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# MENTORING AS A NEW TOOL FOR TALENT ATTRACTION

Master Thesis by the 2<sup>nd</sup> year student  
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## **ЗАЯВЛЕНИЕ О САМОСТОЯТЕЛЬНОМ ХАРАКТЕРЕ ВЫПОЛНЕНИЯ ВЫПУСКНОЙ КВАЛИФИКАЦИОННОЙ РАБОТЫ**

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## АННОТАЦИЯ

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Название ВКР	Наставничество как новый инструмент привлечения талантов
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Описание цели, задач и основных результатов	Цель данного исследования выяснить как менторство студента сотрудником компании может быть использовано организациями в качестве инструмента привлечения талантов и какие факторы влияют на успешное внедрение данной практики. На основе результатов анализа собранных данных разработана модель менторской программы и рекомендации по ее использованию для привлечения талантливых студентов в организацию.
Ключевые слова	Менторство, привлечение талантливых студентов, развитие талантов, менторство талантов

## ABSTRACT

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Main field of study	International Management
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Academic Advisor's Name	Marina O. Latukha
Description of the goal, tasks and main results	<p>The goal of this research is to investigate talent mentoring as a talent attraction tool. More precisely, to figure out whether mentoring of a student by an employee can be used by organizations as an effective tool of talent attraction; to research what are the specifics and elements of this process and to identify the most important factors that affect successful implementation of the instrument. Based on the findings of content analysis talent mentoring framework, which serves as an applicable tool for talent attraction was developed and recommendations on its implementation were provided.</p>
Keywords	Talent Mentoring, Talent Attraction, Talent Management

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## **CHAPTER I. MENTORING FROM TALENT MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE**

### **1. Introduction**

Modern organizations experience the need to look for new innovative tools of talent attraction (TA) due to changes in global economic environment. What bring talent management (TM) and, consequently, TA to the forefront of today's organizational concerns are such factors as globalization and aging workforce (Broek et al., 2017), demographic changes and migration (Ewerlin, 2013), talent mobility and talent shortages, high expectations of Millennial generation (Mupepi, 2017). Organizations began to perceive TM as a competitive advantage, thus, started to recognize its significant importance. People became key strategic assets of modern organizations and are widely addressed as "talents". TM field is maturing and evolving rapidly. Therefore, "talent acquisition, retention and management" became a key expression in global business environment (Guthridge et al., 2008; Schuler et al., 2011; Collings et al., 2015).

Researchers claim that TM is a relatively new multidisciplinary field, which needs further extensive research (Tarique and Schuler, 2010). Ariss and Sidani (2016) underline that TM remains underdeveloped both in theory and practice. More specifically Thunnissen et al. (2013) and Ariss et al. (2014) propose the need for future research on the role of stakeholders such as universities in shaping TM and how firms can take their interests into account in improving TM. The field has to be investigated more in different contexts and environments and the focus should be broadened to a wider multi-stake-holder perspective (Collings et al., 2015).

Despite the rapid development of the discipline and greater interest among practitioners, new TM challenges emerge (Schuler et al., 2011, Meyers and Woerkom, 2014; Stone and Deadrick, 2015; Ariss and Sidani, 2016; Mupepi, 2017). The challenge how to attract the best talents to an organization is especially emphasized and widely discussed among academics and practitioners (Schuler et al., 2011). TA initiatives are easily benchmarked and copied that creates a strong corporate need for new innovative and effective instruments of TA to increase firm's competitiveness on the employer market (Chenkovich and Cates, 2016). This master thesis presents a new tool of TA, talent mentoring, which intends to solve the challenge of attracting high-qualified young graduates to an organization. Traditionally, mentoring is seen as a tool of development employees within a company, but not as TA practice. The author argues that precisely talent mentoring can be perceived as a new innovative instrument of TA that has been overlooked so far. Mentoring in a context of TA can bring significant benefits to organizations if implemented properly and supported by a company. Talent mentoring addresses current trends and demands of business environment, takes into account expectations of Millennial generation, promotes employer brand, differentiates company among competitors on the labor market and

