	3	18	0	0	0.0000
Birmingham	47	7	42	5.93	35.1649	0.8471
Bristol	36	6	36	0	0	0.0000
Cambridge	42	8	47	-5.93	35.1649	0.7413
Cardiff	6	1	6	0	0	0.0000
Durham	36	6	36	0	0	0.0000
Edinburgh	36	6	36	0	0	0.0000
Exeter	6	2	12	-5.93	35.1649	2.9650
Glasgow	53	8	47	5.93	35.1649	0.7413
Imperial	24	4	24	0	0	0.0000
Leeds	30	5	30	0	0	0.0000
Liverpool	12	2	12	0	0	0.0000
London	24	5	30	-5.93	35.1649	1.1860
LSE	18	3	18	0	0	0.0000
Manchester/ UMIST	47	8	47	0	0	0.0000
Newcastle	12	2	12	0	0	0.0000
Nottingham	47	8	47	0	0	0.0000
Oxford	42	7	42	0	0	0.0000

University assignment	<i>Observed frequency (O)</i>	<i>Expected percentage</i>	<i>Expected frequency (E)</i>	$O - E$	$(O - E)^2$	$(O - E)^2/E$
Sheffield	24	3	18	5.93	35.1649	1.9767
Southampton	24	4	24	0	0	0.0000
York	12	2	12	0	0	0.0000
Chi-square value						8.4573

Degrees of freedom = 19

Significant at 0.050 significance level

L. Likelihood to Apply: Sex, Course Type and Sex/Course Type (external survey): Cross-tabulation and Chi-square

			Likelihood of applying to the Firm		Total
			Apply	Not apply	
D2: Gender	Male	Count	232	115	347
		% within D2: Gender	66.9%	33.1%	100.0%
		% within Likelihood of applying to the Firm	62.9%	30.1%	46.2%
		% of Total	30.9%	15.3%	46.2%
	Female	Count	137	267	404
		% within D2: Gender	33.9%	66.1%	100.0%
		% within Likelihood of applying to the Firm	37.1%	69.9%	53.8%
		% of Total	18.2%	35.6%	53.8%
Total		Count	369	382	751
		% within D2: Gender	49.1%	50.9%	100.0%
		% within Likelihood of applying to the Firm	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	49.1%	50.9%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	81.081 ^b	1	.000		
Continuity Correction ^a	79.768	1	.000		
Likelihood Ratio	82.593	1	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test				.000	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	80.973	1	.000		
N of Valid Cases	751				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 170.50.

Crosstab

			Likelihood of applying to the Firm		
			Apply	Not apply	Total
D3::For which type of degree are you studying?	BA or MA	Count	150	194	344
		% within D3: For which type of degree are you studying?	43.6%	56.4%	100.0%
		% within Likelihood of applying to the Firm	40.7%	50.8%	45.8%
		% of Total	20.0%	25.8%	45.8%
	BSc, Msc, BEng or MEng	Count	219	188	407
		% within D3: For which type of degree are you studying?	53.8%	46.2%	100.0%
		% within Likelihood of applying to the Firm	59.3%	49.2%	54.2%
		% of Total	29.2%	25.0%	54.2%
Total	Count	369	382	751	
	% within D3: For which type of degree are you studying?	49.1%	50.9%	100.0%	
	% within Likelihood of applying to the Firm	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	49.1%	50.9%	100.0%	

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.766 ^b	1	.005		
Continuity Correction ^a	7.363	1	.007		
Likelihood Ratio	7.782	1	.005		
Fisher's Exact Test				.005	.003
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.756	1	.005		
N of Valid Cases	751				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 169.02.

			Q6_1B		Total
			Apply	Not apply	
D4: Gender and Course Type	Female/Arts	Count	68	162	230
		% within D4: Gender and Course Type	29.6%	70.4%	100.0%
		% within Q6_1B	18.4%	42.4%	30.6%
		% of Total	9.1%	21.6%	30.6%
	Female/Science	Count	70	105	175
		% within D4: Gender and Course Type	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%
		% within Q6_1B	19.0%	27.5%	23.3%
		% of Total	9.3%	14.0%	23.3%
	Male/Arts	Count	82	32	114
		% within D4: Gender and Course Type	71.9%	28.1%	100.0%
		% within Q6_1B	22.2%	8.4%	15.2%
		% of Total	10.9%	4.3%	15.2%
	Male/Science	Count	149	83	232
		% within D4: Gender and Course Type	64.2%	35.8%	100.0%
		% within Q6_1B	40.4%	21.7%	30.9%
		% of Total	19.8%	11.1%	30.9%
Total		Count	369	382	751
		% within D4: Gender and Course	49.1%	50.9%	100.0%

	Q6_1B		Total
	Apply	Not apply	
Type	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
% within Q6_1B	49.1%	50.9%	100.0%
% of Total			

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	85.924 ^a	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	88.119	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	71.534	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	751		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 56.01

M. Sex Differences in Importance of Attributes (external survey): *t* tests

	D2: Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Q1_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organization and work in different areas/roles	Male Female	602 679	5.52 5.62	1.078 1.188	.044 .046
Q1_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	Male Female	602 679	5.16 5.31	1.181 1.120	.048 .043
Q1_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	Male Female	602 679	5.42 5.44	.944 .916	.038 .035
Q1_4: have a friendly, informal culture	Male Female	602 679	5.53 5.71	1.071 .953	.044 .037
Q1_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel	Male Female	602 679	4.98 4.97	1.458 1.615	.059 .062
Q1_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	Male Female	602 679	4.27 4.71	1.410 1.254	.057 .048
Q1_7: would use your degree skills	Male Female	602 679	4.85 5.08	1.475 1.263	.060 .048
Q1_8: really care about their employees as individuals	Male Female	602 679	5.99 6.26	.922 .806	.038 .031
Q1_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	Male Female	602 679	5.17 5.10	1.347 1.268	.055 .049
Q1_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	Male Female	602 679	4.75 4.66	1.674 1.719	.068 .066
Q1_11: offer a very high starting salary	Male Female	602 679	5.09 4.76	1.146 1.191	.047 .046
Q1_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	Male Female	602 679	6.07 6.15	.852 .831	.035 .032
Q1_13: would offer variety in your daily work	Male Female	602 679	5.89 6.20	.889 .731	.036 .028

	D2: Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Q1_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	Male	602	6.12	.807	.033
	Female	679	6.18	.773	.030
Q1_15: have a dynamic forward-looking approach to their business	Male	602	5.86	.878	.036
	Female	679	5.80	.948	.036
Q1_16: are a small organization	Male	602	3.37	1.201	.049
	Female	679	3.38	1.216	.047
Q1_17: would require you to work standard working hours only	Male	602	3.74	1.341	.055
	Female	679	4.02	1.285	.049
Q1_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work	Male	602	5.46	1.027	.042
	Female	679	5.37	1.104	.042
Q1_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment	Male	602	4.78	1.338	.055
	Female	679	5.03	1.288	.049
Q1_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	Male	602	4.91	1.308	.053
	Female	679	4.97	1.285	.049

		Levene's Test of Equality of Variances		t-test for equality of means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q1_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organization and work in different areas/roles	Equal variances assumed	2.467	.117	-1.440	1279	.150	-.09	.064	-.217	.033
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.449	1278.778	.148	-.09	.063	-.216	.032
Q1_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	Equal variances assumed	.410	.522	-2.367	1279	.018	-.15	.064	-.278	-.026
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.359	1242.138	.018	-.15	.065	-.279	-.026
Q1_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	Equal variances assumed	.686	.408	-.436	1279	.663	-.02	.052	-.125	.079
	Equal variances not assumed			-.435	1250.743	.663	-.02	.052	-.125	.080
Q1_4: have a friendly informal culture	Equal variances assumed	5.474	.019	-3.198	1279	.001	-.18	.057	-.292	-.070
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.176	1211.768	.002	-.18	.057	-.292	-.069
Q1_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel	Equal variances assumed	4.986	.026	.134	1279	.893	.01	.086	-.158	.181
	Equal variances not assumed			.135	1279.000	.893	.01	.086	-.157	.180
Q1_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	Equal variances assumed	3.669	.056	-5.954	1279	.000	-.44	.074	-.589	-.297
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.912	1211.621	.000	-.44	.075	-.590	-.296
Q1_7: would use your degree skills	Equal variances assumed	19.545	.000	-3.072	1279	.002	-.24	.077	-.385	-.085
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.043	1190.783	.002	-.24	.077	-.387	-.084
Q1_8: really care about their employees as individuals	Equal variances assumed	.147	.701	-5.567	1279	.000	-.27	.048	-.364	-.174
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.522	1202.676	.000	-.27	.049	-.364	-.173
Q1_9: are a pure meritocracy (ie rewards and promotions are based on performance)	Equal variances assumed	1.740	.187	.892	1279	.373	.07	.073	-.078	.209
	Equal variances not assumed			.889	1238.940	.374	.07	.073	-.079	.209

		Levene's Test of Equality of Variances		t-test for equality of means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q1_10: would off the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	Equal variances assumed	.340	.560	.974	1279	.330	.09	.095	-.094	.279
	Equal variances not assumed			.975	1268.137	.330	.09	.095	-.094	.279
Q1_11: offer a very high starting salary	Equal variances assumed	8.346	.004	5.165	1279	.000	.34	.065	.210	.467
	Equal variances not assumed			5.177	1270.842	.000	.34	.065	.210	.466
Q1_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	Equal variances assumed	1.168	.280	-1.538	1279	.124	-.07	.047	-.165	.020
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.536	1252.855	.125	-.07	.047	-.165	.020
Q1_13: would offer variety in your daily work	Equal variances assumed	9.843	.002	-6.798	1279	.000	-.31	.045	-.397	-.219
	Equal variances not assumed			-6.719	1166.406	.000	-.31	.046	-.398	-.218
Q1_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	Equal variances assumed	.259	.611	-1.423	1279	.155	-.06	.044	-.149	.024
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.420	1245.958	.156	-.06	.044	-.150	.024
Q1_15: have a dynamic and forward-looking approach to their business	Equal variances assumed	1.979	.160	1.077	1279	.282	.06	.051	-.045	.156
	Equal variances not assumed			1.082	1276.936	.280	.06	.051	-.045	.155
Q1_16: are a small organization	Equal variances assumed	.448	.503	-.175	1279	.861	-.01	.068	-.145	.121
	Equal variances not assumed			-.175	1264.462	.861	-.01	.068	-.144	.121
Q1_17: would require you to work standard working hours only	Equal variances assumed	6.482	.011	-3.792	1279	.000	-.28	.073	-.422	-.134
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.783	1245.978	.000	-.28	.074	-.423	-.134
Q1_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work	Equal variances assumed	2.942	.087	1.446	1279	.148	.09	.060	-.031	.204
	Equal variances not assumed			1.452	1276.448	.147	.09	.060	-.030	.203
Q1_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment	Equal variances assumed	5.511	.019	-3.391	1279	.001	-.25	.073	-.393	-.105
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.384	1247.748	.001	-.25	.074	-.393	-.105
Q1_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	Equal variances assumed	.894	.345	-.894	1279	.372	-.06	.073	-.207	.077
	Equal variances not assumed			-.893	1255.317	.372	-.06	.073	-.207	.078

N. Sex Differences in Importance of Attributes (external survey): Spearman's rho

Construct	Male Rank	Female Rank	d	d ²
1	7	7	0	0
2	11	10	1	1
3	9	8	1	1
4	6	6	0	0
5	13	15	-2	4
6	18	17	1	1
7	15	12	3	9
8	3	1	2	4
9	10	11	-1	1
10	17	18	-1	1
11	12	16	-4	16
12	2	4	-2	4
13	4	2	2	4
14	1	3	-2	4
15	5	5	0	0
16	20	20	0	0
17	19	19	0	0
18	8	9	-1	1
19	16	13	3	9
20	14	14	0	0
			Sum	60

Spearman $r = 0.954887$

O. Sex Differences in Importance of Attributes (external survey): Factor Analysis

Factor Analysis – Total

Component Matrix^a

a. 6 components extracted.

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Q1_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	.911					
Q1_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel	.889					

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Q1_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	.652					
Q1_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	.543					
Q1_17: would require you to work standard working hours only		.732				
Q1_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment		.681				
Q1_16: are a small organisation		.600				
Q1_7: would use your degree skills		.527				
Q1_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees			.736			
Q1_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression			.643			
Q1_15: have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business			.519			
Q1_8: really care about their employees as individuals			.513	.459		
Q1_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common				.765		
Q1_4: have a friendly, informal culture				.653		
Q1_13: would offer variety in your daily work				.547		
Q1_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative					.826	
Q1_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work					.796	
Q1_11: offer a very high starting salary						.807
Q1_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer						.660
Q1_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.574	12.871	12.871
2	1.860	9.302	22.173
3	1.831	9.157	31.330
4	1.740	8.700	40.029
5	1.728	8.640	48.670
6	1.561	7.806	56.476

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Reliability Analysis

	Alpha
Component 1	0.79
Component 2	0.55
Component 3	0.62
Component 4	0.49
Component 5	0.67
Component 6	0.67

Factor Analysis – Male

Component Matrix^a

a. 7 components extracted.

Rotated Component Matrix

	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Q1_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	.911						
Q1_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel	.901						
Q1_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	.529				.421		
Q1_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative		.785					
Q1_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work		.782					
Q1_15: have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business		.482					
Q1_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common			.763				
Q1_4: have a friendly, informal culture			.692				
Q1_13: would offer variety in your daily work			.518				
Q1_8: really care about their employees as individuals			.457				
Q1_17: would require you to work standard working hours only				.765			
Q1_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment				.698			
Q1_16: are a small organisation				.638			
Q1_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees					.783		
Q1_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression					.633		
Q1_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer						.670	
Q1_11: offer a very high starting salary						.663	
Q1_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)						.602	

	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Q1_7: would use your degree skills							.803
Q1_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	.511						.568

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.371	11.855	11.855
2	2.015	10.077	21.932
3	1.773	8.867	30.799
4	1.705	8.523	39.322
5	1.650	8.250	47.572
6	1.648	8.239	55.811
7	1.203	6.015	61.826

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Reliability Analysis

	Alpha
Component 1	0.78
Component 2	0.66
Component 3	0.59
Component 4	0.56
Component 5	0.46
Component 6	0.48
Component 7	0.34

Factor Analysis – Female

Component Matrix^a

a. 6 components extracted.

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Q1_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	.915					
Q1_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel	.891					
Q1_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	.685					
Q1_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	.531					
Q1_17: would require you to work standard working hours only		.670				
Q1_16: are a small organisation		.640				
Q1_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment		.636				
Q1_7: would use your degree skills		.577				
Q1_15: have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business			.626			
Q1_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)			.620			
Q1_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees			.569			
Q1_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression			.544	.514		
Q1_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer				.766		
Q1_11: offer a very high starting salary				.756		
Q1_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common					.687	
Q1_4: have a friendly, informal culture					.660	
Q1_8: really care about their employees as individuals			.492		.523	
Q1_13: would offer variety in your daily work					.465	
Q1_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative						.831
Q1_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work						.810

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.702	13.512	13.512
2	1.856	9.279	22.791
3	1.832	9.161	31.952
4	1.820	9.098	41.050
5	1.764	8.819	49.869
6	1.597	7.984	57.853

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Reliability Analysis

	Alpha
Component 1	0.81
Component 2	0.55
Component 3	0.57
Component 4	0.60
Component 5	0.56
Component 6	0.67

P. Sex Differences in Perceptions of Each of the Firm, Media Corporation and Investment Bank (external survey): t tests

The Firm

	D2: Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Q3_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organization and work in different areas/roles	Male	602	5.24	1.095	.045
	Female	679	5.04	1.148	.044
Q3_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	Male	602	4.42	1.469	.060
	Female	679	4.02	1.414	.054
Q3_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	Male	602	4.72	1.198	.049
	Female	679	4.65	1.240	.048
Q3_4: have a friendly, informal culture	Male	602	4.31	1.330	.054
	Female	679	4.09	1.289	.049
Q3_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel	Male	602	5.33	1.162	.047
	Female	679	5.45	1.128	.043
Q3_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	Male	602	5.34	1.073	.044
	Female	679	5.43	1.060	.041
Q3_7: would use your degree skills	Male	602	4.33	1.607	.065
	Female	679	4.01	1.670	.064
Q3_8: really care about their employees as individuals	Male	602	4.46	1.318	.054
	Female	679	4.36	1.357	.052

	D2: Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Q3_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	Male	602	4.99	1.090	.044
	Female	679	5.08	1.153	.044
Q3_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	Male	602	5.24	1.213	.049
	Female	679	5.19	1.187	.046
Q3_11: offer a very high starting salary	Male	602	5.79	1.147	.047
	Female	679	5.77	1.077	.041
Q3_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	Male	602	5.50	1.080	.044
	Female	679	5.70	.968	.037
Q3_13: would offer variety in your daily work	Male	602	4.95	1.192	.049
	Female	679	4.88	1.221	.047
Q3_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	Male	602	5.81	1.049	.043
	Female	679	5.85	.950	.036
Q3_15: have a dynamic forward-looking approach to their business	Male	602	5.75	1.077	.044
	Female	679	5.92	.911	.035
Q3_16: are a small organization	Male	602	1.79	1.203	.049
	Female	679	1.81	1.059	.041
Q3_17: would require you to work standard working hours only	Male	602	2.73	1.484	.060
	Female	679	2.88	1.467	.056
Q3_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work	Male	602	4.74	1.244	.051
	Female	679	4.41	1.314	.050
Q3_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment	Male	602	3.13	1.426	.058
	Female	679	2.99	1.329	.051
Q3_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	Male	602	6.06	1.172	.048
	Female	679	6.18	.968	.037

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test of Equality of Variances		t-test for equality of means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q3_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organization and work in different areas/roles	Equal variances assumed	.557	.455	3.218	1279	.001	.20	.063	.079	.326
	Equal variances not assumed			3.227	1272.523	.0001	.20	.063	.079	.325
Q3_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	Equal variances assumed	5.963	.015	4.995	1279	.000	.40	.081	.245	.561
	Equal variances not assumed			4.984	1247.801	.000	.40	.081	.244	.561
Q3_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	Equal variances assumed	.693	.405	.989	1279	.323	.07	.068	-.066	.201
	Equal variances not assumed			.991	1269.927	.322	.07	.068	-.066	.201
Q3_4: have a friendly informal culture	Equal variances assumed	3.054	.081	2.994	1279	.003	.22	.073	.076	.363
	Equal variances not assumed			2.989	1250.284	.003	.22	.073	.075	.363
Q3_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel	Equal variances assumed	.059	.809	-1.748	1279	.081	-.11	.064	-.238	.014
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.745	1251.124	.081	-.11	.064	-.238	.014
Q3_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	Equal variances assumed	1.009	.315	-1.606	1279	.109	-.10	.060	-.213	.021
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.605	1257.349	.109	-.10	.060	-.213	.021

		Levene's Test of Equality of Variances		t-test for equality of means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q3_7: would use your degree skills	Equal variances assumed	1.297	.255	3.535	1279	.000	.32	.092	.144	.505
	Equal variances not assumed			3.543	1270.819	.000	.32	.092	.145	.504
Q3_8: really care about their employees as individuals	Equal variances assumed	.127	.722	1.259	1279	.208	.09	.075	-.053	.241
	Equal variances not assumed			1.261	1268.811	.208	.09	.075	-.052	.241
Q3_9: are a pure meritocracy (ie rewards and promotions are based on performance)	Equal variances assumed	9.514	.002	-1.410	1279	.159	-.09	.063	-.212	.035
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.414	1274.138	.157	-.09	.063	-.212	.034
Q3_10: would off the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	Equal variances assumed	.018	.893	.745	1279	.456	.05	.067	-.082	.182
	Equal variances not assumed			.744	1254.042	.457	.05	.067	-.082	.182
Q3_11: offer a very high starting salary	Equal variances assumed	.692	.405	.306	1279	.760	.02	.062	-.103	.141
	Equal variances not assumed			.305	1238.111	.761	.02	.062	-.103	.141
Q3_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	Equal variances assumed	7.658	.006	-3.595	1279	.000	-.21	.057	-.318	-.093
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.571	1215.993	.000	-.21	.058	-.319	-.093
Q3_13: would offer variety in your daily work	Equal variances assumed	.473	.492	1.099	1279	.272	.07	.068	-.058	.207
	Equal variances not assumed			1.100	1267.688	.271	.07	.067	-.058	.207
Q3_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	Equal variances assumed	5.200	.023	-.601	1279	.548	-.03	.056	-.143	.076
	Equal variances not assumed			-.597	1220.847	.551	-.03	.056	-.144	.077
Q3_15: have a dynamic and forward-looking approach to their business	Equal variances assumed	18.181	.000	-3.071	1279	.002	-.17	.056	-.280	-.062
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.041	1183.439	.002	-.17	.056	-.281	-.061
Q3_16: are a small organization	Equal variances assumed	5.915	.015	-.202	1279	.840	-.01	.063	-.137	.111
	Equal variances not assumed			-.200	1206.361	.841	-.01	.064	-.138	.112
Q3_17: would require you to work standard working hours only	Equal variances assumed	3.698	.055	-1.819	1279	.069	-.15	.083	-.312	.012
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.818	1257.491	.069	-.15	.083	-.312	.012
Q3_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work	Equal variances assumed	3.061	.080	4.612	1279	.000	.33	.072	.190	.472
	Equal variances not assumed			4.627	1273.880	.000	.33	.072	.191	.471
Q3_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment	Equal variances assumed	7.036	.008	1.724	1279	.085	.13	.077	-.018	.284
	Equal variances not assumed			1.717	1234.644	.086	.13	.077	-.019	.284
Q3_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	Equal variances assumed	5.103	.024	-2.032	1279	.042	-.12	.060	-.239	-.004
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.009	1169.041	.045	-.12	.061	-.240	-.003

	D2: Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Q4_1: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas / roles	Male Female	602 679	4.73 4.90	1.110 1.168	.045 .045
Q4_2: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	Male Female	602 679	4.54 4.80	1.258 1.206	.051 .046
Q4_3: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	Male Female	602 679	4.71 4.96	1.110 1.143	.045 .044
Q4_4: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - have a friendly, informal culture	Male Female	602 679	4.52 4.65	1.194 1.177	.049 .045
Q4_5: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - would offer the opportunity for international travel	Male Female	602 679	5.13 5.18	1.230 1.211	.050 .046
Q4_6: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	Male Female	602 679	5.16 5.45	1.223 1.202	.050 .046
Q4_7: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - would use your degree skills	Male Female	602 679	3.82 4.07	1.524 1.528	.062 .059
Q4_8: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - really care about their employees as individuals	Male Female	602 679	4.45 4.54	1.082 1.092	.044 .042
Q4_9: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	Male Female	602 679	4.05 4.16	1.260 1.169	.051 .045
Q4_10: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	Male Female	602 679	4.91 4.90	1.316 1.345	.054 .052
Q4_11: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - offer a very high starting salary	Male Female	602 679	3.71 3.93	1.139 1.198	.046 .046
Q4_12: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	Male Female	602 679	4.77 5.03	1.165 1.200	.047 .046
Q4_13: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - would offer variety in your daily work	Male Female	602 679	4.99 5.55	1.109 .959	.045 .037
Q4_14: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	Male Female	602 679	4.66 4.79	1.089 1.106	.044 .042
Q4_15: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	Male Female	602 679	4.43 4.99	1.292 1.317	.053 .051
Q4_16: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - are a small organisation	Male Female	602 679	1.65 1.56	1.124 .922	.046 .035
Q4_17: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - would require you to work standard working hours only	Male Female	602 679	3.46 2.86	1.414 1.197	.058 .046
Q4_18: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work	Male Female	602 679	5.24 5.63	1.081 1.053	.044 .040
Q4_19: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - offer a relatively stress-free working environment	Male Female	602 679	4.00 3.52	1.148 1.184	.047 .045
Q4_20: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	Male Female	602 679	5.46 5.89	1.259 1.186	.051 .045

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q4_1: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas / roles	Equal variances assumed	.479	.489	-2.590	1279	.010	-.17	.064	-.291	-.040
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.598	1273.166	.009	-.17	.064	-.290	-.041
Q4_2: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	Equal variances assumed	1.697	.193	-3.729	1279	.000	-.26	.069	-.392	-.122
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.719	1246.474	.000	-.26	.069	-.392	-.121
Q4_3: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	Equal variances assumed	1.034	.309	-3.821	1279	.000	-.24	.063	-.365	-.117
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.828	1268.898	.000	-.24	.063	-.365	-.118
Q4_4: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - have a friendly, informal culture	Equal variances assumed	.001	.980	-1.975	1279	.048	-.13	.066	-.261	-.001
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.973	1256.466	.049	-.13	.066	-.261	-.001
Q4_5: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - would offer the opportunity for international travel	Equal variances assumed	.104	.747	-.773	1279	.440	-.05	.068	-.187	.081
	Equal variances not assumed			-.772	1256.016	.440	-.05	.068	-.187	.081
Q4_6: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	Equal variances assumed	.006	.937	-4.239	1279	.000	-.29	.068	-.421	-.154
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.235	1255.490	.000	-.29	.068	-.421	-.154
Q4_7: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - would use your degree skills	Equal variances assumed	.086	.769	-2.834	1279	.005	-.24	.085	-.410	-.075
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.834	1261.690	.005	-.24	.085	-.410	-.075
Q4_8: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - really care about their employees as individuals	Equal variances assumed	.217	.641	-1.458	1279	.145	-.09	.061	-.208	.031
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.459	1263.814	.145	-.09	.061	-.208	.031
Q4_9: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	Equal variances assumed	2.623	.106	-1.631	1279	.103	-.11	.068	-.244	.022
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.624	1232.690	.105	-.11	.068	-.245	.023
Q4_10: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	Equal variances assumed	.836	.361	.148	1279	.883	.01	.075	-.135	.157
	Equal variances not assumed			.148	1267.026	.882	.01	.074	-.135	.157

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q4_11: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - offer a very high starting salary	Equal variances assumed	.568	.451	-3.306	1279	.001	-.22	.066	-.345	-.088
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.316	1273.078	.001	-.22	.065	-.345	-.088
Q4_12: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	Equal variances assumed	.012	.913	-3.982	1279	.000	-.26	.066	-.394	-.134
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.989	1268.842	.000	-.26	.066	-.393	-.134
Q4_13: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - would offer variety in your daily work	Equal variances assumed	1.147	.284	-9.665	1279	.000	-.56	.058	-.672	-.445
	Equal variances not assumed			-9.581	1195.960	.000	-.56	.058	-.673	-.444
Q4_14: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	Equal variances assumed	.114	.736	-2.175	1279	.030	-.13	.061	-.254	-.013
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.177	1265.293	.030	-.13	.061	-.254	-.013
Q4_15: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	Equal variances assumed	.175	.676	-7.669	1279	.000	-.56	.073	-.704	-.417
	Equal variances not assumed			-7.678	1266.352	.000	-.56	.073	-.704	-.417
Q4_16: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - are a small organisation	Equal variances assumed	7.355	.007	1.559	1279	.119	.09	.057	-.023	.201
	Equal variances not assumed			1.540	1164.727	.124	.09	.058	-.024	.203
Q4_17: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - would require you to work standard working hours only	Equal variances assumed	30.947	.000	8.264	1279	.000	.60	.073	.460	.746
	Equal variances not assumed			8.182	1183.576	.000	.60	.074	.458	.747
Q4_18: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work	Equal variances assumed	.006	.937	-6.559	1279	.000	-.39	.060	-.509	-.274
	Equal variances not assumed			-6.548	1252.383	.000	-.39	.060	-.509	-.274
Q4_19: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - offer a relatively stress-free working environment	Equal variances assumed	8.025	.005	7.375	1279	.000	.48	.065	.354	.610
	Equal variances not assumed			7.388	1269.093	.000	.48	.065	.354	.610
Q4_20: THE MEDIA CORPORATION - are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	Equal variances assumed	7.553	.006	-6.252	1279	.000	-.43	.068	-.561	-.293
	Equal variances not assumed			-6.230	1239.158	.000	-.43	.068	-.562	-.293

Group Statistics

	D2: Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Q5_1: THE INVESTMENT BANK - would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas / roles	Male	602	4.77	1.156	.047
	Female	679	4.80	1.127	.043
Q5_2: THE INVESTMENT BANK - employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	Male	602	4.17	1.357	.055
	Female	679	3.76	1.470	.056
Q5_3: THE INVESTMENT BANK - would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	Male	602	4.31	1.243	.051
	Female	679	4.29	1.248	.048
Q5_4: THE INVESTMENT BANK - have a friendly, informal culture	Male	602	3.63	1.406	.057
	Female	679	3.40	1.283	.049
Q5_5: THE INVESTMENT BANK - would offer the opportunity for international travel	Male	602	5.42	1.087	.044
	Female	679	5.46	1.110	.043
Q5_6: THE INVESTMENT BANK - would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	Male	602	5.42	1.089	.044
	Female	679	5.42	1.074	.041
Q5_7: THE INVESTMENT BANK - would use your degree skills	Male	602	4.23	1.628	.066
	Female	679	3.85	1.730	.066
Q5_8: THE INVESTMENT BANK - really care about their employees as individuals	Male	602	4.02	1.279	.052
	Female	679	4.14	1.334	.051
Q5_9: THE INVESTMENT BANK - are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	Male	602	5.15	1.191	.049
	Female	679	5.16	1.214	.047
Q5_10: THE INVESTMENT BANK - would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	Male	602	5.26	1.154	.047
	Female	679	5.32	1.097	.042
Q5_11: THE INVESTMENT BANK - offer a very high starting salary	Male	602	5.96	1.024	.042
	Female	679	5.94	1.012	.039
Q5_12: THE INVESTMENT BANK - offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	Male	602	5.35	1.123	.046
	Female	679	5.59	1.021	.039
Q5_13: THE INVESTMENT BANK - would offer variety in your daily work	Male	602	4.26	1.340	.055
	Female	679	4.38	1.264	.048
Q5_14: THE INVESTMENT BANK - invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	Male	602	5.41	1.093	.045
	Female	679	5.51	.999	.038
Q5_15: THE INVESTMENT BANK - have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	Male	602	5.40	1.126	.046
	Female	679	5.61	1.038	.040
Q5_16: THE INVESTMENT BANK - are a small organisation	Male	602	1.89	1.232	.050
	Female	679	1.93	1.102	.042
Q5_17: THE INVESTMENT BANK - would require you to work standard working hours only	Male	602	2.66	1.607	.065
	Female	679	2.74	1.529	.059
Q5_18: THE INVESTMENT BANK - would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work	Male	602	4.09	1.252	.051
	Female	679	3.81	1.330	.051

	D2: Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Q5_19: THE INVESTMENT BANK - offer a relatively stress-free working environment	Male Female	602 679	2.51 2.50	1.400 1.252	.057 .048
Q5_20: THE INVESTMENT BANK - are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	Male Female	602 679	6.06 6.07	1.016 1.059	.041 .041

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q5_1: THE INVESTMENT BANK - would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas / roles	Equal variances assumed	.225	.636	-.381	1279	.704	-.02	.064	-.150	.101
	Equal variances not assumed			-.380	1252.624	.704	-.02	.064	-.150	.101
Q5_2: THE INVESTMENT BANK - employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	Equal variances assumed	5.739	.017	5.098	1279	.000	.40	.079	.249	.560
	Equal variances not assumed			5.123	1277.354	.000	.40	.079	.250	.560
Q5_3: THE INVESTMENT BANK - would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	Equal variances assumed	.011	.915	.336	1279	.737	.02	.070	-.113	.160
	Equal variances not assumed			.336	1262.207	.737	.02	.070	-.113	.160
Q5_4: THE INVESTMENT BANK - have a friendly, informal culture	Equal variances assumed	6.936	.009	3.074	1279	.002	.23	.075	.084	.378
	Equal variances not assumed			3.057	1224.580	.002	.23	.076	.083	.379
Q5_5: THE INVESTMENT BANK - would offer the opportunity for international travel	Equal variances assumed	.999	.318	-.648	1279	.517	-.04	.062	-.161	.081
	Equal variances not assumed			-.649	1266.828	.517	-.04	.061	-.160	.081
Q5_6: THE INVESTMENT BANK - would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	Equal variances assumed	.185	.667	-.028	1279	.978	.00	.061	-.120	.117
	Equal variances not assumed			-.028	1256.452	.978	.00	.061	-.120	.117
Q5_7: THE INVESTMENT BANK – would use your degree skills	Equal variances assumed	2.736	.098	4.053	1279	.000	.38	.094	.197	.567
	Equal variances not assumed			4.068	1274.910	.000	.38	.094	.198	.566
Q5_8: THE INVESTMENT BANK - really care about their employees as individuals	Equal variances assumed	1.490	.222	-1.704	1279	.089	-.12	.073	-.269	.019
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.708	1271.470	.089	-.12	.073	-.268	.019
Q5_9: THE INVESTMENT BANK - are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	Equal variances assumed	.319	.572	-.136	1279	.892	-.01	.067	-.141	.123
	Equal variances not assumed			-.136	1266.207	.892	-.01	.067	-.141	.123
Q5_10: THE INVESTMENT BANK - would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	Equal variances assumed	.885	.347	-.863	1279	.388	-.05	.063	-.178	.069
	Equal variances not assumed			-.861	1242.780	.390	-.05	.063	-.178	.070

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q5_11: THE INVESTMENT BANK - offer a very high starting salary	Equal variances assumed	1.832	.176	.406	1279	.685	.02	.057	-.089	.135
	Equal variances not assumed			.406	1257.310	.685	.02	.057	-.089	.135
Q5_12: THE INVESTMENT BANK - offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	Equal variances assumed	4.297	.038	-4.110	1279	.000	-.25	.060	-.364	-.129
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.087	1223.105	.000	-.25	.060	-.364	-.128
Q5_13: THE INVESTMENT BANK - would offer variety in your daily work	Equal variances assumed	.551	.458	-1.694	1279	.091	-.12	.073	-.266	.020
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.688	1239.752	.092	-.12	.073	-.266	.020
Q5_14: THE INVESTMENT BANK - invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	Equal variances assumed	5.005	.025	-1.826	1279	.068	-.11	.058	-.221	.008
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.816	1225.586	.070	-.11	.059	-.222	.009
Q5_15: THE INVESTMENT BANK - have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	Equal variances assumed	3.341	.068	-3.441	1279	.001	-.21	.060	-.327	-.089
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.424	1229.467	.001	-.21	.061	-.327	-.089
Q5_16: THE INVESTMENT BANK - are a small organisation	Equal variances assumed	.331	.565	-.515	1279	.606	-.03	.065	-.161	.094
	Equal variances not assumed			-.512	1214.493	.609	-.03	.066	-.162	.095
Q5_17: THE INVESTMENT BANK - would require you to work standard working hours only	Equal variances assumed	5.091	.024	-.943	1279	.346	-.08	.088	-.255	.089
	Equal variances not assumed			-.940	1243.413	.347	-.08	.088	-.255	.090
Q5_18: THE INVESTMENT BANK - would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work	Equal variances assumed	3.845	.050	3.810	1279	.000	.28	.072	.134	.418
	Equal variances not assumed			3.824	1274.777	.000	.28	.072	.134	.417
Q5_19: THE INVESTMENT BANK - offer a relatively stress-free working environment	Equal variances assumed	8.891	.003	.090	1279	.928	.01	.074	-.139	.152
	Equal variances not assumed			.090	1214.537	.929	.01	.075	-.140	.153
Q5_20: THE INVESTMENT BANK - are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	Equal variances assumed	1.083	.298	-.053	1279	.958	.00	.058	-.117	.111
	Equal variances not assumed			-.053	1271.372	.958	.00	.058	-.117	.111

Q. Sex Differences in Perceptions of Each of the Firm, Media Corporation and Investment Bank (external survey): Spearman's ρ

The Firm

Construct	Male Rank	Female Rank	d	d ²
1	9	10	-1	1
2	15	16	-1	1
3	13	12	1	1
4	17	15	2	4
5	7	6	1	1
6	6	7	-1	1
7	16	17	-1	1
8	14	14	0	0
9	10	9	1	1
10	8	8	0	0
11	3	4	-1	1
12	5	5	0	0
13	11	11	0	0
14	2	3	-1	1
15	4	2	2	4
16	20	20	0	0
17	19	19	0	0
18	12	13	-1	1
19	18	18	0	0
20	1	1	0	0
			Sum	18

Spearman $r = 0.986466$

The Media Corporation

Construct	Male Rank	Female Rank	d	d ²
1	8	9	-1	1
2	11	11	0	0
3	9	8	1	1
4	12	13	-1	1
5	4	5	-1	1
6	3	4	-1	1
7	17	16	1	1
8	13	14	-1	1
9	15	15	0	0
10	6	10	-4	16

Construct	Male Rank	Female Rank	d	d ²
11	18	17	1	1
12	7	6	1	1
13	5	3	2	4
14	10	12	-2	4
15	14	7	7	49
16	20	20	0	0
17	19	19	0	0
18	2	2	0	0
19	16	18	-2	4
20	1	1	0	0
			Sum	86

Spearman $r = 0.935338$

The Investment Bank

Construct	Male Rank	Female Rank	d	d ²
1	10	10	0	0
2	14	16	-2	4
3	11	12	-1	1
4	17	17	0	0
5	3	6	-3	9
6	4	7	-3	9
7	13	14	-1	1
8	16	13	3	9
9	9	9	0	0
10	8	8	0	0
11	2	2	0	0
12	7	4	3	9
13	12	11	1	1
14	5	5	0	0
15	6	3	3	9
16	20	20	0	0
17	18	18	0	0
18	15	15	0	0
19	19	19	0	0
20	1	1	0	0
			Sum	52

Spearman $r = 0.960902$

R. Sex Differences in Perceptions of Each of the Firm, Media Corporation and Investment Bank (external survey): Factor Analysis

Factor Analysis – The Firm, Total

Component Matrix^a

a. 5 components extracted.

Rotated Component Matrix

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Q3_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	.704				
Q3_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	.701				
Q3_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	.700				
Q3_15: have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	.608				
Q3_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common		.732			
Q3_7: would use your degree skills		.682			
Q3_8: really care about their employees as individuals		.622			
Q3_4: have a friendly, informal culture		.616			
Q3_17: would require you to work standard working hours only			.825		
Q3_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment			.745		
Q3_16: are a small organisation			.679		
Q3_11: offer a very high starting salary	.461		-.539		
Q3_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad				.876	
Q3_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel				.859	
Q3_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues				.593	
Q3_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles				.458	
Q3_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative					.697
Q3_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work		.458			.665

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Q3_13: would offer variety in your daily work					.641
Q3_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)					.596

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.740	13.698	13.698
2	2.620	13.102	26.800
3	2.474	12.369	39.169
4	2.431	12.157	51.326
5	2.162	10.810	62.137

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Reliability Analysis

	Alpha
Component 1	0.78
Component 2	0.75
Component 3	0.74
Component 4	0.77
Component 5	0.72

Factor Analysis – The Firm, Male

Component Matrix^a

a. 4 components extracted.

Rotated Component Matrix

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Q3_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	.734			
Q3_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	.732			
Q3_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	.645			
Q3_15: have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	.617		.477	
Q3_11: offer a very high starting salary	.595			
Q3_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment		.825		
Q3_17: would require you to work standard working hours only		.710		
Q3_4: have a friendly, informal culture		.601		
Q3_8: really care about their employees as individuals		.566		
Q3_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common		.498		
Q3_16: are a small organisation	-.475	.497		
Q3_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work			.770	
Q3_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative			.749	
Q3_13: would offer variety in your daily work			.678	
Q3_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)			.458	
Q3_7: would use your degree skills			.408	
Q3_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad				.856
Q3_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel				.853
Q3_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles				.517
Q3_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	.405			.424

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.360	16.800	16.800
2	2.921	14.606	31.406
3	2.752	13.758	45.164
4	2.407	12.037	57.202

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Reliability Analysis

	Alpha
Component 1	0.79
Component 2	0.74
Component 3	0.71
Component 4	0.76

Factor Analysis – The Firm, Female

Component Matrix^a

a. 5 components extracted.

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Q3_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	.716				
Q3_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	.708				
Q3_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	.665				
Q3_15: have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	.583				
Q3_17: would require you to work standard working hours only		.820			
Q3_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment		.750			
Q3_16: are a small organisation		.700			
Q3_11: offer a very high starting salary	.437	-.562			
Q3_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common			.776		
Q3_8: really care about their employees as individuals			.698		
Q3_7: would use your degree skills			.617		

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Q3_4: have a friendly, informal culture			.610		
Q3_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work				.744	
Q3_13: would offer variety in your daily work				.725	
Q3_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative				.718	
Q3_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	.469			.500	
Q3_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad					.868
Q3_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel					.842
Q3_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues					.712
Q3_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles					

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.601	13.003	13.003
2	2.575	12.873	25.877
3	2.570	12.851	38.728
4	2.3474	12.371	51.098
5	2.420	12.100	63.198

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Reliability Analysis

	Alpha
Component 1	0.77
Component 2	0.74
Component 3	0.76
Component 4	0.73
Component 5	0.83

Factor Analysis – The Media Corporation, Total

Component Matrix^a

a. 5 components extracted.

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Q4_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	.734				
Q4_11: offer a very high starting salary	.721				
Q4_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	.671				
Q4_15: have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	.562				
Q4_8: really care about their employees as individuals	.505	.406			
Q4_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	.471				
Q4_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	.432				
Q4_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	.426				
Q4_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work		.762			
Q4_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative		.721			
Q4_13: would offer variety in your daily work		.611			
Q4_4: have a friendly, informal culture		.578			
Q4_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad			.852		
Q4_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel			.842		
Q4_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues			.560		
Q4_17: would require you to work standard working hours only				.729	
Q4_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment				.664	
Q4_16: are a small organisation				.658	
Q4_7: would use your degree skills					.799
Q4_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common					.679

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.951	14.755	14.755
2	2.564	12.820	27.575
3	2.036	10.179	37.754
4	1.941	9.706	47.460
5	1.548	7.742	55.202

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Reliability Analysis

	Alpha
Component 1	0.79
Component 2	0.70
Component 3	0.72
Component 4	0.59
Component 5	0.59

Factor Analysis - The Media Corporation, Male

Component Matrix^a

a. 5 components extracted.