provides mutually beneficial experience for a potential employee and an organization. The author studies mentoring relationships between university students and successfully employed alumni, therefore, addresses universities as stakeholders. This study introduces the relation between TA and mentoring and how mentoring can shape TM. As a result of this master thesis the talent mentoring framework as applicable tool for organizations is developed and recommendations on how it can be implemented by corporations are provided. By presenting talent mentoring framework, the literature on mentoring and TM is extended. Particularly, the specifics, elements and factors that affect successful implementation of the external mentoring program are outlined

**Subject:** External mentoring programs.

**Object:** Multinational companies in Russia.

The goal is to investigate talent mentoring as talent attraction tool.

The main objectives of this research can be defined as following:

- 1) To review academic literature and reveal peculiarities of modern TM and identify possible interconnection between talent shortage, talent attraction and mentoring.
- 2) To conduct a non-structured in-depth interview with a TM and HR manager of multinational company who is responsible for external mentoring program in local office in Russia.
- 3) To conduct semi-structured in-depth interviews with experts of mentoring practice to examine specifics of mentoring process, elements and factors that affect successful application of the instrument.
- 4) To conduct one additional interview with an expert and professional coach who specializes in internal corporate mentoring in order to get an informed view on the results of findings.
- 5) To provide recommendations for organizations based on extensive data analysis for successful application of external mentoring program as a TA tool in order to gain competitive advantage as employer.

## **Master Thesis Structure**

This research paper consists of 4 chapters. The first chapter is dedicated to the literature review of the main concepts related to TM and mentoring theory. The second chapter describes



the methodology that is used in this master thesis and explains why it is suitable for this particular study. The third chapter contains empirical part with generalizations, discussion and analysis of the interviews, conclusions and the development of an empirically grounded model. The fourth chapter provides final conclusions of the research paper, theoretical contribution, managerial implications, limitations and suggestions for future research.

### **1.1. Talent Management Background and Practices**

In this literature review the author will open up the concept of mentoring through the context of TM. The articles selected for this review were published between 2001 to 2017 in leading academic journals mainly in general management, human resource management, international human resource management, international management, and international business, vocational behavior, social science and work and organizational psychology. In addition, several books referring to TM were reviewed and two articles from The McKinsey Quarterly. All the articles were examined for TM or mentoring content and an article was selected if its focus was on any aspect of the terms. The main goal was to achieve a comprehensive multidisciplinary review of the literature on TM and mentoring. It was important for the author of this paper to get the most recent outlook of the situation on the TM practices and to identify the gap based on the suggestions of the academics for further research and get an idea how future master thesis can contribute to the development and prosperity of the discipline.

This literature review includes analysis of the main concepts, which will be the base for this master thesis. Main terms discussed below are the following: talent, talent management, talent attraction, talent shortage, and mentoring.

#### *From Human Resource Management to Talent Management*

The field of human resource management (HRM) today is constantly under the numerous pressures for change due to such external factors as globalization, shifts in the economy, domestic diversity, and development of technology (Mupepi, 2017). These factors create new threats and opportunities for organizations, pushing HRM to develop in some new directions. More precisely TM and technology are defined to be the primary drivers of change in the twenty-first century. (Stone and Deadrick, 2015). The knowledge economy considers talent as one of the main sources of competitive advantage and allocates it in the center of every business (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Serban and Andanut, 2014; Mupepi, 2017).

In addition, business has become more complex and interconnected, that is why the tasks and functions of HR managers increased significantly (Cascio and Boudreau, 2016). With the internationalization and globalization of businesses, a more internationally focused understanding of TM, known as global talent management (GTM) and HRM, known as international human resource management (IHRM) have emerged (Ariss and Sidani, 2016). Researchers argue that the importance of maximizing the talent of individual employee, as a unique source of competitive advantage, became a major topic to research that has emerged in IHRM. (Scullion and Collings, 2006).