Rotated Component Matrix

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Q4_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	.763				
Q4_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	.675				
Q4_11: offer a very high starting salary	.651				
Q4_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	.537				.463
Q4_8: really care about their employees as individuals	.485				
Q4_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	.473				
Q4_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work		.802			
Q4_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative		.769			
Q4_13: would offer variety in your daily work	.449	.550			
Q4_17: would require you to work standard working hours only			.717		
Q4_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment			.698		
Q4_7: would use your degree skills			.495		
Q4_4: have a friendly, informal culture		.444	.480		
Q4_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common			.454		
Q4_15: have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business					
Q4_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad				.835	
Q4_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel				.775	
Q4_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues				.614	
Q4_16: are a small organisation					.712
Q4_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer					-.593

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.093	15.466	15.466
2	2.322	11.610	27.076
3	2.306	11.531	38.608
4	2.031	10.153	48.759
5	1.324	6.620	55.380

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Reliability Analysis

	Alpha
Component 1	0.77
Component 2	0.71
Component 3	0.65
Component 4	0.68
Component 5	0.27

Factor Analysis – The Media Corporation, Female

Component Matrix^a

a. 5 components extracted.

Rotated Component Matrix

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Q4_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	.733				
Q4_11: offer a very high starting salary	.703				
Q4_15: have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	.686				
Q4_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	.652				
Q4_8: really care about their employees as individuals	.492	.468			
Q4_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	.462				
Q4_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	.423				
Q4_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	.410				
Q4_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work		.735			
Q4_13: would offer variety in your daily work		.669			
Q4_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative		.669			
Q4_4: have a friendly, informal culture		.632			
Q4_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad			.862		
Q4_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel			.857		
Q4_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues			.574		
Q4_17: would require you to work standard working hours only				.709	
Q4_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment				.644	
Q4_16: are a small organisation				.632	
Q4_7: would use your degree skills					.807
Q4_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common					.726

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.024	15.118	15.118
2	2.598	12.991	28.109
3	2.140	10.702	38.811
4	1.787	8.934	47.745
5	1.562	7.812	55.557

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Reliability Analysis

	Alpha
Component 1	0.79
Component 2	0.70
Component 3	0.76
Component 4	0.51
Component 5	0.57

Factor Analysis – The Investment Bank, Total

Component Matrix^a

a. 4 components extracted.

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Q5_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work	.780			
Q5_13: would offer variety in your daily work	.743			
Q5_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	.686			
Q5_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	.668			
Q5_7: would use your degree skills	.663			
Q5_4: have a friendly, informal culture	.613		.413	
Q5_8: really care about their employees as individuals	.496		.450	
Q5_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression		.791		

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Q5_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees		.672		
Q5_15: have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business		.639		
Q5_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer		.565	-.442	
Q5_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)		.517		
Q5_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles				
Q5_17: would require you to work standard working hours only			.823	
Q5_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment			.752	
Q5_16: are a small organisation			.635	
Q5_11: offer a very high starting salary		.491	-.546	
Q5_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad				.838
Q5_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel				.816
Q5_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues				.690

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.660	18.301	18.301
2	2.945	14.727	33.029
3	2.715	13.574	46.603
4	2.357	11.786	58.388

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Reliability Analysis

	Alpha
Component 1	0.83
Component 2	0.76
Component 3	0.75
Component 4	0.83

Factor Analysis – The Investment Bank, Male

Component Matrix^a

a. 4 components extracted.

Rotated Component Matrix

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Q5_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	.830			
Q5_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel	.828			
Q5_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	.704			
Q5_15: have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	.544			.419
Q5_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	.447			
Q5_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	.405			
Q5_13: would offer variety in your daily work		.755		
Q5_7: would use your degree skills		.731		
Q5_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work		.694		
Q5_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common		.643		
Q5_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative		.584		.448
Q5_4: have a friendly, informal culture		.468		.454
Q5_17: would require you to work standard working hours only			.826	
Q5_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment			.769	
Q5_16: are a small organisation			.707	
Q5_11: offer a very high starting salary	.445		-.537	
Q5_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer			-.533	
Q5_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression				.715
Q5_8: really care about their employees as individuals				.603
Q5_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	.443			.602

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 9 iterations.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.294	16.472	16.472
2	3.186	15.931	32.403
3	2.872	14.362	46.765
4	2.437	12.184	58.949

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Reliability Analysis

	Alpha
Component 1	0.80
Component 2	0.79
Component 3	0.77
Component 4	0.67

Factor Analysis – The Investment Bank, Female

Component Matrix^a

a. 4 components extracted.

Rotated Component Matrix

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Q5_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work	.840			
Q5_13: would offer variety in your daily work	.776			
Q5_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	.776			
Q5_4: have a friendly, informal culture	.613			.446
Q5_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	.589			
Q5_7: would use your degree skills	.575			
Q5_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression		.798		
Q5_15: have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business		.667		
Q5_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer		.631		
Q5_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees		.579		
Q5_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)		.545		
Q5_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel			.819	
Q5_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad			.813	
Q5_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues			.702	
Q5_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles				
Q5_17: would require you to work standard working hours only				.797
Q5_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment				.731
Q5_11: offer a very high starting salary		.522		-.558
Q5_16: are a small organisation				.524
Q5_8: really care about their employees as individuals				.510

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 9 iterations.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.682	18.410	18.410
2	2.900	14.502	32.912
3	2.670	13.350	46.261
4	2.615	13.073	59.335

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Reliability Analysis

	Alpha
Component 1	0.82
Component 2	0.75
Component 3	0.83
Component 4	0.71

S. Differences in Perceptions of the Firm, Media Corporation and Investment Bank (external survey; *t* tests)

	The Firm	The Media Corporation	The Investment Bank		The Firm vs The Media Corporation	The Firm vs The Investment Bank	The Media Corporation vs The Investment Bank
	Mean	Mean	Mean		Sig. Diff	Sig. Diff	Sig. Diff
1 – would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	5.13	4.82	4.79		**	**	-
2 – employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	4.21	4.68	3.95		**	**	**
3 – would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	4.68	4.84	4.30		**	**	**
4- have a friendly, informal culture	4.20	4.59	3.51		**	**	**
5 – would offer the opportunity for international travel	5.39	5.15	5.44		**	-	**
6 – would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	5.39	5.32	5.42		-	-	*
7 – would use your degree skills	4.16	3.95	4.03		**	*	-
8 – really care about their employees as individuals	4.41	4.50	4.08		*	**	**
9 – are a pure meritocracy	5.04	4.11	5.16		**	**	**

	The Firm	The Media Corporation	The Investment Bank		The Firm vs The Media Corporation	The Firm vs The Investment Bank	The Media Corporation vs The Investment Bank
	Mean	Mean	Mean		Sig. Diff	Sig. Diff	Sig. Diff
(ie. rewards and promotions are based on performance)							
10 – would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	5.22	4.90	5.29		**	*	**
11 – offer a very high starting salary	5.78	3.83	5.95		**	**	**
12 – offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	5.61	4.91	5.48		**	**	**
13 – would offer variety in your daily work	4.91	5.28	4.32		**	**	**
14 – invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	5.83	4.73	5.46		**	**	**
15 – have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	5.84	4.73	5.51		**	**	**
16 – are a small organisation	1.80	1.61	1.91		**	**	**
17 – would require you to work standard working hours only	2.81	3.14	2.70		**	*	**
18 – would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work	4.56	5.44	3.94		**	**	**
19 – offer a relatively stress-free working environment	3.06	3.74	2.51		**	**	**
20 – are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	6.12	5.69	6.07		**	-	**

** - Difference significant at 0.01 significance level

* - Difference significant at 0.05 significance level

T. Likelihood to Apply (external survey): Multiple Regression Analysis

Regression – Total

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.524 ^a	.274	.263	1.781

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Q3DIF20, Q3DIF19, Q3DIF9, Q3DIF7, Q3DIF10, Q3DIF13, Q3DIF2, Q3DIF12, Q3DIF11, Q3DIF16, Q3DIF6, D3DIF1, Q3DIF3, Q3DIF14, Q3DIF17, Q3DIF4, Q3DIF8, Q3DIF15, Q3DIF18, Q3DIF5

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1510.123	20	75.506	23.817	.000 ^a
	Residual	3996.072	1260	3.170		
	Total	5506.195	1280			

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Q3DIF20, Q3DIF19, Q3DIF9, Q3DIF7, Q3DIF10, Q3DIF13, Q3DIF2, Q3DIF12, Q3DIF11, Q3DIF16, Q3DIF6, D3DIF1, Q3DIF3, Q3DIF14, Q3DIF17, Q3DIF4, Q3DIF8, Q3DIF15, Q3DIF18, Q3DIF5
- b. Dependent Variable: Q6_1: How likely it is that you will submit an application to the Firm

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.946E-02	.313		.094	.925
Q3DIF1	-6.27E-03	.007	-.027	-.933	.351
Q3DIF2	4.218E-02	.006	.199	6.777	.000
Q3DIF3	-1.08E-02	.008	-.043	-1.342	.180
Q3DIF4	2.509E-02	.007	.110	3.408	.001
Q3DIF5	2.450E-02	.009	.127	2.793	.005
Q3DIF6	-2.35E-02	.007	-.104	-3.581	.000
Q3DIF7	1.850E-02	.005	.096	3.610	.000
Q3DIF8	2.424E-02	.007	.112	3.442	.001
Q3DIF9	-2.02E-03	.006	-.009	-.352	.725
Q3DIF10	9.513E-03	.008	.050	1.161	.246
Q3DIF11	2.196E-02	.006	.098	3.463	.001
Q3DIF12	-1.36E-03	.007	-.006	-.186	.852
Q3DIF13	4.848E-03	.007	.021	.690	.491
Q3DIF14	-3.76E-03	.008	-.015	-.494	.621
Q3DIF15	1.736E-02	.008	.073	2.165	.031
Q3DIF16	-5.77E-03	.013	-.014	-.458	.647
Q3DIF17	-2.13E-02	.008	-.079	-2.575	.010
Q3DIF18	2.024E-02	.008	.088	2.605	.009
Q3DIF19	8.057E-05	.008	.000	.010	.992
Q3DIF20	3.722E-03	.006	.018	.600	.549

- a. Dependent Variable: Q6_1: How likely it is that you will submit an application to the Firm

Regression

D2: Gender = Male

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.577 ^a	.333	.310	1.657

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Q3DIF20, Q3DIF19, Q3DIF6,Q3DIF9, Q3DIF7, Q3DIF1, Q3DIF2, Q3DIF11,Q3DIF12, Q3DIF3, Q3DIF16, D3DIF10, Q3DIF14,Q3DIF13, Q3DIF4, Q3DIF17, Q3DIF8, Q3DIF18, Q3DIF15, Q3DIF5
- b. D2: Gender = Male

ANOVA^{b,c}

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	795.730	20	39.787	14.482	.000 ^a
Residual	1596.407	581	2.747		
Total	2392.138	601			

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Q3DIF20, Q3DIF19, Q3DIF6,Q3DIF9, Q3DIF7, Q3DIF1, Q3DIF2, Q3DIF11,Q3DIF12, Q3DIF3, Q3DIF16, D3DIF10, Q3DIF14,Q3DIF13, Q3DIF4, Q3DIF4, Q3DIF17, Q3DIF8,Q3DIF18, Q3DIF15, Q3DIF5
- b. Dependent Variable: Q6_1: How likely it is that you will submit an application to the Firm
- c. D2: Gender = Male

Coefficients^{a,b}

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.205	.431		.476	.634
Q3DIF1	-2.81E-02	.010	-.123	-2.932	.003
Q3DIF2	3.494E-02	.008	.178	4.328	.000
Q3DIF3	5.984E-03	.012	.024	.512	.609
Q3DIF4	1.710E-02	.009	.081	1.823	.069
Q3DIF5	4.945E-02	.012	.261	4.103	.000
Q3DIF6	-1.39E-02	.009	-.066	-1.600	.110
Q3DIF7	2.319E-02	.007	.128	3.363	.001
Q3DIF8	2.683E-02	.010	.130	2.729	.007
Q3DIF9	-1.10E-02	.008	-.052	-1.350	.177
Q3DIF10	-1.48E-02	.011	-.082	-1.332	.183
Q3DIF11	3.210E-02	.009	.148	3.719	.000
Q3DIF12	5.970E-03	.010	.025	.614	.540
Q3DIF13	1.218E-02	.010	.054	1.239	.216
Q3DIF14	-5.89E-03	.010	-.026	-.580	.562
Q3DIF15	8.432E-03	.011	.037	.741	.459
Q3DIF16	-5.70E-03	.017	-.015	-.339	.735
Q3DIF17	-1.66E-02	.012	-.063	-1.443	.150
Q3DIF18	7.545E-03	.011	.033	.670	.503
Q3DIF19	4.921E-03	.011	.021	.453	.651
Q3DIF20	1.696E-02	.008	.089	2.022	.044

a. Dependent Variable: Q6_1: How likely it is that you will submit an application to the Firm

D2: Gender = Male

D2: Gender = Female

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.490 ^a	.240	.217	1.793

a. Predictors: (Constant), Q3DIF20, Q3DIF19, Q3DIF9, Q3DIF7, Q3DIF10, Q3DIF13, Q3DIF2, Q3DIF12, Q3DIF16, Q3DIF11, Q3DIF3, Q3DIF1, Q3DIF6, Q3DIF17, Q3DIF14, Q3DIF15, Q3DIF4, Q3DIF18, Q3DIF8, Q3DIF5

b. D2: Gender = Female

ANOVA ^{b,c}

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	667.693	20	33.385	10.380	.000 ^a
Residual	2117.411	658	3.216		
Total	2785.104	678			

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Q3DIF20, Q3DIF19, Q3DIF9, Q3DIF7, Q3DIF10, Q3DIF13, Q3DIF2, Q3DIF12, Q3DIF16, Q3DIF11, Q3DIF3, D3DIF1, Q3DIF6, Q3DIF17, Q3DIF14, Q3DIF15, Q3DIF4, Q3DIF18, Q3DIF8, Q3DIF5
- b. Dependent Variable: Q6_1: How likely it is that you will submit an application to the Firm
- c. D2: Gender = Female

Coefficients ^{a,b}

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	-.432	.437		-.989	.323
Q3DIF1	7.011E-04	.009	.003	.074	.941
Q3DIF2	3.759E-02	.010	.173	3.952	.000
Q3DIF3	-1.34E-02	.011	-.056	-1.221	.223
Q3DIF4	3.130E-02	.011	.136	2.839	.005
Q3DIF5	1.932E-02	.012	.104	1.553	.121
Q3DIF6	-9.95E-03	.010	-.043	-.985	.325
Q3DIF7	1.072E-02	.007	.056	1.456	.146
Q3DIF8	2.288E-02	.010	.108	2.264	.024
Q3DIF9	1.267E-03	.008	.006	.158	.874
Q3DIF10	9.757E-03	.012	.053	.824	.410
Q3DIF11	9.419E-04	.009	.004	.102	.919
Q3DIF12	4.680E-03	.011	.019	.440	.660
Q3DIF13	1.017E-02	.010	.044	1.040	.299
Q3DIF14	1.070E-03	.011	.004	.096	.924
Q3DIF15	2.568E-02	.011	.108	2.351	.019
Q3DIF16	-1.84E-03	.018	-.004	-.102	.919
Q3DIF17	-1.77E-02	.011	-.067	-1.543	.123
Q3DIF18	4.844E-03	.011	.022	.449	.653
Q3DIF19	-6.39E-03	.011	-.027	-.576	.565
Q3DIF20	2.808E-03	.009	.014	.314	.753

- a. Dependent Variable: Q6_1: How likely it is that you will submit an application to the Firm
- b. D2: Gender = Female

U. Differences Within Predictor Attributes Between Females Likely and Not Likely to Apply to the Firm (external survey): *t* tests

Importance of Constructs		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Q1_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	Females not applying	267	5.46	1.177	.072
	Females applying	137	5.90	1.118	.095
Q1_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	Females not applying	267	5.47	1.033	.063
	Females applying	137	5.19	1.111	.095
Q1_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	Females not applying	267	5.46	.915	.056
	Females applying	137	5.51	.890	.076
Q1_4: have a friendly, informal culture	Females not applying	267	5.78	.864	.053
	Females applying	137	5.72	.967	.082
Q1_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel	Females not applying	267	4.75	1.787	.109
	Females applying	137	5.57	1.347	.115
Q1_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	Females not applying	267	4.52	1.347	.082
	Females applying	137	5.09	1.022	.087
Q1_7: would use your degree skills	Females not applying	267	5.09	1.396	.086
	Females applying	137	4.98	1.206	.103
Q1_8: really care about their employees as individuals	Females not applying	267	6.22	.928	.057
	Females applying	137	6.24	.744	.063
Q1_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e.rewards and promotions are based on performance	Females not applying	267	4.95	1.227	.075
	Females applying	137	5.15	1.252	.107
Q1_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live abroad)	Females not applying	267	4.46	1.872	.115
	Females applying	137	5.30	1.478	.126
Q1_11: offer a very high starting salary	Females not applying	267	4.50	1.299	.080
	Females applying	137	5.22	1.072	.091
Q1_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	Females not applying	267	6.04	.918	.056
	Females applying	137	6.26	.741	.063
Q1_13: would offer variety in your daily work	Females not applying	267	6.24	.712	.044
	Females applying	137	6.17	.746	.064
Q1_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	Females not applying	267	6.08	.843	.052
	Females applying	137	6.32	.690	.059
Q1_15: have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	Females not applying	267	5.61	1.076	.066
	Females applying	137	6.18	.819	.070
Q1_16:are a small organisation	Females not applying	267	3.48	1.256	.077
	Females applying	137	3.13	1.194	.102

Importance of Constructs		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Q1_17: would require you to work standard working hours only	Females not applying	267	4.10	1.372	.084
	Females applying	127	3.66	1.239	.106
Q1_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work	Females not applying	267	5.43	1.211	.074
	Females applying	137	5.39	1.050	.090
Q1_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment	Females not applying	267	5.08	1.345	.082
	Females applying	137	4.82	1.235	.105
Q1_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	Females not applying	267	4.79	1.375	.084
	Females applying	137	5.43	1.330	.113

		Levene's test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2 tail)	Mean difference	Std. Error difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q1_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	Equal variances assumed	7.652	.006	-3.638	402	.000	-.44	.122	-.681	-.203
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.698	288.559	.000	-.44	.120	-.677	-.207
Q1_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	Equal variances assumed	.184	.668	2.504	402	.013	.28	.111	.060	.497
	Equal variances not assumed			2.446	258.802	.015	.28	.114	.054	.503
Q1_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	Equal variances assumed	.000	.986	-.521	402	.602	-.05	.095	-.237	.137
	Equal variances not assumed			-.526	282.475	.599	-.05	.094	-.235	.136
Q1_4: have a friendly informal culture	Equal variances assumed	4.255	.040	.697	402	.486	.07	.094	-.120	.252
	Equal variances not assumed			.673	250.192	.502	.07	.098	-.127	.259
Q1_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel	Equal variances assumed	15.635	.000	-4.738	402	.000	-.82	.173	-1.162	-.480
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.177	348.993	.000	-.82	.159	-1.133	-.509
Q1_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	Equal variances assumed	16.960	.000	-4.312	402	.000	-5.6	.131	-.822	-.307
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.702	347.307	.000	-5.6	.120	-.800	-.328
Q1_7: would use your degree skills	Equal variances assumed	3.411	.066	.803	402	.422	.11	.140	-.163	.388
	Equal variances not assumed			.841	313.495	.401	.11	.134	-.151	.376
Q1_8: really care about their employees as individuals	Equal variances assumed	1.672	.197	-.289	402	.773	-.03	.091	-.206	.153
	Equal variances not assumed			-.310	333.168	.757	-.03	.085	-.194	.141

		Levene's test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
				t	df	Sig. (2 tail)	Mean difference	Std.Error difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
		F	Sig						Lower	Upper
Q1_9: are a pure Meritocracy (ie rewards and promotions are not based on performance)	Equal variances assumed	.040	.842	-1.549	402	.122	-.20	.130	-.456	.054
	Equal variances not assumed			1.539	271.000	.125	-.20	.131	-.458	.056
Q1_10: would offer the assumed opportunity to work (and live) abroad	Equal variances assumed	11.880	.001	-4.543	402	.000	-.83	.184	-1.194	-.473
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.894	337.031	.000	-.83	.170	-1.169	-.499
Q1_11: offer a very high starting salary	Equal variances assumed	7.779	.006	-5.594	402	.000	-.72	.129	-.973	-.467
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.944	325.375	.000	-.72	.121	-.959	-.482
Q1_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	Equal variances assumed	.827	.364	-2.392	402	.017	-.22	.090	-.394	-.039
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.560	331.281	.011	-.22	.085	-.383	-.050
Q1_13: would offer variety in your daily work	Equal variances assumed	.001	.976	.963	402	.336	.07	.076	-.076	.223
	Equal variances not assumed			.949	264.774	.344	.07	.077	-.079	.225
Q1_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	Equal variances assumed	.851	.357	-2.877	402	.004	-.24	.083	-.404	-.076
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.066	327.762	.002	-.24	.078	-.394	-.086
Q1_15: have a dynamic, variances forward-looking approach to their business	Equal assumed	12.588	.000	-5.421	402	.000	-.57	.105	-.722	-.361
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.905	346.390	.000	-.57	.096	-.756	-.378
Q1_16: are a small organisation	Equal variances assumed	.204	.651	2.641	402	.009	.34	.130	.088	.598
	Equal variances not assumed			2.684	288.481	.008	.34	.128	.091	.594
Q1_17: would require you assumed to work standard working hours only	Equal variances assumed	.552	.458	3.165	402	.002	.44	.139	.167	.716
	Equal variances not assumed			3.270	301.617	.001	.44	.135	.176	.707
Q1_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work	Equal variances assumed	5.323	.022	.315	402	.753	.04	.122	-.201	.277
	Equal variances not assumed			.329	312.309	.742	.04	.116	-.190	.267
Q1_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment	Equal variances assumed	1.308	.254	1.922	402	.055	.26	.137	-.006	.534
	Equal variances not assumed			1.975	297.227	.049	.26	.134	-.001	.527
Q1_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employee	Equal variances assumed	.069	.793	-4.462	402	.000	-.64	.143	-.917	-.356
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.509	283.974	.000	-.64	.141	-.915	-.359

Perception of the Firm		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Q3_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	Females not applying	267	4.73	1.186	.073
	Females applying	137	5.36	1.152	.098
Q3_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	Females not applying	267	3.28	1.440	.088
	Females applying	137	4.96	1.172	.100
Q3_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	Females not applying	267	4.33	1.276	.078
	Females applying	137	4.92	1.129	.096
Q3_4: have a friendly, informal culture	Females not applying	267	3.55	1.256	.077
	Females applying	137	4.94	1.177	.100
Q3_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel	Females not applying	267	5.25	1.189	.073
	Females applying	137	5.91	.977	.083
Q3_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	Females not applying	267	5.31	1.060	.065
	Females applying	137	5.65	1.034	.088
Q3_7: would use your degree skills	Females not applying	267	3.54	1.772	.108
	Females applying	137	4.74	1.434	.122
Q3_8: really care about their employees as individuals	Females not applying	267	3.89	1.459	.089
	Females applying	137	5.21	1.101	.094
Q3_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e.rewards and promotions are based on performance)	Females not applying	267	5.04	1.203	.074
	Females applying	137	5.29	1.152	.098
Q3_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live abroad)	Females not applying	267	5.05	1.265	.077
	Females applying	137	5.60	1.106	.094
Q3_11: offer a very high starting salary	Females not applying	267	5.79	1.081	.066
	Females applying	137	5.91	1.127	.096
Q3_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	Females not applying	267	5.52	1.013	.062
	Females applying	137	5.91	.959	.082
Q3_13: would offer variety in your daily work	Females not applying	267	4.49	1.300	.080
	Females applying	137	5.43	1.133	.097
Q3_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	Females not applying	267	5.64	.980	.060
	Females applying	137	6.19	.843	.072
Q3_15: have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	Females not applying	267	5.65	1.044	.064
	Females applying	137	6.33	.706	.060
Q3_16: are a small Organisation	Females not applying	267	1.76	1.029	.063
	Females applying	137	1.74	1.159	.099
Q3_17: would require you to work standard working hours only	Females not applying	267	2.84	1.588	.097
	Females applying	137	2.76	1.398	.119

Perception of the Firm		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Q3_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work	Females not applying	267	4.00	1.399	.086
	Females applying	137	4.95	1.221	.104
Q3_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment	Females not applying	267	2.69	1.352	.083
	Females applying	137	3.33	1.296	.111
Q3_20: are widely Regarded as a highly Prestigious employer	Females not applying	267	6.03	.976	.060
	Females applying	137	6.50	.739	.063

		Levene's test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)	Mean difference	Std. Error difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q3_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organization and work in different areas/roles	Equal variances assumed	.059	.809	-5.128	402	.000	-.63	.123	-.874	-.390
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.176	282.971	.000	-.63	.122	-.873	-.392
Q3_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	Equal variances assumed	11.470	.001	-11.812	402	.000	-1.68	.142	-1.960	-1.400
	Equal variances not assumed			-12.607	329.124	.000	-1.68	.133	-1.942	-1.418
Q3_3: would allow a lot of Freedom to work on your own initiative	Equal variances assumed	5.391	.021	-4.628	402	.000	-.60	.129	-.850	-.343
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.812	306.982	.000	-.60	.124	-.841	-.353
Q3_4: have a friendly informal culture	Equal variances assumed	4.149	.042	-10.792	402	.000	-1.39	.129	-1.648	-1.140
	Equal variances not assumed			-11.020	292.101	.000	-1.39	.126	-1.643	-1.145
Q3_5: would offer opportunity for international travel	Equal variances assumed	17.211	.000	-5.576	402	.000	-.66	.118	-.888	-.425
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.935	326.749	.000	-.66	.111	-.874	-.439
Q3_6: would provide you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	Equal variances assumed	.333	.564	-3.146	402	.002	-.35	.110	-.564	-.130
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.171	281.931	.002	-.35	.110	-.563	-.132
Q3_7: would use your degree skills	Equal variances assumed	21.181	.000	-6.887	402	.000	-1.20	.175	-1.548	-.860
	Equal variances not assumed			-7.363	330.606	.000	-1.20	.163	-1.525	-.882
Q3_8: really care about their employees as individuals	Equal variances assumed	8.751	.003	-9.354	402	.000	-1.32	.142	-1.602	-1.046
	Equal variances not assumed			-10.216	348.699	.000	-1.32	.130	-1.579	-1.069
Q3_9: are a pure Meritocracy (ie rewards and promotions are based on performance)	Equal variances assumed	.037	.847	-2.018	402	.044	-.25	.125	-.496	-.007
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.046	286.491	.042	-.25	.123	-.493	-.010

		Levene's test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)	Mean difference	Std.Error difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q3_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	Equal variances assumed	1.157	.283	-4.343	402	.000	-.55	.127	-.804	-.303
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.533	310.231	.000	-.55	.122	-.793	-.313
Q3_11: offer a very high starting salary	Equal variances assumed	.000	.990	-1.010	402	.313	-.12	.115	-.343	.110
	Equal variances not assumed			-.996	265.812	.320	-.12	.117	-.346	.114
Q3_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	Equal variances assumed	5.464	.020	-3.712	402	.000	-.39	.104	-.593	-.182
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.777	289.352	.000	-.39	.013	-.590	-.186
Q3_13: would offer variety in your daily work	Equal variances assumed	3.717	.055	-7.185	402	.000	-.94	.131	-1.197	-.683
	Equal variances not assumed			-7.507	310.981	.000	-.94	.125	-1.187	-.694
Q3_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their	Equal variances assumed	9.245	.003	-5.546	402	.000	-.54	.098	-.738	-.352
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.817	314.281	.000	-.54	.094	-.729	-.360
Q3_15: have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	Equal variances assumed	11.596	.001	-6.905	402	.000	-.68	.099	-.878	-.489
	Equal variances not assumed			-7.786	373.821	.000	-.68	.088	-.856	-.511
Q3_16: are a small organisation	Equal variances assumed	3.401	.066	.182	402	.855	.02	.13	-.201	.243
	Equal variances not assumed			.176	248.769	.861	.02	.117	-.210	.252
Q3_17: would require to work standard working hours only	Equal variances assumed	2.873	.091	.469	402	.639	.08	.160	-.240	.390
	Equal variances not assumed			.488	308.330	.626	.08	.154	-.228	.378
Q3_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work	Equal variances assumed	4.583	.033	-6.796	402	.000	-.96	.141	-1.234	-.680
	Equal variances not assumed			-7.098	310.670	.000	-.96	.135	-1.223	-.692
Q3_19: offer a relatively stress-free working environment	Equal variances assumed	3.141	.077	-4.581	402	.000	-.64	.140	-.916	-.366
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.643	286.313	.000	-.64	.138	-.913	-.369
Q3_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	Equal variances assumed	2.600	.108	-4.913	402	.000	-.47	.095	-.652	-.279
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.361	347.961	.000	-.47	.095	-.636	-.295

V. Sex Differences in Internal Image (internal survey): *t* tests

	Q5: Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Q1_1: offers the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	Male	387	4.23	1.561	.079
	Female	206	4.29	1.605	.112
Q1_2: employs people with whom you feel you will have things in common	Male	387	5.81	.905	.046
	Female	206	5.92	.960	.067
Q1_3: allows a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	Male	387	4.95	1.273	.065
	Female	206	5.07	1.290	.090
Q1_4: have a friendly informal culture	Male	387	5.17	1.108	.056
	Female	206	5.18	1.124	.078
Q1_5: offers the opportunity for international travel	Male	387	5.03	1.390	.071
	Female	206	4.87	1.433	.100
Q1_6: provides you with an internationally diverse culture	Male	387	5.77	1.159	.059
	Female	206	5.80	1.070	.075
Q1_7: uses my degree skills	Male	387	3.85	1.649	.084
	Female	206	3.84	1.645	.115
Q1_8: really cares about their employees as individuals	Male	387	4.67	1.265	.064
	Female	206	4.64	1.244	.087
Q1_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	Male	387	4.57	1.433	.073
	Female	206	4.59	1.431	.100
Q1_10: offers the opportunity to work (and live abroad)	Male	387	4.68	1.452	.074
	Female	206	4.65	1.464	.102
Q1_11: offer a very high starting salary	Male	387	6.09	.862	.044
	Female	206	6.12	.968	.067
Q1_12: offer clear opportunities for long term career progression	Male	387	5.79	.955	.049
	Female	206	5.78	1.000	.070
Q1_13: offer variety in your daily work	Male	387	5.18	1.246	.063
	Female	206	5.29	1.211	.084
Q1_14: invest heavily in the training and development of their employees	Male	387	5.32	1.299	.066
	Female	206	5.30	1.267	.088
Q1_15: has a dynamic forward-looking approach	Male	387	6.07	.752	.038
	Female	206	5.85	.964	.067
Q1_16: is a small organisation	Male	387	1.61	.995	.051
	Female	206	1.55	1.062	.074
Q1_17: would require you to work standard	Male	387	1.60	.897	.046

	Q5: Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
working	Female	206	1.75	1.043	.073
Q1_18: would offer a lot of scope for creativity in your work	Male	387	4.67	1.361	.069
	Female	206	4.32	1.330	.093
Q1_19: offer a relatively stress free working environment	Male	387	2.82	1.261	.064
	Female	206	2.78	1.236	.086
Q1_20: are widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	Male	387	6.34	.722	.037
	Female	206	6.37	.713	.050

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence interval of difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q1_1: would offer the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles	Equal variances assumed	.656	.418	-.396	591	.692	-.05	.136	-.321	.213
	Equal variance not assumed			-.393	408.509	.695	-.05	.137	-.323	.216
Q1_2: employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	Equal variances assumed	.272	.602	-1.456	591	.146	-.12	.080	-.273	.040
	Equal variance not assumed			-1.431	397.309	.153	-.12	.081	-.276	.043
Q1_3: would allow a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	Equal variances assumed	.252	.616	-1.108	591	.268	-.12	.110	-.339	.094
	Equal variance not assumed			-1.104	413.736	.270	-.12	.111	.340	.095
Q1_4: have a friendly informal culture	Equal variances assumed	.128	.721	-.172	591	.864	-.02	.096	-.205	.172
	Equal variance not assumed			-.171	413.286	.864	-.02	.096	-.206	.173
Q1_5: would offer the opportunity for international travel	Equal variances assumed	1.260	.262	1.255	591	.210	.15	.121	-.086	.390
	Equal variance not assumed			1.243	407.572	.214	.15	.122	-.088	.392
Q1_6: provides you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	Equal variances assumed	2.039	.154	-.318	591	.751	-.03	.097	-.222	.160
	Equal variance not assumed			-.326	448.078	.745	-.03	.095	-.218	.156
Q1_7: would use your degree skills	Equal variances assumed	.022	.882	.020	591	.984	.00	.142	-.276	.282
	Equal variance not assumed			.020	419.225	.984	.00	.142	-.276	.282
Q1_8: really care about their employees are individuals	Equal variances assumed	.778	.378	.262	591	.793	.03	.108	-.185	.242
	Equal variance not assumed			.264	424.375	.792	.03	.108	-.184	.241
Q1_9: are a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	Equal variances assumed	.238	.626	-.153	591	.878	-.02	.124	-.262	.224
	Equal variance not assumed			-.153	418.885	.878	-.02	.123	-.262	.224

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence interval of difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q1_10: would offer the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	Equal variances assumed	.228	.633	.270	591	.787	.03	.126	-.213	.281
	Equal variance not assumed			.270	415.602	.788	.03	.126	-.214	.281
Q1_11: offer a very high starting salary	Equal variances assumed	.889	.346	-.432	591	.666	-.03	.078	-.186	.119
	Equal variance not assumed			-.417	378.962	.677	-.03	.080	-.192	.125
Q1_12: offer clear opportunity for long term career progression	Equal variances assumed	.220	.639	.109	591	.913	.01	.084	-.155	.174
	Equal variance not assumed			.108	401.895	.914	.01	.085	-.158	.176
Q1_13: offers variety in your daily work	Equal variances assumed	.141	.708	-1.037	591	.300	-.11	.106	-.319	.099
	Equal variance not assumed			-1.046	428.909	.296	-.11	.105	-.318	.097
Q1_14: invest heavily in the training and development of its employees	Equal variances assumed	.004	.948	.128	591	.898	.01	.111	-.204	.232
	Equal variance not assumed			.129	427.419	.897	.01	.110	-.202	.231
Q1_15: has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	Equal variances assumed	7.871	.005	3.035	591	.003	.22	.072	-.077	.359
	Equal variance not assumed			2.818	340.449	.005	.22	.077	-.066	.370
Q1_16: are a small organisation	Equal variances assumed	.000	.989	.727	591	.467	.06	.088	-.109	.236
	Equal variance not assumed			.713	395.489	.476	.06	.090	-.112	.240
Q1_17: require you to work standard working hours only	Equal variances assumed	3.455	.064	-1.744	591	.082	-.14	.082	-.304	.018
	Equal variance not assumed			-1.666	367.968	.096	-.14	.086	-.312	.026
Q1_18: offers a lot of scope for creativity in your work	Equal variances assumed	.025	.873	3.082	591	.002	.36	.116	-.130	.588
	Equal variance not assumed			3.104	426.866	.002	.36	.116	-.132	.586
Q1_19: offer a relatively stress free working environment	Equal variances assumed	.088	.767	.396	591	.693	.04	.108	.169	.255
	Equal variance not assumed			.398	425.774	.691	.04	.107	.168	.254
Q1_20: is widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	Equal variances assumed	.051	.821	.486	591	.627	-.03	.062	-.152	.092
	Equal variance not assumed			-.488	423.007	.626	-.03	.062	-.152	.091

W. Differences Between Internal, External and Construed Images: *t* tests

***t* test – Construed Image and External Image**

Group Statistics

	Type	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Q3_1	Construed Image	5.8836	.93629	.03845
	External Image	5.1172	1.13398	.03862
Q3_2	Construed Image	5.5076	1.05924	.04350
	External Image	4.2146	1.42456	.04852
Q3_3	Construed Image	5.1315	1.25320	.05146
	External Image	4.7181	1.20803	.04115
Q3_4	Construed Image	4.7808	1.37515	.05647
	External Image	4.2193	1.30200	.04435
Q3_5	Construed Image	6.1164	.77435	.03180
	External Image	5.4130	1.14611	.03904
Q3_6	Construed Image	5.7791	.88918	.03651
	External Image	5.4049	1.05796	.03603
Q3_7	Construed Image	4.7757	1.26356	.05189
	External Image	4.1752	1.65298	.05630
Q3_8	Construed Image	4.8870	1.27438	.05233
	External Image	4.4582	1.31638	.04484
Q3_9	Construed Image	5.5076	1.04317	.04284
	External Image	5.0313	1.13346	.03861
Q3_10	Construed Image	5.9680	.84068	.03452
	External Image	5.2146	1.19099	.04057
Q3_11	Construed Image	6.4705	.68247	.02803
	External Image	5.7691	1.11012	.03781
Q3_12	Construed Image	5.9612	.88351	.03628
	External Image	5.6323	1.00661	.03429
Q3_13	Construed Image	5.7875	.95616	.03926
	External Image	4.9269	1.20991	.04121
Q3_14	Construed Image	6.0455	.84006	.03450
	External Image	5.8295	.97824	.03332
Q3_15	Construed Image	5.9089	.93819	.03853
	External Image	5.8561	.97956	.03336
Q3_16	Construed Image	1.9106	1.07981	.04434
	External Image	1.8074	1.11480	.03797
Q3_17	Construed Image	2.5885	1.28374	.05272
	External Image	2.8550	1.48350	.05053
Q3_18	Construed Image	5.0877	1.27306	.05228
	External Image	4.5928	1.28336	.04371
Q3_19	Construed Image	3.0202	1.37162	.05633
	External Image	3.0777	1.37498	.04683
Q3_20	Construed Image	6.5599	.67047	.02753
	External Image	6.1427	1.04456	.03558

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q3_1	Equal Variances assumed	43.483	.000	13.580	1453	.000	.7665	.05644	.65576	.87719
	Equal Variances not assumed			14.064	1405.528	.000	.7665	.05450	.65957	.87338
Q3_2	Equal Variances assumed	46.227	.000	18.812	1453	.000	1.2930	.06873	1.15815	1.42780
	Equal Variances not assumed			19.842	1444.297	.000	1.2930	.06516	1.16515	1.42080
Q3_3	Equal Variances assumed	.003	.960	6.317	1453	.000	.4134	.06544	.28506	.54181
	Equal Variances not assumed			6.275	1241.857	.000	.4134	.06589	.28417	.54270
Q3_4	Equal Variances assumed	2.917	.088	7.900	1453	.000	.5615	.07108	.42209	.70095
	Equal Variances not assumed			7.820	1226.566	.000	.5615	.07180	.42065	.70239
Q3_5	Equal Variances assumed	172.451	.000	13.037	1453	.000	.7034	.05395	.59753	.80920
	Equal Variances not assumed			13.970	1452.560	.000	.7034	.05035	.60460	.80213
Q3_6	Equal Variances assumed	49.167	.000	7.066	1453	.000	.3742	.05296	.27033	.47810
	Equal Variances not assumed			7.295	1396.114	.000	.3742	.05130	.27358	.47485
Q3_7	Equal Variances assumed	64.801	.000	7.472	1453	.000	.6005	.08038	.44288	.75821
	Equal Variances not assumed			7.844	1437.000	.000	.6005	.07656	.45035	.75073
Q3_8	Equal Variances assumed	.988	.320	6.185	1453	.000	.4288	.06933	.29279	.56477
	Equal Variances not assumed			6.222	1298.877	.000	.4288	.06891	.29359	.56397
Q3_9	Equal Variances assumed	1.896	.169	8.133	1453	.000	.4763	.05856	.36140	.59113
	Equal Variances not assumed			8.259	1337.502	.000	.4763	.05767	.36314	.58939

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q3_10	Equal Variances assumed	158.517	.000	13.292	1453	.000	.7533	.05668	.64217	.86452
	Equal Variances not assumed			14.143	1452.044	.000	.7533	.05327	.64885	.85783
Q3_11	Equal Variances assumed	121.420	.000	13.705	1453	.000	.7013	.05117	.60096	.80173
	Equal Variances not assumed			14.902	1436.385	.000	.7013	.04706	.60902	.79367
Q3_12	Equal Variances assumed	42.443	.000	6.434	1453	.000	.3290	.05113	.22867	.42926
	Equal Variances not assumed			6.590	1370.144	.000	.3290	.04992	.23104	.42689
Q3_13	Equal Variances assumed	45.703	.000	14.486	1453	.000	.8606	.05941	.74407	.97714
	Equal Variances not assumed			15.119	1425.368	.000	.8606	.05692	.74895	.97226
Q3_14	Equal Variances assumed	34.936	.000	4.381	1453	.000	.2161	.04932	.11932	.31281
	Equal Variances not assumed			4.505	1383.734	.000	.2161	.04796	.12198	.31015
Q3_15	Equal Variances assumed	4.467	.035	1.028	1453	.304	.0528	.05137	-.04799	.15356
	Equal Variances not assumed			1.036	1307.331	.300	.0528	.05097	-.04719	.15277
3_16	Equal Variances assumed	9.330	.002	1.757	1453	.079	.1032	.05872	-.01199	.21839
	Equal Variances not assumed			1.768	1298.449	.077	.1032	.05838	-.01133	.21772
Q3_17	Equal Variances assumed	20.644	.000	-3.553	1453	.000	-.2665	.07499	-.41355	-.11936
	Equal Variances not assumed			-3.649	1379.086	.000	-.2665	.07302	-.40970	-.12321
Q3_18	Equal Variances assumed.	1.094	.296	7.251	1453	.000	.4949	.06825	.36101	.62875
	Equal Variances not assumed			7.262	1279.208	.000	.4949	.06814	.36119	.62857
Q3_19	Equal Variances assumed	.538	.463	-.784	1453	.433	-.0575	.07329	-.20125	.08627
	Equal Variances not assumed			-.785	1274.604	.433	-.0575	.07325	-.20120	.08622