Tarique and Schuler (2012) propose three essential differences between GTM and IHRM. First of all, IHRM includes more stakeholders. These stakeholders can be customers, investors, suppliers, employees, society and an organization itself. GTM, on the other hand, has prompt and significant effect on employees and an organization itself, even though it can also impact the same variety of stakeholders. Secondly, IHRM includes more concerns and criteria than GTM. IHRM goes beyond attracting, developing, and retaining employees and addresses the concerns of all types of employees regardless of talent. Thirdly, IHRM embraces wider number of policies and practices such as planning, staffing, compensating, training and developing, appraising, labor relations, safety and health. On contrary, GTM focuses only on a sub-set of topics in each activity. Summarizing the authors' view, GTM is a much more precise and focused issue. (Briscoe et al., 2009; Tarique and Schuler, 2010).

Academics identify three major IHRM activities of a GTM system: talent attraction, talent retention and talent development. Attraction of talents refers to reputation management, recruitment, and selection. Retention is about performance management and compensation activities. Development includes learning, training and career development initiatives. (Tarique and Schuler, 2010).

Cascio and Boudreau (2016) propose an idea that the HR planning movement of the 1980s and early 1990s provided the intellectual roots of TM. The demand from business side shifted emphasis to succession planning, the forecasting of staffing, planning and managing staffing needs, and short-term management development activities (Tarique and Schuler, 2012; Cascio and Boudreau, 2016).

Literature review reveals a great discussion about common comprehension on the term of TM. The concept of TM was “officially” born in 1997 when McKinsey made a research on the global “war for talent” to review the practices that US companies were adopting to hire the best performing employees. (Dries, 2013; Latukha, 2016; Tarique and Schuler, 2010; Tarique and Schuler, 2012).

Since that time, according to Ariss et al. (2014), researchers still did not come up with unified understanding of the this term. There are two most discussed controversial views whether TM is about managing the talent of all employees or whether it is about the bright talents of high-performing employees with high potential only (Meyers and Woerkom, 2014).

Collings and Mellahi (2009) presented a comprehensive definition that became the most common among HR practitioners. They describe TM as “activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of key positions that differentially contribute to the organization’s sustainable competitive advantage, the development of a talent pool of high-potential and high-performing incumbents to fill these roles, and the development of a differentiated human resource architecture to facilitate filling these positions with competent incumbents, and to ensure their continued commitment to the organization” (Collings and Mellahi, 2009, pp.309).

Hughes and Rog (2008) in their literature review concluded that TM is a “multi-faceted concept” that has been defended by HR managers, “fueled by the war for talent and built on the foundations of strategic HRM” (Hughes and Rog, 2008, pp.746). The researchers came up with four dimensions of TM. On the one hand, it may be perceived as an organizational mindset or culture where employees are truly appreciated. On the other hand, some companies see TM as a source of competitive advantage. Another dimension is when TM is viewed as efficiently integrated and enterprise-wide set of advanced, technology enabled, experience-based HRM policies and techniques. The last approach sees TM as an enhancement of the HR function to one of strategic partner. Hence, the researchers define TM both as a philosophy and a practice. (Hughes and Rog, 2008).

A further definition in international context is given by Schuler et al. (2011) who describe GTM as the systematic use of specific HR policies and techniques to manage the several global talent challenges that a firm confronts. Academics concluded that meaning of the GTM varies depending on the context it appears in (Farndale et al. 2010; Stahl et al., 2012).

Meyers and Woerkom (2014) underline that even though there are different interpretations and perceptions of TM, practitioners agreed that TM is one of the key challenges for companies worldwide as it represents a source of sustained competitive advantage and brings great value to an organization. (Sparrow and Makram, 2015).