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q3_20	Equal Variances assumed	62.614	.000	8.584	1453	.000	.4172	.04860	.32184	.51250
	Equal Variances not assumed			9.273	1446.528	.000	.4172	.04499	.32893	.50542

Internal Image and Construed Image

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Q1_1: offers the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles initiative	4.25	593	1.576	.065
	Q2_1: offers the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles initiative	5.88	593	.936	.038

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1	Q1_1: offers the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles initiative & Q2_1: offers the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles initiative	593	-.034	.409

Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Q1_1: offers the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles initiative - Q2_1: offers the opportunity, in the early years, to move around the organisation and work in different areas/roles initiative	-1.63	1.860	.076	-1.78	-1.48	-21.373	592	.000

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Q1_2: employs people with whom you fee you will have things in common	5.85	593	.925	.038
Q2_2: employs people with whom you fee you will have things in common	5.51	593	1.059	.043

Paired Samples Correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1 Q1_2: employs people with whom you fee you will have things in common & Q2_2: employs people with whom you fee you will have things in common	593	.093	.023

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Pair 1	Q1_2: employs people with whom you fee you will have things in common - Q2_2: employs people with whom you fee you will have things in common	.34	1.340	.055	.23	.45	6.160	592	.000

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Q1_3: allows a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	4.99	593	1.279	.053
	Q2_3: allows a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	5.13	593	1.253	.051

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1	Q1_3: allows a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative & Q2_3: allows a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	593	.113	.006

Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Q1_3: allows a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative Q2_3: allows a lot of freedom to work on your own initiative	-.14	1.687	.069	-.28	-.01	-2.069	592	.039

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Q1_4: have a friendly, informal culture	5.17	593	1.113	.046
	Q2_4: have a friendly, informal culture	4.78	593	1.375	.056

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1	Q1_4: have a friendly, informal culture & Q2_4: have a friendly, informal culture	593	.141	.001

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Q1_4: have a friendly, informal culture - Q2_4: have a friendly, informal culture	.39	1.643	.067	.26	.53	5.825	592	.000

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Q1_5: offers the opportunity for international travel	4.97	593	1.406	.058
	Q2_5: offers the opportunity for international travel	6.12	593	.774	.032

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1	Q1_5: offers the opportunity for international travel & Q2_5: offers the opportunity for international travel	593	0.68	.098

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Q1_5: offers the opportunity for international travel - Q2_5: offers the opportunity for international travel	-1.14	1.558	.064	-1.27	-1.02	-17.872	592	.00

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Q1_6: provides you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	5.78	593	1.128	.046
	Q2_6: provides you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	5.78	593	.889	.037

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1	Q1_6: provides you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues & Q2_6: provides you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	593	.115	.005

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Q1_6: provides you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues - Q2_6: provides you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues	.00	1.354	.056	-.11	.11	.030	592	.976

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Q1_7: uses your degree skills	3.85	593	1.647	.068
	Q2_8: uses your degree skills	4.78	593	1.264	.052

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1	Q1_7: uses your degree skills & Q2_8: would use your degree skills	593	.052	.209

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Q1_7: uses your degree skills - Q2_8: uses your degree skills	-.93	2.023	.083	-1.09	-.77	-11.184	592	.000

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Q1_8: really cares about their employees as individuals	4.66	593	1.257	.052
Q2_8: really cares about their employees as individuals	4.89	593	1.274	.052

Paired Samples Correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1 Q1_8: really cares about their employees as individuals & Q2_8: really cares about their employees as individuals	593	.095	.021

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Q1_8: really cares about their employees as individuals - Q2_8: really cares about their employees as individuals	-.23	1.703	.070	-.36	-.09	-3.256	592	.001

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Q1_9: is a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	4.58	593	1.431	.059
	Q2_9: is a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	5.51	593	1.043	.043

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1	Q1_9: is a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance) & Q2_9: is a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	593	.059	.153

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Q1_9: is a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance) _ Q2_9: is a pure meritocracy (i.e. rewards and promotions are based on performance)	-.93	1.721	.071	-1.07	-.79	-13.196	592	.000

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Q1_10: offers the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	4.67	593	1.455	.060
	Q2_10: offers the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	5.97	593	.841	.035

Paired Samples Correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1 Q1_10: offers the opportunity to work (and live) abroad & Q2_10: offers the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	593	.000	.992

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Q1_10: offers the opportunity to work (and live) abroad - Q2_10: offers the opportunity to work (and live) abroad	-1.30	1.681	.069	-1.44	-1.16	-18.836	592	.000

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Q1_11: offers a very high starting salary	6.10	593	.900	.037
Q2_11: offers a very high starting salary	6.47	593	.682	.028

Paired Samples Correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1 Q1_11: offers a very high starting salary & Q2_11: offers a very high starting salary	593	.435	.000

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Q1_11: offers a very high starting salary & Q2_11: offers a very high starting salary	-.37	.861	.035	-.44	-.30	-10.499	592	.000

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Q1_12: offers clear opportunities for long term career progression	5.79	593	.970	.040
	Q2_12: offers clear opportunities for long term career progression	5.96	593	.884	.036

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1	Q1_12: offers clear opportunities for long term career progression & Q2_12: offers clear opportunities for long term career progression	593	.227	.000

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Q1_12: offers clear opportunities for long term career progression - Q2_12: offers clear opportunities for long term career progression	-.17	1.155	.047	-.27	-.08	-3.664	592	.000

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Q1_13: offers variety in your daily work	5.22	593	1.234	.051
	Q2_13: offers variety in your daily work	5.79	593	.956	.039

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1	Q1_13: offers variety in your daily work & Q2_13: offers variety in your daily work	593	.084	.041

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
			Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Q1_13: offers variety in your daily work - Q2_13: offers variety in your daily work	-.57	1.496	.061	-.69	-.45	-9.249	592	.000

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Q1_14: invests heavily in the training and development of their employees	5.31	593	1.287	.053
	Q2_14: invests heavily in the training and development of their employees	6.05	593	.840	.034

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1	Q1_14: invests heavily in the training and development of their employees & Q2_14: invests heavily in the training and development of their employees	593	-.027	.509

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Q1_14: invests heavily in the training and development of their employees - Q2_14: invests heavily in the training and development of their employees	-.74	1.556	.064	-.86	-.61	-11.506	592	.000

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Q1_15: has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	5.99	593	.837	.034
	Q2_15 has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	5.91	593	.938	.039

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1	Q1_15: has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business & Q2_15 has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	593	.201	.000

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Q1_15: has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business - Q2_15 has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	.08	1.125	.046	-.01	.17	1.789	592	.074

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Q1_16: is a small organisation	1.59	593	1.018	.042
Q2_16: is a small organisation	1.91	593	1.080	.044

Paired Samples Correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1 Q1_16: is a small organisation & Q2_16: is a small organisation	593	.254	.000

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Q1_16: is a small organisation - Q2_16: is a small organisation	-.32	1.282	.053	-.42	-.22	-6.086	592	.000

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Q1_17: requires you to work standard working hours only	1.65	593	.952	.039
	Q2_17: requires you to work standard working hours only	2.59	593	1.284	.053

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1	Q1_17: requires you to work standard working hours only & Q2_17: requires you to work standard working hours only	593	.052	.206

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Q1_17: requires you to work standard working hours only - Q2_17: requires you to work standard working hours only	-.93	1.558	.064	-1.06	-.81	-14.605	592	.000

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Q1_18: offers a lot of scope for creativity in your work	4.55	593	1.360	.056
	Q2_18: offers a lot of scope for creativity in your work	5.09	593	1.273	.052

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1	Q1_18: offers a lot of scope for creativity in your work & Q2_18: offers a lot of scope for creativity in your work	593	.060	.145

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
			Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Mean	Lower			
Pair 1	Q1_18: offers a lot of scope for creativity in your work - Q2_18: offers a lot of scope for creativity in your work	-.54	1.806	.074	-.68	-.39	-7253	592	.000

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Q1_19: offers relatively stress-free working environment	2.81	593	1.252	.051
	Q2_19: offers relatively stress-free working environment	3.02	593	1.372	.056

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig
Pair 1	Q1_19: offers relatively stress-free working environment & Q2_19: offers relatively stress-free working environment	593	.143	.000

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Q1_19: offers relatively stress-free working environment - Q2_19: offers relatively stress-free working environment	-.21	1.720	.071	-.35	-.07	-2.985	592	.003

T-Test

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Q1_20: is widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	6.35	593	.719	.030
	Q2_20: is widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	6.56	593	.670	.028

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Q1_20: is widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer & Q2_20: is widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	593	.457	.000

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Q1_20: is widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer - Q2_20: is widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer	-.21	.725	.030	-.26	-.15	-6.913	592	.000

***t* test –Internal Image and External Image**

Group Statistics

	Type	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Q3_1	Internal Image	4.2513	1.57555	.06470
	External Image	5.1172	1.13398	.03862
Q3_2	Internal Image	5.8465	.92546	.03800
	External Image	4.2146	1.42456	.04852
Q3_3	Internal Image	4.9882	1.27933	.05254
	External Image	4.7181	1.20803	.04115
Q3_4	Internal Image	5.1737	1.11282	.04570
	External Image	4.2193	1.30200	.04435
Q3_5	Internal Image	4.9730	1.40557	.05772
	External Image	5.4130	1.14611	.03904
Q3_6	Internal Image	5.7808	1.12819	.04633
	External Image	5.4049	1.05796	.03603
Q3_7	Internal Image	3.8465	1.64657	.06762
	External Image	4.1752	1.65298	.05630
Q3_8	Internal Image	4.6594	1.25687	.05161
	External Image	4.4582	1.31638	.04484
Q3_9	Internal Image	4.5750	1.43138	.05878
	External Image	5.0313	1.13346	.03861
Q3_10	Internal Image	4.6678	1.45516	.05976
	External Image	5.2146	1.19099	.04057
Q3_11	Internal Image	6.0995	.89963	.03694
	External Image	5.7691	1.11012	.03781
Q3_12	Internal Image	5.7875	.97019	.03984
	External Image	5.6323	1.00661	.03429
Q3_13	Internal Image	5.2192	1.23402	.05068
	External Image	4.9269	1.20991	.04121
Q3_14	Internal Image	5.3103	1.28722	.05286
	External Image	5.8295	.97824	.03332
Q3_15	Internal Image	5.9916	.83722	.03438
	External Image	5.8561	.97956	.03336
Q3_16	Internal Image	1.5902	1.01793	.04180
	External Image	1.8074	1.11480	.03797
Q3_17	Internal Image	1.6543	.95164	.03908
	External Image	2.8550	1.48350	.05053
Q3_18	Internal Image	4.5497	1.35989	.05584
	External Image	4.5928	1.28336	.04371
Q3_19	Internal Image	2.8094	1.25167	.05140
	External Image	3.0777	1.37498	.04683
Q3_20	Internal Image	6.3541	.71852	.02951
	External Image	6.1427	1.04456	.03558

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q3_1	Equal Variances assumed	127.904	.000	-12.188	1453	.000	-.8659	.07105	-1.00527	-.72654
	Equal Variances not assumed			-11.491	1001.651	.000	-.8659	.07535	-1.01377	-.71804
Q3_2	Equal Variances assumed	126.590	.000	24.557	1453	.000	1.6319	.06645	1.50157	1.76228
	Equal Variances not assumed			26.478	1448.558	.000	1.6319	.06163	1.51103	1.75282
Q3_3	Equal Variances assumed	1.884	.170	4.091	1453	.000	.2701	.06603	.14058	.39962
	Equal Variances not assumed			4.048	1224.280	.000	.2701	.06673	.13918	.40102
Q3_4	Equal Variances assumed	21.017	.000	14.563	1453	.000	.9544	.06554	.82587	1.08300
	Equal Variances not assumed			14.988	1386.539	.000	.9544	.06368	.82952	1.07935
Q3_5	Equal Variances assumed	4.565	.033	-6.554	1453	.000	-.4400	.06713	-.57166	-.30829
	Equal Variances not assumed			-6.314	1099.282	.000	-.4400	.06968	-.57670	-.30325
Q3_6	Equal Variances assumed	3.421	.065	6.481	1453	.000	.3759	.05800	.26213	.48968
	Equal Variances not assumed			6.405	1218.348	.000	.3759	.05869	.26075	.49105
Q3_7	Equal Variances assumed	1.788	.181	-3.732	1453	.000	-.3286	.08805	-.50135	-.15591
	Equal Variances not assumed			-3.735	1275.783	.000	-.3286	.08799	-.50125	-.15601
Q3_8	Equal Variances assumed	1.052	.305	2.917	1453	.004	.2011	.06896	.06586	.33639
	Equal Variances not assumed			2.942	1309.767	.003	.2011	.06837	.06700	.33525
Q3_9	Equal Variances assumed	53.447	.000	-6.770	1453	.000	-.4563	.06740	-.58850	-.32406
	Equal Variances not assumed			-6.488	1075.324	.000	-.4563	.07032	-.59427	-.31829
Q3_10	Equal Variances assumed	23.742	.000	-7.853	1453	.000	-.5468	.06963	-.68341	-.41024
	Equal Variances not assumed			-7.571	1102.380	.000	-.5468	.07222	-.68854	-.40511
Q3_11	Equal Variances assumed	53.462	.000	6.014	1453	.000	.3304	.05493	.22260	.43810
	Equal Variances not assumed			6.249	1414.588	.000	.3304	.05286	.22665	.43405
Q3_12	Equal Variances assumed	8.498	.004	2.934	1453	.003	.1553	.05292	.05146	.25908
	Equal Variances not assumed			2.954	1302.384	.003	.1553	.05256	.05215	.25839
Q3_13	Equal Variances assumed	.039	.0844	4.492	1453	.000	.2923	.06508	.16465	.41997
	Equal Variances not assumed			4.475	1256.168	.000	.2923	.06532	.16417	.42045
Q3_14	Equal Variances assumed	39.882	.000	-8.731	1453	.000	-.5192	.05946	-.63582	-.40254
	Equal Variances not assumed			-8.309	1042.694	.000	-.5192	.06248	-.64179	-.39657
Q3_15	Equal Variances assumed	30.595	.000	2.746	1453	.006	.1354	.04931	.03870	.23214

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
	Equal Variances not assumed			2.827	1386.544	.005	.1354	.04791	.04144	.22940
Q3_16	Equal Variances assumed	10.364	.001	-3.782	1453	.000	-.2172	.05743	-.32985	-.10456
	Equal Variances not assumed			-3.846	1343.200	.000	-.2172	.05647	-.32799	-.10642
Q3_17	Equal Variances assumed	147.877	.000	-17.399	1453	.000	-1.2007	.06901	-1.33606	-1.06532
	Equal Variances not assumed			-18.797	1446.417	.000	-1.2007	.06388	-1.32599	-1.07539
Q3_18	Equal Variances assumed	4.992	.026	-.614	1453	.539	-.0431	.07016	-.18069	.09457
	Equal Variances not assumed			-.607	1223.784	.544	-.0431	.07092	-.18219	.09607
Q3_19	Equal Variances assumed	6.930	.009	-3.792	1453	.000	-.2683	.07075	-.40707	-.12950
	Equal Variances not assumed			-3.858	1345.387	.000	-.2683	.06954	-.40469	-.13187
Q3_20	Equal Variances assumed	40.062	.000	4.281	1453	.000	.2114	.04939	.11456	.30832
	Equal Variances not assumed			4.575	1453.000	.000	.2114	.04622	.12077	.30211

X. Samples of Analysed Portions of the Group Interview Transcripts

UAT Group Interview, Friday 19th April 2002

“CF: So when you are chatting to people what sort of effect that has on them, the things that you say, how important do you think that is?”

P2M*: I think the opportunity to chat is really important, speaking to people when I’ve done presentations afterwards, number one is always the quality of the food and drink and how many lights, cameras and action things you’ve got going and after that how many people you’ve got down on the ground, not just junior people, but how many senior people especially, maybe particularly true for Oxford and Cambridge, but they always go for the senior people. It is noticeable how many people of different ranks are present for people to talk to.

P3M: When I have spoken to people, I always tend to find that they feel that what they say to me directly influences their application...put your cv’s away! It’s amazing people’s attitude of how they chat to people, what they think the purpose of chatting to us is rather than what we think the purpose is. Because we are there to inform you, to let you know what is going on.

P2M: It is the urban myth you are going to get a job on the spot if you impress the right person on the night.

P1M: It is understandable as well because I remember when I was going through, I came in ‘interview mode’ as soon as I walked in to the presentation hall. Not through anything else, not there to impress, but certainly to brush up skills and learn to ask the right questions.

P3M: An interesting perspective on what you have just said, at UCL most of the students there are overseas students, particularly in the engineering and technology side. So their first question is, do you give work permits? As soon as you say that, the conversation actually shifts, so what they ask are much more general things – what's consulting, what's going on, what other companies they've applied to, they do not ask what it is like back in China or back in Malaysia. But once you get out of that...that's trying to impress someone who's got absolutely no influence whatsoever, if those overseas students to go by, they also want to know a lot more general stuff: 'if I didn't go for [the Firm] who would be the next person I should go to?'

P1M: Going back to impressions actually, people do value the opportunity to speak to people at presentations, and perhaps feel that, that opportunity shouldn't be limited to campus presentations. So there should be some mechanism to enable the every-day student to make contact with people without having to go through a heavy rigmarole of applying. A fact-finding call to someone who is actually working.

P3M: That is definitely one of the best aspects - the way UAT is organised. Certainly for myself, one of my points of contact because my experience was the engineering department and all different faculties within engineering, and because I have contact with the lecturers, who the students go to, they get redirected to me - not loads, certainly two or three people phoned or emailed me and have asked things. It is much more general or round about sort of the industry rather than what [the Firm] are up to. I think they are quite clever to make a distinction between the two rather than just ask me, how did I get a job? But that in itself is really important, being able to have an alumni, people who have studied that at university as well. Its what they most value. People recognise you especially if you are a couple of years ahead so they see it as much more attainable because they know you are of the same background. [TC]

P2F: One of things they ask is where you are from and if you are from Imperial, you say 'oh right, so its ok then, there are people from Imperial.' [TC]

P3M: I remember when I was doing it, there were loads of companies that were sending people up, and only people out of recruiting and they were often not from the same university. It certainly noticed if they are from your same university. [TC]

P2F: The other thing you pointed out about the fact that you are in the job as opposed to being in recruiting. You don't get the recruiting message, they probably get the recruiting message too often and it's standard lines." [CS]

**Note: 'P2M' = second male participant*

UAT Group Interview, Monday 22nd April 2002

"CF: How important do you think what you do as UAT members, if you put that in the context of the bigger recruiting machine, what role do you think that plays in the process? How important a part of the process you are?"

P3F: I think it is a massive part of it.

P2F: On campus presentations definitely, I think that's what sold me to join was the fact that I spoke to 4 different [employees] that were there. They were reasonably honest, but each one of them I thought A) I got on well with them – that is a good sign, B) What they said, was what I wanted to do. [TC]

P3F: It is every point of contact from when you go to presentations. My opinion changed right the way through. I remember going to presentations, and happened that the people I spoke to, I came out thinking 'I do not want to work there!' but then I still applied, and through out the process of going to assessment centers it changed my mind. If everyone stayed the same, I would have had that same contact all the way

through, I wouldn't have wanted to be in the firm. That changed my opinion, I thought 'Well, hey are quite down to earth, I'll get rid of my initial impression'. It made a massive difference.

CF: Do you think it is what you actually say or is there an element of liking people, getting on with them?

P1M: I think people generally want to go somewhere where they can get on with the people they work with. For me that is the most important thing. I have been on projects on my own, working with a client, I have got on with him but it was very hard. If you get a good team, it makes it so much nicer. That is what a student wants to see as well, is that he going to come in to a company and just be happy with the people he is working with. [TC]

P1F: With the events that we do, it's just not the UAT members, there is an argument to say that we could have just used agencies, or would could have used national advertising and still achieve our aims. But the UAT is a cheaper way of doing it and I think it gets the right people in. You've got the UAT members and the event as a whole, we tend to do reasonably slick, professional type of events most of the time. That is probably another thing to it. The whole image. People talk about the whole image of the presentation rather than the people they talk to afterwards as well. I think it is a combined package. The events obviously to not work without the people."