TM intends to allocate “the right people to the right job at the right time” based on the corporate strategy, an analogous approach to the one of HRM. (Latukha, 2016; Tarique and Schuler, 2010). In the other words, TM is a collection of HRM practices with special focus on individuals, employees with high potential and talent pools.

Meyers et al. (2013) argue that given the close connection between TM and HRM talent philosophies are critical but so far overlooked factor that directly affects the effectiveness of TM

in practice. TM systems recognize the importance of HR development and use a rich set of HR practices that tend to enlarge employees' knowledge, skills and abilities. These tools include management skills training, challenging assignments, coaching, job rotations, the provision of early leadership experiences, and mentoring.

Another interesting view on TM refers to the idea of the right fit of talent with strategic objectives, organizational culture, organizational capacity, other HR practices and policies rather than just a collection of best practices (Dries, 2013). In order to retain high potential talent TM approaches have to be more closely linked with individual's goals and expectations, be more balanced between organizational needs (Collings et al., 2015).

The next section of this literature review will specify the definition of talent that is used in this master thesis.

### *Defining Talent*

In 2001, McKinsey consultants referred to “talent” as a major condition for achieving organizational excellence, recognizing it as a critical strategic matter for the twenty-first century in economics knowledge (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Tarique and Schuler, 2010). However, until today academics did not agree on universal definition of the term. It varies according to the interpretation of particular industry and even company or depending on the context.

Talents are individuals who possess the capability to significantly contribute to the organizational prosperity and future performance. In the paper of Makela et al. (2010) “talent” is viewed as high performance and future potential: “Talents are those employees who are high performing and continuously improving within their current position... are mobile and have the potential and the willingness for further growth in other key positions” (Makela et al., 2010, pp.135). Ariss et al. (2014) predict that the definition of “talent” shifted to the talent an organization requires at a particular time and place.

Gallardo-Gallardo et al. (2013) proposes holistic view on the understanding of “talent” within world of work depicted in Fig.1 below.

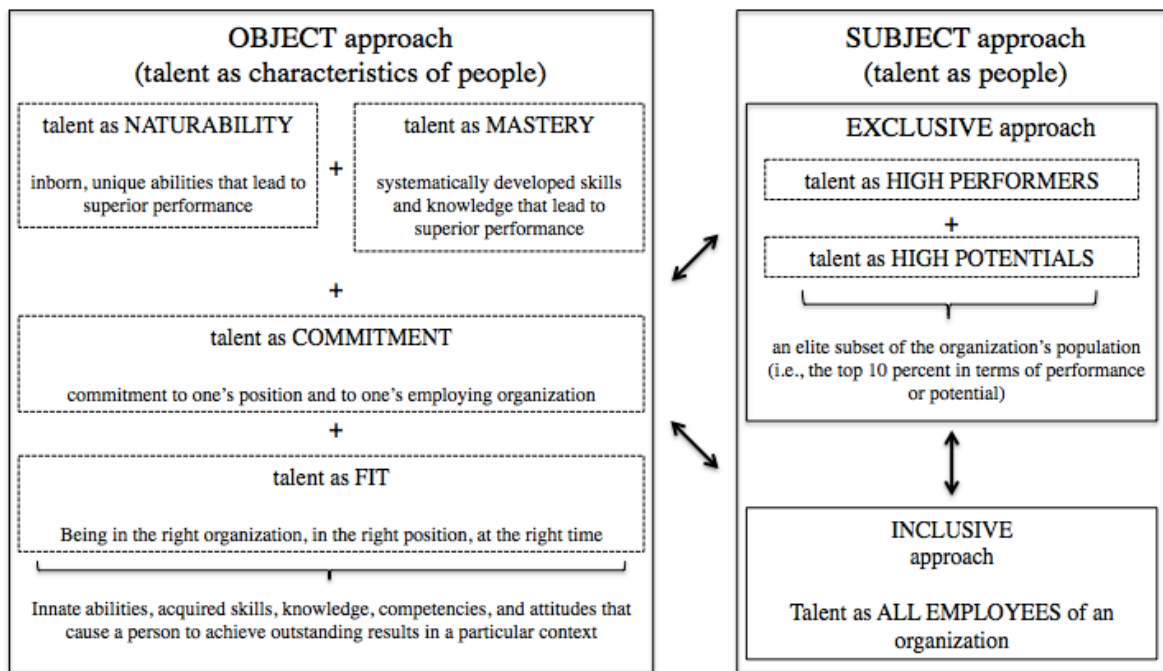


Fig 1. Framework for the conceptualization of talent within the world of work. Borrowed from Gallardo-Gallardo et al. (2013).

The authors group various theoretical views on talent into “object” versus “subject” approaches. The object approach refers to talent as characteristics of people, such as abilities, knowledge, and competencies. This view is connected to the AMO paradigm, which states that employee performance is a combination of the employee's ability (A), motivation (M) and opportunity (O) to perform (Dries, 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013). Within the object approach there are different sub-approaches: talent as natural ability, talent as mastery, talent as commitment, and talent as fit, which are to be seen as complementary, rather than supplementary. Dries (2013) emphasizes that organizations, which take an object approach to TM more likely see competence management and knowledge management as central practices.

On contrary, Gallardo-Gallardo et al. (2013) define the subject approach referring to talent as people and point out that it is more prevalent in organizational practice. Gallardo-Gallardo et al. (2013) distinguish inclusive and exclusive approaches to talent within the subject approach. The traditional view is based on exclusive philosophies, which means that it concentrates on a small group of employees who perform better than the others and, thus, are more valuable for an organization (Dries, 2013). A set of high potential individuals differentially contributes to the performance of an organization and for that reason they are worthy of investment in development (Krishnan and Kirubamoorthy, 2017). However, focusing and investing in particular talents (in terms of time, money, and energy) can be inefficient because modern changing world requires more dynamic strategy. (Lewis and Heckman, 2006, Schuler et al., 2011). Some practitioners and

academics argue that exclusive approach favors inequality between employees as focuses on the development of the brightest individuals (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Swailes, 2013).

On the other hand, there are inclusive philosophies, which are more popular and widely accepted by organizations today. They propose investing in various forms of talents and assume that everyone has potential to develop. (Buckingham, 2005; Meyers and Woerkom, 2014; Swailes and Downs, 2014).

Swailes and Downs (2014) define inclusive TM theory as the recognition that all employees have talent together with the ongoing evaluation and allocation of employees in best fit positions that provide an opportunity for employees to use those talents.

In the Fig. 2 below Meyers and Woerkom (2014) showed TM philosophies mentioned above in a very clear manner.