UAT Group Interview, Thursday 25th April 2002

"CF: How important do you think your role is as a UAT in the global recruiting machine or the recruiting process? What do you think the role of UAT members is within that process?"

P1M: I think it was quite differentiating when I was an undergraduate attending investment banking, consulting presentations. They are pretty much of a form, top tier recruiters spend serious money putting on presentations in swanky hotels, and nice food. One of the things that was nice and differentiating was the fact that [the Firm] had the people who could talk to you very relevantly, 'I used to do the same stuff you are doing right now. In a year or two's time you will be doing exactly what I am doing right now'. It just worked very well that way. [CS, TC]

P1F: And another thing from my experiences, you can actually get away from the big corporate presentations. We have done quite a lot of presentations just to the maths department or to the business department and that actually brings it down more to the level that you are actually targeting specific groups of people and talking just generally rather than just a big flash presentation. More one on one really. Small groups of people.

CF: So how important do you think it is the things you say to students as individual UAT members either in presentations or when you are chatting in marketing events? How important do you think it is in influencing them one way or the other?"

P3M: I think that is very important. One of the most important things that they would get is first hand information. Someone who's been in your position before not a long time ago.

P1F: Not just that. I think it is if they like you as well. You could tell them absolutely anything ... I like that sort of person, I could work with her or work with him. If you feel that you could just fit in that's probably more important. [TC]

P1M: It is very important to me. People I have indirectly recruited, I have sent emails when they joined saying 'remember, we spoke in Southampton...' and stuff. That's important."

UAT Group Interview, Friday 10th May 2002

“CF: What role do you think you as UAT members being there and going to events on campus and presenting – how important or what role do you think that plays in the bigger scheme of students’ experience of our recruiting?”

P1F: I think it’s really quite important We did a skills session one afternoon. It was a 4 hour session one afternoon just through the career service. It was really good, it was really successful. We got about 35 people, we’ve got lots of questions about [the Firm] and what we do. It was actually on the same day as the evening presentation and I think virtually all of them turned up to the evening presentation. I think they are useful to maintain your profile on campus. Their key thing is that a lot of students don’t know what we do. Lots of questions on what you do, what is your typical day, that kind of thing.

P4F: Aside from knowing what we do, having the profile on campus is a lot to do with people getting an understanding for the kind of people they would be working with and I know that for a lot of people, myself included, knowing people you knew at university who you like and you could go for a beer with, and you respect their opinions, knowing that they are working for a company does quite a lot of how you would feel about working there. For me what took me to thinking that [the Firm] was the place for me was the fact that I knew 5 or 6 people who worked here all of whom knew me very well, knew what I was like, knew what I wanted, had similar goals. It was having them come back and talk about it all, having them say give me a call or whatever. It made a real difference and I think it still does. I still speak to people who were 2 to 3 years below me and they are like, you seem to be really enjoying it that makes me feel much more confident about applying. [CS, TC]

P1M: I think that is actually one of the keys to the members of the UAT teams who actually go out and do the presentations etc. Obviously it’s voluntary and you don’t scream for ideal candidates to do them but when I was watching other presentations it did make a big difference those people are the front face of the company. If you get people who you like, admire, would aspire to be that would swing your votes so to speak. [TC]

CF: How would you rate it in terms of its importance in the bigger scheme of things.

P1F: For the students themselves?

CF: Well, I am thinking the impact it has meeting you guys. The impact that has on their impressions. In the context of the bigger picture, the brochures and all the other stuff that gets done.

P2F: Pretty up there I would say, one of the top one or two things. A lot of people don’t know what they want to do up to a certain extent. They don’t care what they do in the first 3-4 years of their career. They just know that they want to earn decent money, be somewhere where they can have some fun and preferably be working in a big city type company. Especially coming out of business degrees where they hear a lot about that. At the end of the day, what differentiates one company from the rest is firstly the kind of work you do, although to some extent they don’t really know about that, it’s quite hard to explain, and secondly the people, it’s quite a high priority.

P3F: I agree, they get to see you. They get to see that you are normal. Especially if you go back to the university you were at, you can even go out with them at night when you’ve been there for the presentation. You know the recruiting video that they have? One of the guys that was in that video was actually at our presentation and some of them still believe that this video wasn’t real life. What this analyst did. Even when we had the guy there, some of them said this just looks too fake. It just helped to say look we are real people, this is the kind of thing we do. [TC]

P4F: It makes it look clearer to them as well. It’s really hard to explain what we do, and it’s really difficult to write it down in a way anyone would understand. It makes it a lot easier when you can stand there and say not really in formal language because all the brochures and things in the career service have

to be fairly formal. You can say, look this is how it is, and this is what it is like in a much easier way for them to grasp. [CS] It is a completely different world to them.

P1F: Being able to ask questions and know that we are not going to lie to them or not just try and give them the spiel. They can say, look level with me – are you really working 18 hours a day every day for how ever many weeks. You can say no, not every day but you can get the odd day like that. You can be honest, and they will believe you and they won't think that you are giving them the best case scenario. The more junior the people are, the more approachable, the more useful it is. [CS] I am now 2 years past knowing anyone at university, I don't know anyone back at Cambridge and I felt less useful the last time I went back. Simply by virtue of the fact that I didn't know anyone that was still there and I'd speak to people and they ask what college you were at and I'd say that, and they go do you know so and so – no way, after my time. And I am starting to feel unapproachable. It means that if that is how it feels to me , imagine if you are 5 or 6 years in. I think having A1 and A2 in is probably the most important thing you can get. Obviously having a senior executive or manager up there doing the big formal bit is good but in terms of approachability...

P1M: I think on that note there, the graduate recruitment question and answer session the other day after the second round interview, I had a bit of time with them, the potential employees, after the final interview and just spoke to them quite normally and left them my email address just so if they do get the job they have a contact and it didn't seem very much at the time but someone came up to me afterwards and said – 'is everyone as helpful as you in the company?' It isn't a lot of effort but it does highlight the point that just small gestures particularly from people who are being honest and perhaps haven't been here that long, do make a difference.

P1F: That is what we did at the skills session that we went, we just gave people...we put our email addresses up, we weren't actually recruiting it was just a skills session, and said if you've got any questions, if you are interested, just send us an email. And they did appreciate it. You reach a wider audience doing that sort of thing, they can go away and say we had a good session with [the Firm], got an email address, I might ask them some questions. And I guess they have a point of contact and can spread it around."

UAT Group Interview, Monday 13th May 2002

"CF: The role that the UAT members play in the whole recruiting process, how important do you think that is in the bigger scheme of everything that students have coming at them from the firm...how important is the interaction they have with you guys in terms of influencing them, do you think?"

P1F: Coming from a different perspective, as one of the recruits, it's nice to have someone you can actually ask the kind of questions people really want to know at university. What's it like there...get past company blurb that they get from everybody, its nice to have somebody you can actually interact with and find out the real [Firm] scene. The kind of people that were there...everyone was positive that you speak to, it says something that you can have people who are in the job that are that positive about it as opposed to just HR people. [CS] Its quite nice to talk to people, find out what kind of projects they do, what they get involved with day to day basis.

P2M: It brings to life what they actually do. [CS] I know we have case studies and the literature but people don't know what hour-to-hour, day-to-day what we do.

P1M: It brings a slightly more realistic slant to what actually happens. During my recruitment process I had a glamorous picture of the whole [Firm] ideal, the whole travelling, flying off to Europe...essentially it is just Halifax and Doncaster you could end up in. It is quite handy to have that down to earth, someone to say it's not like that, it is more like this and you appreciate them and value that feedback." [CS]

Key: CS = credible source

TC = things in common

Y. Gender Diversity Recruitment Marketing Toolkit

Gender Diversity Recruitment Marketing Toolkit
Detailed Messages, Evidence & Programmes

June 2002

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Introduction

Why the right messages are key

It's a fact that, in the UK, job-search methods amongst females and all other potential recruits are the same i.e. they will generally read the same media and use the same channels when they are looking for a role. The most effective way to reach these groups, therefore, is to continue with traditional recruitment media, both on and off line, *but to focus on the way we use these vehicles and the messages we convey.*

As a result of research carried out in the UK, it is clear that the key buyer values of female recruits differ from those of the male population in both content and emphasis. Correspondingly, we have created a set of messages (and supporting evidence and programmes), in this document, that can be used to attract more women.

However, whatever the buyer values of different groups, we must tell the truth about [the Firm] careers. Whilst we can highlight the facts that are important to these groups, and encourage them to apply if they are attracted to what we have to offer, we cannot claim to offer a working environment that we don't. [the Firm] is not an easy option, whatever your background; but we do provide the support to encourage individuals to succeed, whoever they are and wherever they come from.

The aim of our recruitment marketing communications in this area is to position [the Firm] as a best-practice diversity employer that is taking positive steps (on diversity) that really mean something. Messages are not therefore a mere statement of egalitarian values or commitment to best practice. Some messages are easy to show through examples and evidence. Others are more intuitive, and can be conveyed by the way we act, what we do and what we say.

Of course, all this effort (on diversity) needs to sit comfortably as part of our overall recruitment marketing communications. We have ensured that the messages in this document work as a coherent whole with those in our 'mainstream' recruitment marketing message architecture. We are also confident, from our research work, that none of these diversity messages are unattractive to 'males'.

What do we know about our audiences?

Our research shows that when female undergraduates rate [the Firm] highly on the following organisational characteristics, they are likely to apply to us for a job (note: these results are not general findings, but specific to [the Firm]). These results are important because it is the first time we have been able to make a direct link between aspects of our image and their direct effect on our target audience's intention to apply to us (see appendix for details on this research). The characteristics are:

Has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to its business
Has a friendly and informal culture
Really cares about its employees as individuals
Employs people with whom you feel you will have things in common

For the purpose of messaging, we have translated these into:

- Dynamic company & employer
- Friendly and informal environment
- People not numbers
- People like me

Note: our group discussions with both new joiners and UAT members have confirmed that these are key topics that students want to know about, e.g. in their informal discussions with our people at recruiting events

One final very important point to bear in mind is the importance of interpersonal interaction with potential recruits. Research shows that potential recruits place a great importance on what they see and hear in their meetings with employees of a company; this is, therefore, one of the most influential channels we have for building our desired image on campus. Furthermore, it has been shown that these interpersonal effects are even more important for women than for men – women are more likely to mention interactions with employees as reasons for changing their attitudes towards a particular potential employer.

The challenges we face

Avoiding tokenism

We know that female groups will easily spot and reject any tokenism or lip service in recruitment communications. There is generally scorn for opportunism and occasional forays into the women's press. We can be certain that if these groups are hesitant or reluctant to apply to [the Firm] then we need to make our case carefully and intelligently. If all it took to convert females from 'target audience' to 'confirmed applicants' was a picture of a female face in a recruitment advertisement, then neither [the Firm] nor any other major employer would have shortages amongst this group.

A note on pre-conceptions

Everybody has them. Our target recruits are no different. Our research has shown that [the Firm] is not perceived by female undergraduates as friendly and informal, as particularly caring about its employees as individuals or as employing people with whom these women feel they will have things in common. In other words, on three of the four characteristics highlighted above as affecting female undergraduates' desire to apply to us for a job, [the Firm] does not have a strong image.

However, as our graduate campaign emphasizes, we want to tell the truth about careers at [the Firm]. We can dispel myths and untruths – fair enough. But we must emphasize the facts about working at [the Firm] and the lifestyle implications of a career with us. We must provide the relevant information, and individuals can decide whether this type of career is right for them. We must emphasize that we do support individuals in their career, whoever they are and whatever their background.

Getting in front of women

One of the main challenges we face in attracting more women to apply to us is making contact with them in the first place – clearly this is a prerequisite to conveying the right messages to them. Whilst, as noted above, these groups will typically use the same channels and media as anyone else in their job search, they may very well not choose to attend our employer presentation or to seek out our brochure or website.

As part of our diversity strategy therefore, we have to include plans to increase our 'presence' with these groups by adapting our approach to events as necessary. For example, we may want to think about holding different types of events than we have in the past, in order to attract these groups, and gain some face time with them, and/or introducing new ways of promoting our existing events to these audiences (to encourage their attendance). You can find more ideas on this theme below (under 'Actions speak louder than words')

How to use this message architecture

The messages have been broken down into:

- Core message
- Sub messages & supporting statements
- Evidence examples
- Marketing programme ideas to support diversity objectives

The messages are all supported by evidence to provide a powerful foundation for communications and a source of further background information. It is important to use evidence to support these messages as it is far more compelling to demonstrate the message, for example how we support Work/Life balance, how people benefit from continuous learning throughout their career etc, than simply to say we offer these things.

In compiling this toolkit, we ran discussion groups with some of our new joiners to discuss their experiences of both [the Firm] and our competitors during the recruiting process. From these discussions we were able to identify the evidence points and programme ideas that would provide the strongest support for our four messages – these are outlined below.

Overview of messages

People not numbers

People Like Me

Friendly & Informal

Dynamic Company & Employer

Detailed gender diversity recruitment marketing messages

Message: People not numbers

<p>Message</p>	<p>Being one of c75000 employees globally, you may feel that it is easy to fade into the background at [the Firm]. We are determined that our employees never feel this way, and have put the systems in place to ensure that every opinion counts, and that everyone is treated as an individual. <i>You</i> matter. Your opinions matter, for example you can expect to be asked for your opinion within your project team from very early on in the job. If you're happy, rewarded and motivated, it's great for you. It's also great for your teams, our clients and us too.</p> <p>We will endeavor to give you the support you need to develop in the way that is right for you. In an organisation as large as this, with specialisms across so many industries and services, we are able to offer an enormous variety of roles and career options. Every project you work on will be different – you will work with your Scheduler & Career Counselor to carve out a career that suits you best.</p> <p>Our focus on continuous learning ensures our people have the opportunity to learn everywhere they turn, through exposure to training opportunities and challenging work assignments. All this means that our employees have enormous scope to manage their own careers and follow a path that is individual to them, supported by their career counselor and others in the company.</p> <p>Our Performance Management process is highly developed and objective, meaning that individual talent is always recognized and rewarded.</p> <p>Each employee has an opinion that counts. We want you to tell us what you think and we have the systems in place to encourage you to do so. We can then make the changes that are necessary to keep our people motivated and happy at work.</p> <p>In addition, we are an organisation that looks after our people. We recognize the value of employees enjoying a healthy work/life balance and offer a host of programs and flexible working arrangements to enable employees to balance home, work and social commitments. We also offer opportunities for our people to give back to their communities, whether through organized [the Firm] activities or charities or through time or resources donated at a personal level.</p>
<p>Evidence Summary (details provided pages 13-20)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities & Project teams • Training & Learning • Scheduling • Career Counseling

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring • Performance Management • Communication & feedback • Work/Life balance programmes • Community & Charitable activities • Corporate Social Responsibility
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Message: People Like Me

<p>Message</p>	<p>Ask an [the Firm] employee what they like most about working for the company, and invariably they will say ‘the people’. With c75000 employees globally and c7500 in the UK, this is a place where everyone has the chance to meet people they have things in common with. You’ll be surprised at the great range of backgrounds, personalities and interests that are represented in our people.</p> <p>Everyone who joins [the Firm] has passion, enthusiasm and ambition. Whether that passion relates to elements of their life inside or outside work, these are the traits that set our employees apart. So, whether it’s people from your start group, your immediate colleagues, or those you meet through networking and socializing, you will find you are in an organisation with talented and like-minded individuals.</p> <p>Being such a big company, ours is already a diverse workplace, with people from every religion, race and background. We do recognize that we still have improvements to make and we are determined to do whatever it takes to find and nurture the talent we need. Employing a diverse workforce is not just the right thing to do. It is actually very good for business. We want to attract people who are able to challenge conventional thought and offer unique perspectives. We can only attract those people if we can demonstrate we have an environment where they can flourish and be supported.</p> <p>We try to ensure our employees feel part of the [the Firm] team both before and after they join (and even after they leave through our Alumni programme). As soon as you receive an offer you will be given access to our ‘Pre-Joiners’ website, where you can talk on-line to your new colleagues. You will also be allocated a buddy. This support continues throughout the integration process, and onwards into your career. And as you spend more time in the company, you will find your formal & informal networks continually grow. Whether you enjoy exchanging knowledge and information with your colleagues, attending networking group meetings, or sharing interests with them outside work, the opportunity is there to hook up with people like you.</p> <p>We understand that working with the right people in an open, flexible and stimulating environment makes a world of difference in meeting daily challenges. This is what separates [the Firm] from many other employers.</p>
<p>Evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking

Summary (details provided pages 21-22)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Joining • Start Groups • Communities • New Joiner Orientation • Societies & Social activities
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Message: Friendly & Informal environment

Message	<p>When people join [the Firm], they are often surprised by just how friendly and supportive their colleagues are. The culture of continuous learning and knowledge sharing has fostered an environment where people want to offer information and help each other out. Whether you are working with global teams or local colleagues, you will always find someone to ask for advice and guidance. You will also have plenty of opportunities to get to know your colleagues off the job – whether through social events or working together to give something back to your local community.</p> <p>[the Firm] offices are open plan and informal. Business casual dress code and flexible work styles are the norm. People at every level are very approachable. A down-to-earth attitude, a welcoming approach and a sociable atmosphere are all in evidence. You will spot this as early as during the selection process when, as rigorous as we are, you will find that we are informal in our approach and more concerned about learning about you as a person than asking you to complete formal psychometric tests.</p>
Evidence Summary (details provided page 23)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office environment • Community events • Selection process • Business dress • Community/charitable activities • Flexible working • Societies & Social activities

Message: Dynamic Company & Employer

Message	<p>Innovation is at the very heart of [the Firm]. Our people help design, develop and implement cutting-edge technology solutions for some of the world's leading organizations. But you can also benefit from the way our genuine commitment to taking an original and innovative approach extends to every aspect of our own business.</p> <p>Our company has consistently evolved to remain at the forefront of trends and influential ideas; we have evolved from a consulting business to a network of businesses. We have a progressive approach to the environments we work in, the knowledge and resources we share, and the management of our people. All aim to promote our people's personal success, so that they are best equipped to contribute to ours. Our specialist learning, knowledge and technology tools help our people find new, intelligent ways of approaching business issues. Our flexible work arrangements aim to achieve a balance in our peoples' personal and professional lives and provide them with the flexibility to manage their time and careers.</p>
Evidence Summary (details provided pages 24-28)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A different type of business • History of re-invention • Breadth of client work • Thought Leadership • Alliances • Balanced workforce initiatives • External memberships

Note: generally speaking, this is a characteristic on which [the Firm] is rated highly by students; it is also a message area that is well supported by our broader corporate marketing programmes. It is less of a concern, therefore, than the three other message areas (above); although it is still important that we stress the innovative employer piece of this message, firstly because that is not covered by our corporate marketing and, secondly, because it is interlinked with – and helps to support – the other three messages here.

Evidence to support messages

The following pages provide the detail behind each of the evidence points to support our diversity marketing messages above, i.e.:

- People not numbers
- People Like Me
- Friendly & Informal
- Dynamic Company & Employer

The evidence provides a powerful foundation for communications and a source of background information. It is important to use evidence to support these messages as it is far more compelling to demonstrate the message, for example how we look after our people, how people benefit from continuous learning throughout their career etc, than simply to say we offer these things.

1. Evidence: People not numbers

1.1 Communities & Project Teams

[the Firm] is a large, global company. While this is exciting and means our employees have fantastically varied career opportunities, it does also mean there is a danger you will feel lost. To combat this, everyone belongs to a *Community*, usually according to your Operating Group or Skills area. This is your 'home' and you can feel connected to others throughout your community, which provides a source of support, no matter where you are or with whom you are working.

Communities are typically comprised of 100 - 150 employees spanning all levels. Gatherings are designed to encourage teamwork, and provide a forum for you to create strong, lifelong ties with colleagues through professional and social activities. Whether it's for a Christmas or summer party, or for more formal work events such as planned discussion sessions and opportunities to exchange ideas with others, you can be sure to have ample time to get to know others that you don't directly work with.

Project teams vary in size and composition, and you will join a new one each time you start a different project. This is the team you will get to know very quickly each time, and the one that you will have your highs and lows with on a daily basis. You will also be part of frequent project team events, from communications meetings to social get-togethers.

1.2 Training & Learning

We invest around US\$580 million in training and development annually, which translates into an average of about 750 hours of training for our entry-level professionals during their first five years.

Our aim is to put each person in control of their own professional growth. While the business needs are paramount, we do try to ensure that the career path you follow, the projects you join and the skills you learn are those that suit you best.

Continuous Learning

[the Firm] has a continuous learning philosophy. This is an ongoing process focused on three things: experience, support and feedback.

Experience refers to the learning gained from roles and assignments as well as from the tasks, challenges and problems faced every day.

Support is provided by the comprehensive training that [the Firm] offers through both eLearning and traditional classroom learning, as well as by knowledge sharing with your colleagues and access to our Knowledge Exchange [™], a vast on-line repository of our tools and knowledge.