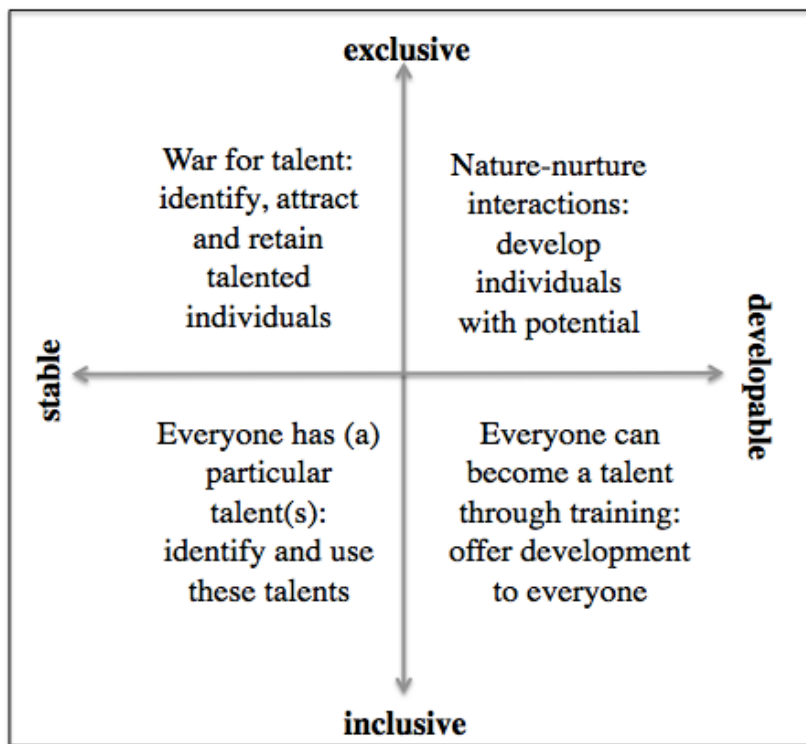


Fig 2. Talent management philosophies. Borrowed from Meyers and Woerkom (2014).

Even though Meyers and Woerkom (2014) provide quite strict division of the theories, they argue on possibility to implement an alternative integrated approach and apply hybrid talent-management systems. In this case one talent-management approach is used for one group of employees and the other talent-management approach for another group of employees (Stahl et al., 2012).

Dries (2013) underlines that apart from tension between object versus subject perspectives, inclusive versus exclusive there is tension between innate versus acquired approaches to talent in academic literature. Meyers and Woerkom (2014) refer to innate or

acquired views as stable or developable accordingly. Innate perspectives mean that organization focuses on the selection, assessment, and identification of talent. In an era of “war for talents” this becomes more challenging and aggressive as scarcities become even more tangible. In contrast, acquired perspectives on talent mean that companies focus on education, training, experience, and learning. This view becomes more widespread nowadays. (Dries, 2013).

The interpretation of talent holds important implications for the application of TM in practice. For example, it affects whether TM department focuses more on the identification and selection or the learning and development of talent (Meyers et al., 2013). Overall, the importance of talent increases constantly to businesses at a micro level and to countries at macro level (Serban and Andanut, 2014).

## **1.2. Talent Attraction as the Main Talent Management Practice**

Along with increased attention in the academic literature to TM and the term “war for talent” practitioners started to talk about talent shortage as a basic reason for competition among firms (Serban and Andanut, 2014).

Schuler et al. (2011) concluded that companies worldwide are struggling to find the employees with the required competencies to perform a broad variety of jobs at the offered wage rates. Workers at every level are more important than ever to corporations operating on the global and local market that hope to stay competitive (Guthridge, et al., 2008). Regardless whether companies operate in emerging economy or developed they deal with talent shortage to some extent (Stahl et al., 2012).

Academics suggest for further research topics referring to developing new innovative strategies to manage talent shortage (Chenkovich and Cates, 2016). Among already widely used ones there is, for instance, increasing the labor supply of existing workers (through overtime, encouraging part-timers to work extra hours, outsourcing work, and substituting technology/capital for labor) (Henkens, Remery, & Schippers, 2008).

Makela et al. (2010) in their case study based research raise question how corporations identify individual talents in the era of talent shortage. They see a major key driver for shortages in the intensified of global competition. As a result, organizations face the growing need for human capital to manage not only the requirements for global integration and local adaptation but also international learning and development.

In modern society job seekers have many job opportunities worldwide. Globalization opens new business opportunities and changes the distribution of world work places (Latukha, 2016). It created integrated market for talent and greater diversity in the global talent pool. The mobility of skilled workers becomes essential to boosting productivity (Kerr et al., 2016).

Nevertheless positive effects of global integration such as greater returns for matching talent with the right job or opportunity (Kerr et al., 2016), talent mobility posed challenges for organizations. Selection and recruiting became more time-consuming due to cross-market hiring and its peculiarities such as relocation and visa requirements. Organizations need to reassess how talent is recruited, developed, retained and managed (Mupepi, 2017). Leveraging technology and innovative practices to attract and engage talent have the highest importance in today and tomorrow's global landscape (Krishnan and Kirubamoorthy, 2017).