Feedback, via the annual performance review process and day-to-day feedback from clients, peers and subordinates, provides our people with the information they need on how they are doing and what they need to learn in order to improve.

Self Directed learning

Everyone who joins [the Firm] can participate in a unique, self-directed learning approach to managing their career development. A key feature of this approach is our innovative eLearning tool, "*Mylearning.com*", which enables our people to build their own skills and career. Mylearning.com is tailored to individual needs and provides access to our rich training and personal development information resources. People can monitor their progress and create their own curriculum and development plan; your career counselor and other colleagues will be on hand to offer guidance if you need it. Training programs are available in the traditional classroom setting or through videoconferencing, CD-ROM or real-time access via the Internet, so our people can further their development whenever and wherever it's convenient.

Informal learning

'Brown bag lunches' are a feature of life at [the Firm]. Groups of colleagues gather together over a sandwich to exchange knowledge, views and ideas on an enormous range of topics – from project experiences to new technologies.

1.3 Directing your own career path

In an organisation as large as this, and with specialisms across so many industries and services, we are able to offer an enormous variety of roles and career options. Every project you work on will be different – in fact it is likely that every day will be different. Your Scheduler and Career Counselor are there to help you decide which projects will benefit you most in terms of skills and experience.

1.3.1 Scheduling

Each employee has an allocated Scheduler. They help our people to drive their careers, helping them gain the experience that will benefit them and the business most. Based on feedback, the UK practice has adopted inclusive—or transparent—scheduling. This new process allows consulting people to “see through” the scheduling process and have more control over the jobs they are assigned to and ultimately over their time with [the Firm].

The [the Firm] portal has information on the Inclusive Scheduling program at:
[https://portal.\[the Firm\].com/initiatives/INIT_Scheduling%20Journey.htm](https://portal.[the Firm].com/initiatives/INIT_Scheduling%20Journey.htm)

1.3.2 Career Counseling

Every employee has a dedicated career counselor, who will help guide and monitor your progress and advise you on the best ways to manage your career.

1.3.3 Mentoring Schemes

Mentoring, or learning by example, is a powerful way that people can learn at [the Firm] and is available to everyone throughout the organisation. Specific programmes that have been introduced are:

Mentoring for Women

[the Firm]'s continuing commitment to increasing the representation of women across the UK organisation has seen a number of initiatives progress in the last quarter. The key focus has been to launch the UK Mentoring for Women Programme (currently offered to all managers and above). Mentoring for Women has been identified as an important and effective mechanism for improving the retention and advancement of women in all our divisions. The programme is modular, allowing participants to choose those components which best reflect their needs and interests. The three components include:

Networking: structured events to encourage discussion and social networking.

1-1 Mentoring Relationships: This mentoring provides an opportunity to discuss issues / challenges faced by female Senior Managers and clarify the achievements needed to reach Partner level. The relationship is in addition to existing career counselor relationships.

Skill Building / Personal Development: a schedule of cross Operating Group events designed to equip male and female participants with skills and knowledge required to work in a diverse organisation.

1.4 Performance management

[the Firm] has all the mechanisms in place to recognize and reward people who have demonstrated the talent and potential to succeed. The Performance Management (PM) process is very objective. Meaning that all employees globally are assessed using the same tools and techniques.

Everyone has responsibility for their own development planning. Each person works with their Career Counselor to draft their Individual Development Plan (IDP), which is discussed at regular intervals to ensure goals are achievable. The career management process is documented and monitored using the on-line Global Assessment Tool (GAT).

It is up to individuals to discuss feedback with their project supervisors and actively seek out interim feedback throughout the performance year. Your annual performance, reward and promotion prospects will be discussed with your Career Counselor at your Annual Review. Each person has primary responsibility for ensuring assessment of their contribution.

Several people have a role in the PM process:

Project Supervisors:

Set and discuss objectives and contribution goals for people at the start of a project or evaluation period

Conduct frequent checkpoint discussions to provide ongoing feedback

Assess the person's performance demonstrated on the project and discuss the final project feedback assessment with the person

Assess promotion readiness (if applicable)

Career Counselors':

Initiate and conduct checkpoint discussions
Review and approve the counselee's Personal Plan.
Make reward recommendations as well as promotion recommendation (if applicable)
Conduct the Annual Review discussion

Reward Assessors:

Make decisions in the area of Rewarding Success. They have to make decisions on salary recommendations in conjunction with your career counselor.

1.5 Communication & Feedback

In a company the size of [the Firm], you can imagine, there is a lot of information in circulation. It is all part of a huge internal communications programme, which provides information and updates to all our employees. We don't believe in keeping people in the dark – when things happen that affect the business, all our employees generally know pretty quickly. For example, when we changed our name in 2001, a series of e-postcards, presentations and web casts ensured that everyone was fully briefed about the transition – how it would happen, what the effect would be, what people had to do to make the relevant changes etc. That's a big example, but business news is breaking everyday – whether it's about the share price, a change in business direction or a new personnel policy. And on every subject, you have the opportunity to give your feedback, whether it's through a formal forum, as part of a 'pulse group', or via a feedback button on an email.

You'll be surprised at the lengths we go to to generate and evaluate employee feedback. We want you to tell us what you think. As an example, the [the Firm] Portal - an internal website with links to vast information resources and company knowledge – has a whole section designed to generate employee feedback and encourage discussion. For example:

[Share your Ideas!](#) Do you have any ideas about making [the Firm] a great place to work, driving bold growth or making us more operationally effective? Or, do you have any quick workplace tips you'd like to share? Enter your ideas or see ideas that others have shared there!

[Join the Global People Network](#). This gives you an opportunity to join a group of people from around the world who are regularly surveyed to provide insight and input to our leaders' new strategies and process changes.

You can also take part in various focus groups and interviews around the world to help in usability tests, requirements gathering and concept verification for new or updated [the Firm] processes.

Every employee is also asked to complete the annual 'People Satisfaction Survey', which enables us to get your feedback on all matters – from training and development to rewards and general satisfaction at work. Once we have gathered and evaluated all the information, we are able to make the changes necessary to keep our employees happy.

1.6 Life Works

Our philosophy is to provide support to all employees concerned with balancing their work and personal lives. Everyone can benefit from the programmes we have in place which are intended to support all phases of an employee's life.

As different people have different priorities, [the Firm] offers benefits that will match a variety of needs and wishes. Well-being programs encourage our people to stay healthy. Flexible working arrangements enable them to manage their work schedule in a way that suits them. Pension, insurance and savings programs encourage them to plan for their financial future. With additional leave, they may be given an incentive to further their education or pursue other interests. All of these are designed to help achieve a balance between work and personal life and to reward our people for their significant contributions to [the Firm].

Flexible Working

We encourage employees to create a working pattern that meets both personal and business needs. Internal research shows that flexible working is a number one priority for all employees who want greater control over how and where their work gets done. Morale, motivation and productivity are all positively affected by flexible working arrangements. Options include:

Part-time working: working 2, 3 or 4 days a week.

Job Sharing: 2 part-time employees working in one role.

Flexible hours: Any re-configuration of hours that remains acceptable in the working environment – eg leaving early, coming in late, midday breaks.

Compressed hours: compressing hours into fewer numbers of days – eg working 5 days in 4 days.

Home Working: working from home as required.

Home/Office/Client Site Ratio: client requirements permitting, you may be able to work from home or at an [the Firm] office location on a Friday, so you can be home for the weekend.

7:7 practice: client requirements permitting, we encourage you to leave your project location on a Friday so you are home by 7pm, and not leave home again on a Monday morning until 7am.

Leave of absence

[the Firm] offers employees the opportunity to take an unpaid absence to undertake activities outside the working environment, which will assist with an employee's personal development and address balance of life issues. The time taken can be anything between 4 weeks and one year.

Flex-Leave

Flex Leave is a voluntary sabbatical programme where [the Firm] offers a 6 to 12 month partially paid opportunity for our employees to pursue their interests (e.g. travel, charity work, non-[the Firm] sponsored study, work in a different field). (Flex-Leave is offered in times of over-supply).

Working parents

We offer generous maternity and paternity leave, together with other advice and discussion forums for working parents. Our Working Parents Advisory Forum consists of employees from various areas of the business who provide the Balanced Workforce team with input into the needs of working parents. Brown bag lunches and other forums provide parents with the opportunity to discuss issues important to them, and to network with each other. Our Working Parents database provides practical information and advice to parents on-line.

Concierge service

A concierge service available to all employees - takes an employee's "to-do" list and gets everything accomplished, from obtaining tickets and helping with travel plans to arranging deliveries and repairs.

Well-being Programme

The Well-being Programme was set up to look after the health and welfare of our employees. Well-being events are run throughout the year at our offices. These events are designed to give employees the opportunity to talk to all types of traditional and alternative health professionals – from dentists to dieticians.

Other Well-being initiatives are the provision of fresh fruit on a daily basis in all our offices. This is to encourage you to include fresh fruit and vegetables within your diet. The British Nutrition Foundation recommends that you eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables a day (excluding potatoes).

Workstation Assessments

An Assessor visits you at your workstation and advises you on your working area. They will recommend immediate solutions e.g. seat height, layout of materials on desk, etc, and make recommendations where required for various pieces of equipment e.g. lap-pack, telephone headset, chair, lightweight laptop, back pack, etc. The Risk Management team also provides assessments for New and Expectant Mothers at work.

Healthscreens and Health Assessment Medicals

All [the Firm] employees are eligible for either a Health Screen or Health Assessment. The type and frequency of the medical will be dependent on the employee's age or grade.

Fitness & Health

[the Firm] gives employees discounted health club membership and pays a subsidy towards membership fees.

Employee counseling service

Our counseling service offers confidential telephone and face-to-face counseling for employees and their families on a range of personal issues such as emotional problems, family concerns, and relationship worries. The service is completely confidential and independent of [the Firm] – [the Firm] receives no information on who uses the service.

Fly-backs

If you are required to work on a project out of town for a period greater than two months, you are entitled to 'flybacks', meaning you can return home each weekend, or arrange for your partner to come to you. In addition, the Flexible Trip Allowance permits you to fly to any location you choose every *other* flyback.

Shopping discounts

We have relationships with numerous retailers where we have organized an employee discount on goods and services – ranging from hair & beauty salons to dry cleaners.

1.7 Involvement in Community Activities

We encourage our employees to give time and knowledge back to their communities, whether through organized charity schemes, or donating their time or expertise to help others. Every employee is encouraged to take part in community work, and is given three days extra leave to do so. Internal research has shown that employees are highly committed to participating in Charitable and Community activities. For example:

- 40% of [the Firm] employees would like details of how they can help.
- Over £1.25 million has been donated to charity since the "Give As You Earn" scheme began.
- A wide range of community projects have already been successfully completed
- During the past two years, [the Firm] has financially "adopted" 13 Volunteers Programme teams through the Prince's Trust, supporting around 150 young people to develop self-confidence, motivation and resilience to overcome difficult circumstances and move towards further education, training and employment.

The Charity & Community Portal

This is an internal website highlighting everything an employee needs to know about participating in Charity and Community activities at [the Firm]. [the Firm] UK has partnered with Capital Cares to develop a menu of options to form the core of our community activities. Capital Cares is a campaign coordinated by Business in the Community. They provide links between voluntary sector organisations and employers throughout London and Manchester. Employees can become involved in charity/community projects both individually or as part of a team.

The types of projects you will be able to participate include:

Children & Youth activities

Community

Counseling & Support

Education

Elderly

Environment

Health & Disability

Homelessness

Other areas where you can become involved are Schools initiatives and the Prince's Trust.

VSO – Voluntary Service Overseas

More and more employees want to take a career break to do something that is different from their normal work, but is constructive and challenging at the same time. In addition, many would like to make use of their skills in a focused way to make life better for others. The [the Firm]/VSO Business Partnership scheme enables our people to join a VSO project without detrimentally impacting their career progression. Indeed, it can help them acquire new skills that they will find useful on their return. We recognize that in many cases employees will develop considerable new skills during their placement and when they rejoin they can do so at a level that is now appropriate.

Making A Difference Campaign – Give as you earn

The Making A Difference Campaign is the UK employee charity fund. Employee donations are collected through monthly payroll deductions – *tax-free* – and are then pooled to fund substantial charitable projects, both within the UK and internationally, which employees propose.

Other Examples:

Asian Women's refuge: Around 50 volunteers used their community leave to help redecorate a refuge for Asian Women in London. The refuge provides much needed short-term accommodation, advice and support to Asian women and their children fleeing domestic violence. The three-storey house was completely redecorated over two days - no mean feat! The inhabitants of the refuge were delighted with the results - especially the children who were thrilled with the new dinosaur mural in their playroom.

Cambridge Childcare Project: [the Firm] helped create Web-based solutions for unemployed, single parents to access information on childcare, training and job opportunities

1.8 [the Firm] & Good Corporate Citizenship

Corporate Social Responsibility (the Digital Divide) “Information and communications technologies are an immensely positive force, accelerating economic prosperity across the globe. But they also have the effect of widening the gap between countries, since not all are currently in a position to benefit from the opportunities these technologies offer. They are also likely to lead to greater division within countries, as the gap between the information rich and poor grows.”

_____, international chairman, [the Firm]

Read about [the Firm]'s point of view and the work we are doing to address these issues on:

[http://www.\[the Firm\].com/xd/xd.asp?it=enWeb&xd=ideas\digital_divide\idea_bridge.xml](http://www.[the Firm].com/xd/xd.asp?it=enWeb&xd=ideas\digital_divide\idea_bridge.xml)

[the Firm] is contributing to several [other initiatives](#) to help bridge the digital divide.

Good Corporate Citizenship

"At [the Firm], we believe that good corporate citizenship is about pursuing our business in a way that ensures we develop positive and sustainable relationships with our multiple stakeholders. Through our work, we want to bring innovations and lasting change to both our clients' organizations and to the communities where we live. I was extremely proud to represent [the Firm] as one of 36 leaders who signed the CEO Statement on Corporate Citizenship at the 2002 meeting of the World Economic Forum. I have a personal interest in corporate citizenship, and I truly believe that our company's commitment to this area is vital to our future success." --- _____, Chairman & CEO.

[the Firm] is committed to being a good corporate citizen, playing our full part in society. We seek to understand and manage the impact of our actions on our people, clients, alliance partners and the broader community, and we are passionate about building mutually beneficial relationships with all of these groups.

_____ recently reaffirmed that these principles are fundamental to our core business operations by signing the CEO Statement on Corporate Citizenship at the 2002 Annual Meeting of the [World Economic Forum](#).

Living our Commitment

Being a good corporate citizen means that we embed a socially responsible perspective in everything we do: from our community involvement and company values, to the way we work with our clients. Here is what this means for you:

Connecting with the Wider Community

[the Firm] is an organization that delivers positive outcomes and views itself as a catalyst for change. We encourage our people to pursue pro bono and voluntary opportunities that build on our core competencies and help organizations such as non-profit agencies and enterprises in developing countries achieve their goals. Find out how we are [Connecting with the Wider Community](#).

Client Work

The work we do with clients has an impact beyond specific project goals. We believe that good corporate citizenship is good business, and that a good business is in turn a good corporate citizen. By considering the longer-term effect of our recommendations on their stakeholders, such as the wider community and employees, we can work with clients to design and deliver innovative, robust, and sustainable solutions. Read about our holistic approach to [Client Work](#).

2. Evidence: People like me

2.1 Building a network

UK Pre-Joiners support

(Still under construction)

We want you to feel comfortable even before you join. Which is why, when you are offered a position with us, you will receive details of our 'Pre-Joiners website'. This enables you to connect with your new colleagues prior to joining, if you wish to do so. There's a chance to chat to each other on line, as well as ask direct questions to the recruitment team. Perhaps you want to find a flat-mate or ask advice about moving to London. Whatever your concern, there will be someone available to ask.

The Pre-Joiners site also gives you access to company information not available throughout your recruitment process, offers ideas about where to go out in your new location (London, Manchester & Newcastle), let's you know what pre-reading or training would help you on arrival and much much more.

Your Start Group

These are the 30 plus people that join [the Firm] at the same time as you and with who you will share your initial training and integration process. Most employees stay in touch with their 'Start Group' throughout their career. Everyone is genuinely surprised at how well they get on with the people they shared their first [the Firm] experiences with.

Networking Groups

Our employee networks bring together groups of like-minded people. Participation is open to everyone. For example:

Working Parents Network: See evidence 1.6

2.2 Communities

Everyone belongs to a Community, usually according to your Operating Group or Skills area. You can feel connected to others throughout [the Firm] through your community, which provides a source of support, no matter where you are or with whom you are working.

see evidence 1.1

2.3 Extensive new joiner orientation

Our Global New Joiners Website is designed to help you transition smoothly and easily into the company. This is a central source of information with everything you need to know as a New Joiner. For example, who to call for help, which technologies we use, a chance to ask any questions on-line, a who's who guide and a Jargon Buster.

The Orientation & Integration process is designed to help you network and form alliances with your future colleagues. In fact almost everyone says that the initial training was just as much about networking and making friends as it was about training. (See Start Group).

2.4 Social societies

Below are just some of the huge range of societies and activity groups that you can become involved in when you join [the Firm]. Whatever your hobbies, you are sure to find a group that interests you.

[the Firm] Adventures

[the Firm] Adventures organizes outdoor and lifestyle orientated activities. The group publishes a regular monthly calendar, which details all the planned events. Each event is subsidised by [the Firm], so many activities are available at greatly reduced cost. Examples include weekends away walking, rock climbing and horse riding.

Sports Clubs

There are many sports clubs including:

Basketball

Football

Hockey

Netball

Dragon Boat Racing

Rugby

Ski Racing

Yachting

Christian Fellowship Group

[the Firm] Christian Union is open to Christians from all church backgrounds that are seeking fellowship with other Christians in the workplace. Speaker events are held three to four times a year when a prominent Christian is invited to speak to the group and follow this with dinner in London.

Policy and Politics Group

The Policy and Politics Group gives all [the Firm] personnel an excellent opportunity to meet leading politicians of all parties and also to network with other [the Firm] colleagues who are interested in politics.

3.. Evidence: Friendly & Informal

3.1 Informal office environment

All our offices are open plan – some Partners do have offices, but some sit with their teams. Everyone is on first name terms, and you will find that as you work on more projects you will get to know more and more people. The majority of our locations have cafes, where you can grab a quick snack, have a coffee with your team or even watch some television.

3.2 Community meals & events

Everyone belongs to a community – usually decided by which area of the business they are working in. Every community has social events – whether this is a team meal or a full-scale summer party. All this gives our people the opportunity to socialize and meet up with colleagues outside the work environment. Plus see evidence 1.1

3.3 Selection process

You will probably be surprised at our selection and assessment process. It is very rigorous. But, we want to find out about you, and what makes you tick. We are not interested in putting you on the spot, making you uncomfortable or playing games. We don't even have psychometric tests. We want to see how you react in a typical work environment, and what really matters to you.

3.4 What we wear

Business casual is the accepted dress style at [the Firm] – no suits are required. There will however be occasions when employees are expected to dress in more traditional business attire if the client business environment dictates.

3.5 Involvement in Community Activities

see evidence 1.7

3.6 Life Works

see evidence 1.6

3.7 Social Societies

see evidence 2.4

4. Evidence: Dynamic Company & Employer

4.1 A different type of business

At [the Firm] you will have the opportunity to work in an innovative environment in one of the world's most visionary companies. Innovation is at the heart of everything we do, from the delivery of pioneering business solutions to our innovative network of businesses approach, in which we leverage alliances and our affiliate companies to enhance our consulting and outsourcing expertise.

Innovation takes on many forms at [the Firm]: the ideas we bring, a unique or innovative approach we take to solving a problem, bringing a client's idea to life or another business challenge, a new technology or the application of a technology in a new and different way.

4.2 A history of re-invention

[the Firm] has a history of reinventing itself to stay ahead of business trends and revolutionary business ideas.

For example, in 2001, we

- became independent,
- adopted a new name and brand identity,
- made the transition to corporate form,
- listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

Join us and you will have the opportunity to design, develop and deliver revolutionary business and technology solutions. You will be at the forefront of development of business and technology ideas, models, methodologies and applications.

But, the world is not about to stand still, and neither are we. The pace of technological and sociological change is phenomenal, and we need to keep up. That is the only way that we will continue to provide our clients and employees with the solutions they need, and remain competitive. Some people thrive on change, others don't - so this may not be an environment that suits everyone. However, for people who work here, it's what keeps us all excited about the future.

4.3 Breadth of client work

See [the Firm].com, Credentials Mart, 2001 eEurope study for case studies and examples.

These case examples can be used to demonstrate the scope and variety of work at [the Firm] and the range of challenging and interesting work our people are involved in.

[the Firm] works with 86 of the *Fortune* Global 100 companies and more than half of the *Fortune* Global 500. There is a range of clients/type of client work on [\[the Firm\].com](http://the Firm.com)

4.4 Thought Leader

Development of Leading Edge Ideas - Overview

[the Firm] is committed to developing leading-edge ideas. We believe that research and innovation have been major factors in our success and will help us continue to grow in the future. We use our investment in research to help create, commercialize and disseminate innovative business strategies and technology. Our research and innovation program is designed to generate early insights into how knowledge can be harnessed to create innovative business solutions for our clients. We also promote the creation of knowledge capital and thought leadership through the [the Firm] Technology Labs, the [the Firm] Institute for Strategic Change and the [the Firm] Ideas Exchange.

The [the Firm] Technology Labs, which are part of our Technology Research & Innovation service line, investigate how the convergence of computing, communication and content technologies will change how we work and live in the next three to five years. Researchers in the [the Firm] Technology Labs in North America and Europe develop visions of the future by building prototypes that combine new technologies in innovative ways and report on innovative ideas and projects that are incorporated into pioneering technology solutions for our clients.

The [the Firm] Institute for Strategic Change, which is part of our Strategy & Business Architecture service line, produces a variety of research products and publications that combine innovative academic thinking with business strategy advice. Based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the Institute comprises experienced management researchers, business educators and executives whose collective efforts deliver value to our clients through enhanced service offerings.

The [the Firm] Ideas Exchanges are global hubs for our knowledge capital in specific industries, addressing matters of importance to chief executive officers and other top-level executives. Executives meet in one or two-day sessions working side-by-side with our specialists to focus on the key issues that will effect their organization's prospects of growth. For example, more than 350 chief executive officers and other senior-level executives have visited the Financial Ideas Exchange in New York City since 1995. We also operate several other ideas Exchanges, including the Communications Ideas Exchange, the Retail Ideas Exchange, the Consumer Ideas Exchange and the Chemicals Ideas Exchange.

For more information on Thought Leadership examples, see [\[the Firm\].com](http://the Firm.com) and the global recruitment marketing message architecture.

4.5 [the Firm] Alliances

Our alliances can be used to demonstrate how we have expanded the scope of our company to be much broader than "just" a consulting company. These can be used to show how we are extending the scope of innovative solutions we are able to bring to our clients through this broad network of businesses.

Today's business environment demands more speed, flexibility and resources than any single company can provide. That's why alliances have emerged as one of the most important strategies in the global economy. And that is why [the Firm] has developed one of the most influential business networks in the world, with over 150 alliances with established and early-stage companies in virtually every field.

At [the Firm], alliances are central to our corporate strategy, to our client service business and to the way we deliver value to our clients. Through our relationships with leading companies like Microsoft, Siebel, i2, and Exodus, we are continually adding to the fabric of technologies, business tools and capabilities that we can bring to our clients.

These alliances also enable us to move more quickly. With them we are delivering new and complex technologies, processes and other service offerings far faster than we - or any other company - could do alone. By bringing value-based solutions to our clients more rapidly, we are helping them achieve and sustain measurable results in the short time frames that the new economy demands.

[the Firm] has alliances with a number of outstanding companies, from established market leaders to emerging market innovators, whose products and services complement our own.

For an up-to-date list of alliances and overview of each [http://www.\[the Firm\].com/xd/xd.asp?it=enWeb&xd=aboutus\alliances\our_alliances.xml](http://www.[the Firm].com/xd/xd.asp?it=enWeb&xd=aboutus\alliances\our_alliances.xml)

4.6 Dynamic employer

As an [the Firm] employee you can benefit from a forward-thinking approach to our people. You can access innovative learning, knowledge and technology tools that enable you to identify new and intelligent ways to approach business issues. You can take advantage of programs aimed at improving the balance between your work and personal life to ensure that work travel does not infringe on your personal time and to give you the flexibility to manage your time and your career.

We are committed to making [the Firm] the best place to work, so we will continue to change until we've got the balance right.

See evidence:

1.2 - Training & Learning

1.6 - Life Works

The [the Firm] portal

Find all the information you need to know about [the Firm] by accessing the portal - an on-line resource center with links to everything you need to know about the company. Whether its information on company policies, social societies or training, this is the place to look first.

4.7 Balanced Workforce Initiatives

[the Firm]'s goal is to create an environment rich in diversity that recognises individuals as unique, values their skills and contributions and promotes respect and personal achievement. Through our UK Balanced Workforce Programme, we have put in place tools and education programmes to ensure that we are living up to our commitment to a meritocratic environment. We have recognized the need to change in some areas and we are making sure that it is happening (and not resting on our laurels). The Balanced Workforce Programme was set up in 1999 in response to initial concerns about the recruitment, retention and advancement of women. Research showed that our gender disparity was low at the intake level and worsened as the grade increased. In acknowledgement of these facts and the need for changes in the organisation that will bring benefits to everyone, rather than to specific groups, the programme scope was expanded to promoting Diversity in the workforce. The BWF programme responds to:

- Improving Gender Diversity
- Improving Work / Life Balance
- Improving Ethnic Diversity

The BWF programme has implemented various initiatives that help to meet these goals including a strong focus on flexible work arrangements. The initiatives are outlined below:

Diversity Training

See evidence 5.5

Gender Diversity Initiatives

The BWF Programme has been working on several initiatives to recruit and retain more women at [the Firm]. Some of the initiatives include:

Mentoring for Women Programme

see evidence 1.3.3

Returners' Programme

The Returners' Programme supports employees returning to work following Maternity Leave and general Leave of Absence. The aim of the programme is to:

- To ensure Career Counselors, People Matters Managers (or Line Manager for Solutions Operations) are actively involved in supporting employees as they return to work and take on their new role.
- To ensure the People Matters team and Career Counselor actively encourage an employee on leave to return to work at the appropriate time
- To provide the support required for an employee's return to work

Flexible Working Patterns

As part of [the Firm]'s commitment to Work / Life Balance, the BWF Team has conducted research into new and innovative ways to work. During consultation with

employees, Flexible working was rated as a number one priority for [the Firm] in making [the Firm] a “Great Place to Work”.

The BWF was tasked with trying out flexible working options to determine their impact on individuals as well as critical success factors for implementation. In addition, a separate team was set up to trial home working on a regular basis.

Flexible Working is available to all UK employees at the discretion of their manager / team leader. Some flexible work arrangements, such as requests for part-time work, constitute an alternative contract, which is subject to agreement by the organisation. Other Flexible Working arrangements such as flexible hours, do not change the total number of hours worked per week and therefore, do not constitute a change to terms and conditions of employment.

See evidence: Balanced Workforce Initiatives 4.7 and Life Works 1.6.

Women in Management Schools event

Irvinder Goodhew, a [the Firm] Consultant, is a member of the Indian Sub Continent Network. Irvinder was involved in a 2 day "Women in Management" event at a girl's school in London.

The aim was to increase the level of awareness about careers in Consulting within the Asian Community and to provide real-life experiences of [the Firm] employees to help young Asian females with their career choices and challenges. The event was a great success, and [the Firm] is now working with the school's Careers Department on future dates.

4.8 External Memberships

Opportunity Now Membership

In July 2001 [the Firm] linked up with Opportunity Now to assist with its Gender Diversity Management. The Opportunity Now organisation provides member companies with access to current research in gender diversity management as well as organising conference and seminar events. Most importantly, Opportunity Now leads an annual benchmarking exercise that assesses the progress of member organisations by industry sector. Our membership of Opportunity Now is a clear demonstration of our commitment to making improvements in managing gender diversity.

Parents at Work membership

To promote [the Firm] as a preferred employer, plus enhance our work life balance initiatives with best practice strategies. We were awarded second place in their 2001 Employer of the Year rankings.

Actions speak louder than words:

What more can we do (particularly on campus) to show that we are an organisation that lives these values?

1. Increasing our presence with women

In the first instance, we have to ensure that we are actually making contact with our target group. We need to raise our profile and make sure the messages we are giving out appeal to female undergraduates. Examples of the types of things we could do are:

- Targeting arts courses. Running “What is Management Consultancy” presentations & encouraging these people that MC & Technology careers at [the Firm] are going to be of interest.
- Using ‘Freshminds’ to target top females on technical courses at selected universities
- Using Hobsons to target relevant candidates and to market and run events
- Holding business breakfasts – seen as professional and different by focus group participants
- Organising office visits – ‘day in the life’ event for women
- Holding a summer event for women
- Develop extra marketing materials specifically designed to reinforce diversity messages
- Hold profile raising events – eg film premieres

It is important to remember that the mechanism of word-of-mouth (particularly effective amongst women) will mean that even if an event is only small scale (in terms of the number of attendees), it is likely to have a much wider indirect effect on our target group (i.e. think of it as ‘viral marketing’). Indeed, even a very small initiative, if carefully selected and correctly positioned, can have very wide positive repercussions if it can be perceived as symbolic in some way of our philosophy on diversity.

2. Face-to-face contact

Face-to-face contact is vital to demonstrate all the messages above. As we have mentioned above, the employees that people meet are one of the most important criteria in their assessment of a company and their decision to apply. It is the only true way of demonstrating the type of company we are, how approachable we are, and how diverse we are. We should look for as many opportunities as possible to get interpersonal interaction with our target groups – budget is probably more effectively spent in these ways than on impersonal initiatives such as sponsorships. And try to get as many of our people as possible out there – the more there are, the more chance a potential recruit has of finding someone they can feel a connection with

Whenever we are attending open days, on-campus presentations, exhibitions etc, it goes without saying that we must take people that represent all groups. As we have seen, recruits want to identify with other employees. They want to meet like-minded

people and know that they are joining a meritocracy. We must have senior women as part of presenting teams – not just junior females and senior males - this does nothing to challenge any preconceptions.

TIPS:

On campus or at careers fairs, faculty must:

- Represent all groups, eg a male/female split. Also, we should be representative of a range of social interests – what do people do in their spare time. Take care that not everyone mentions drinking, rugby, other male sports.
- Some should have attended that university
- Be friendly and approachable – have a sleeve's rolled up approach. Be on first name terms, have your first name on badges.
- Be properly briefed.

BEWARE:

Those who are the face of [the Firm] must live the messages. They must not:

- Demonstrate the social aspects of [the Firm] by focusing on a drinking culture. Rather they should properly represent the variety of social options available.
- Place too much emphasis on 'playing hard' (people do want time to themselves)
- Be too laddish
- Act too 'loud' and 'cliquey' as a group

REMEMBER: messages are conveyed not just by what we say, but also (at least as much) by our behaviour. 'Friendly and informal' is an obvious example: it is clearly no use telling students that [the Firm] is a friendly place to work if you don't manage to crack a smile all through the event! Similarly, taking the trouble to find an answer to a student's question if you don't know the answer yourself and/or giving your email address to people in case they have follow-up questions is a strong demonstration that 'we care'.

Present a variety of case studies to demonstrate the messages

Where personal case studies or testimonials are used, we must include representatives of females where this can be honestly achieved. (NB. We must avoid photography in any media that shows a group of entirely white males). We should compile a list of those who are thought leaders, senior players and rising stars that could act as champions of our open approach to recruitment. Case studies & testimonials can also be used to show:

- The variety of career routes and opportunities at [the Firm]
- The friendly & informal face of [the Firm]
- The variety of people who work here – 'people like me'
- Groups of friends/colleagues from a Start Group and stories of how they have grown together.

Show we are innovative

Not just through corporate examples. It's vital that we show an innovative approach – we should do something different, do something informal, do something where students meet real [the Firm] people and feel those people are being genuine. Eg holding a business breakfast rather than an evening presentation or show female friendly BFI film screenings, like *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, *High Society* etc

Diverse sponsorship

Rather than sponsoring the traditional clubs and societies at universities (rugby, tennis, hockey etc), we must ensure that we investigate and sponsor a whole cross-section of societies. These groups may not normally approach us for sponsorship, but often have a high proportion of women (and other 'minorities'), for example international societies. Look out for diversity initiatives on campus in which [the Firm] might wish to get involved.

Also, look out for sponsorships that could help in the campus community – for example sponsoring night buses, helplines etc.

Organise schools and university Alumni programmes

One of the most successful ways of influencing young people is through the provision of role models. Consultants should be encouraged to contact their former schools and universities with the offer of making a presentation to relevant students on the broad topic of technology and e-careers for women

Target arts/management/business courses

We can target arts/business courses with high female numbers, using posters, careers service contacts or lecturers directly. Potential recruits will always need a strong interest in IT, but these students may not realize that a career at [the Firm] could make use of their skills. Skills sessions are popular with the lecturers/careers services – for example presentation skills, interview skills and can be run in lecture time which ensures higher attendance.

Hold a women's event eg weekend

Organised by Northern UAT in FY01 and Midlands UAT in FY02. Although attending numbers are small, these events have proved very successful due to Word of Mouth communication once the students were back on campus. Agendas varied for the different weekends. FY01 attendees were female students rejected at second round for summer vacation course. Attendees in FY02 were students who applied on-line and showed some technical interest.

Hold drop-in sessions in informal environments

Females value 'friendly & informal' as an important employer characteristic. Drop-in sessions either on campus, or perhaps in a local bookstore or café, could prove to be highly effective. These sessions would be very cost effective, and would provide a casual setting where potential recruits can ask questions and get to meet [the Firm] employees in a non-pressurized situation.

Appendix One

Research overview

Analysis of our recruiting data reveals that conversion rates (i.e. from applicant to offer, offer to acceptance) are similar for male and female undergraduates. From this it may be surmised that it is the (relatively) low number of *applications* from female undergraduates that is primarily responsible for the low percentage of female undergraduates recruited in to the company. During the course of FY01 and FY02, a dedicated research study has been conducted specifically to identify how we can attract more female undergraduates to apply to [the Firm].

The first phase of the study used qualitative techniques to identify the organizational attributes that undergraduates use to differentiate between potential employers (in their job application decisions). In phase two, a short-list of twenty of these attributes was used to design a survey, which was completed (on-line) by a sample of 862 undergraduates from twenty-two universities. In both phases, the subjects for the research were final year undergraduates, at our target universities, who were actively looking to start their careers shortly after graduation (but not yet in possession of a job offer). The survey data was weighted to bring it in line with the demographic make-up (by sex and course type) for the UK undergraduate population. The fieldwork was conducted during the months of November and December in order to coincide with the period during which most of the undergraduates would be making their decisions as to which employers to submit job applications. To minimise the risk of impression management biasing responses, the [the Firm] name was not revealed and the subjects were promised confidentiality.

In the survey questionnaire, respondents were asked to rate the twenty organizational attributes according to their importance to them in selecting organisations for job applications. They were then asked for their perceptions (ratings) of [the Firm] (and two other major graduate employers – in order to protect [the Firm]'s anonymity) on those same attributes and, finally, the likelihood (rating) of their applying to [the Firm] (and the other organizations) for a job on these same attributes. A measure of organizational attractiveness was created from the product of the first two of these measures – i.e. attribute importance and organisation ratings – and this attractiveness measure was found to be positively correlated with the measure of application intentions.

Differences were found between the male and female respondents on a number of levels: their ratings of the organizational attributes both in terms of importance and their perceptions of [the Firm]; the benefits ascribed to the attributes; and the way they structured their perceptions of [the Firm]. Using statistical regression techniques, the specific attributes that 'predicted' a respondent's likelihood to apply to [the Firm] were identified and, again, these were different for the male and female respondents.

For the female respondents there were four attributes of attractiveness that accounted for whether or not the respondent was likely to apply to [the Firm], these were:

- 'Employs people with whom you feel you will have things in common'
- 'Has a friendly and informal culture'
- 'Really cares about its employees as individuals'
- 'Has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to its business'

Isolating these four variables provides a starting point for action planning; in order to progress this further, these four attractiveness variables (organisational attributes) were deconstructed into their constituent parts, i.e. the importance of the attribute to the respondents and their perception of [the Firm] relative to the attribute. Two new samples were created for the purpose of this analysis: one comprising all the female respondents likely to apply to [the Firm] and the second the female respondents unlikely to apply. The results of this analysis are summarised in the figure below.

Construct	Importance			Perception of [the Firm]		
	Females unlikely to apply	Females likely to apply	Sig.* (2-tailed)	Females unlikely to apply	Females likely to apply	Sig* (2-tailed)
Employ people with whom you feel you will have things in common	5.47	5.19	*	3.28	4.96	***
Have a friendly, informal culture	5.78	5.72		3.55	4.94	***
Really care about their employees as individuals	6.22	6.24		3.89	5.21	***
Have a dynamic, forward-looking approach to their business	5.61	6.18	***	5.65	6.33	***

*p = 0.05

** p = 0.01

***p = 0.001

The key issue of note in the above is that the balance of the difference between the two groups appears to be due to differing perceptions of the Firm – particularly on the first three variables. This is good news in the respect that changing perceptions about [the Firm] is arguably a more realistic goal than attempting to change the more fundamental views that undergraduates hold as to the importance of employer attributes – it is also a more practicable proposition.

In order to attract more applications from female undergraduates, therefore, we must improve our image amongst them in the four areas detailed above. This toolkit is designed to help you do just that: it contains messages, evidence points and

programme suggestions that you can build in to your recruiting plans, activities and interactions with undergraduates.

Appendix Two

Research: University Action Teams

There is a consensus in academic research on the importance of interpersonal interaction (with employees) in forming organisational images amongst stakeholder groups, and that this has potentially far more impact than any formal communications created by an organization. In the recruitment context, it has been shown that these interpersonal effects are even more important for women than for men – women are more likely (than men) to mention interactions with employees as reasons for changes in their attitudes towards a particular potential employer. Furthermore, ‘line’ employees have been found to play a more important role than full-time recruiting staff as a basis on which potential recruits infer characteristics about an organisation. These observations were confirmed in discussions with some of our recent new joiners.

Given all of the above, we felt it was very important to look carefully at the role of the UATs in our gender diversity recruitment marketing programmes. To this end, we recently conducted a series of group discussions with UAT members as an input to the development of this toolkit. The main findings and recommendations coming out of these groups are summarized below (note: these are generalizations and not all the points may be true for all UATs, nevertheless they provide an important checklist, e.g. for use in planning FY03 UAT activities):

- The UAT members felt that the message areas we have identified above are important and ones where we should do more to position the company favourably
- Given the important role that UATs play in the recruiting process (see above), we might consider whether we are currently affording them sufficient time and attention
- We need to ensure that we get a broad range of people involved in UATs. A systematic audit of current membership might be useful, e.g. is there a heavy emphasis on certain university courses or societies represented in the UAT (eg as a result of personal networking)
- Further, we should ensure that all members of the UAT have input to planning and decision-making. There is limited value in having a diverse group if just a small (and perhaps homogenous) core determine what programmes will be run
- We should question the mix of programmes in each UAT, especially where we may have been running the same ones year after year, eg do we always sponsor the same sports
- Similarly, where we run college dinners, we need to find ways of identifying invitees that avoid our ending up with just certain cliques attending (which might be off-putting to others)
- There may be an over-emphasis on drinking in our campus activities (it can be the easy option when you are pressed for time and energy to come up with more innovative ideas). Many of the UAT members we spoke to were keen to

start placing more emphasis on other aspects of the company's 'social life' (eg clubs and societies)

- The UAT members feel it is important that they are honest in their discussions with students and respond to the questions they are asked, rather than try to plug some pre-conceived messages. As such, we should not expect them to deliver the messages in this toolkit in a parrot-like fashion, rather we should ensure that they are aware (reminded) of the various schemes and benefits that the company offers that are relevant to these message areas- ie focus on providing them with the evidence (see evidence section below). The UAT members indicated that they felt, apart from their own anecdotal evidence, this sort of information was the most effective way to convey such messages to students and also that they (UAT members) welcomed being briefed on such 'facts'
- The UAT members felt that they would like to see more sharing cross-UAT and it would certainly be helpful to establish a mechanism whereby ideas and successes in the diversity area could be shared between teams
- UAT members felt that good progress has been made in recent years with our main campus presentation, but that it would be nice to see even more new thinking in this area. As essentially we still take a very similar approach to this event as every other company

The UAT members need to be aware that [the Firm] is not as well positioned against the four-predictor variables (see Appendix One) as they think. A survey amongst UAT members (sample size of 593, equivalent to 53% response rate) resulted in the following ratings:

Predictor Attributes (1-7)	What students (female) think (of [the Firm])	What UAT members think (of [the Firm])	What UAT members think students think
Employs people with whom I feel I have things in common	4.21 (4.02)	5.85	5.51
Has a friendly and informal culture	4.20 (4.09)	5.17	4.78
Really cares about its employees as individuals	4.41 (4.36)	4.66	4.89
Has a dynamic, forward-looking approach to its business	5.84 (5.92)	5.99	5.91

It should also be noted that the ratings that UAT members gave the company are not very high in the case of 'really cares about its employees as individuals' (especially) and 'has a friendly, informal culture'. These ratings set some limits on how far we can hope to improve the students' ratings, given the finding above that UAT members will not 'parrot' marketing messages in their interactions with potential recruits. It becomes particularly important, therefore, to remind the UAT members (if necessary) of the positive actions the company takes in these areas and in this way hope to maximize

their own perceptions of [the Firm]. One of the most effective ways to do this is through exposing them to the evidence points detailed in this toolkit.