Another driver of increased scarcity of skilled labor is the brain drain, which is defined as the emigration of high-potential skilled workforce from developing to developed countries. Skilled workers from developing countries are attracted by higher wages, better working conditions, and higher standards of living in developed countries. This results in the loss of skilled workers who had accumulated valuable human capital for firms in developing countries and unequal distribution of talent supply worldwide (Bénassy and Brezis, 2013; Kerr et al., 2016; Okoye, 2016).

Moreover, aging workforce poses the need to find the suitable young replacement for baby boom generation entering retirement (Broek et al., 2017). In addition, there is a risk of a "massive loss of collective skills and experience" (Mupepi, 2017, pp.35).

Companies understand the inevitable need of different approach towards recruiting young talents of Millennial generation as Millennials represent the largest percentage of workforce nowadays and by 2030 will represent 75% of the working employees (Chenkovich and Cates, 2016; Durocher et al. 2016; Tsai, 2017). What distinguishes Millennials (born between 1982-mid to late 1990s) is their independent and individualistic attitudes with regards to when, how or where they work (Karakas et al. 2015; Durocher et al. 2016; Espinoza and Ukleja, 2016; Stroup and Zheng 2016; Costello and Westover, 2016). Millennials have different values and expectations in terms of salary, work-life balance, learning and development inside organization, and variety of work-experience (Durocher et al. 2016). They are interested in organizational values, mission and principles instead of stability (Stewart et al. 2017; Tsai, 2017). Millennial workers are flexible in terms of geographical location and can move depending on their preferences and organizational needs. In general, they are not very loyal to their employers and can easily switch jobs. (Espinoza and Ukleja, 2016). They need constant feedback for improvement and personal development and prefer being mentored instead of being supervised (Durocher et al. 2016).

As a consequence, in modern global business environment firms have to make themselves more attractive through the TA practices. Talent shortages, aging workforce, globalization, brain drain, high expectations of new Millennial generation push organizations to search for new innovative instruments to attract high potential employees (Broek et al., 2017; Mupepi, 2017).



Taken into consideration factors mentioned above it can be concluded that talent attraction and retention drift from the local to the global scene. Companies worldwide apply various practices to attract young talent. Latukha (2016) and Tsai (2017) provide the following examples: some companies actively cooperate with universities; others focus more on development and training programs to favor employee qualification. Some firms offer attractive compensation packages such as Schlumberger that include base salary, allowances and medical and dental treatment, life insurance as benefits (Ahmad and Daud, 2016). Others pay more attention to creating strong reputation to maximize attractiveness (Sokro, 2012; Amelia and Nasution, 2016; Reis and Braga, 2016). Some pay attention to corporate social responsibility. Corporations use a systematic approach to TM because they see the direct effect of applying efficient mechanisms and models on overall organizational performance (Latukha, 2016).

In recent study of Mabaso and Moloji (2016) main factors affecting TA were provided. Those are company reputation, working conditions, compensation and benefits, good employment practices. Good reputation is very hard to achieve and even harder to maintain (Sokro, 2012). It requires a lot of time and effort for an employer. However, qualitative reputation is meant to be one of the greatest recruitment instruments for attracting high-performing employees (Rajkumar et al., 2015). Pleasant working environment makes employees feel valuable and appreciated, and motivate them to perform better. Companies carefully develop their compensation and benefits packages to be attractive among competitors and constantly benchmark best techniques not to loose qualified employees. Organizations pay more and more attention to different employment practices such as training and development, improved workplace benefits to maintain positive environment. (Mabaso and Moloji, 2016; Ahmad and Daud, 2016).

TA is significant for company's productivity and therefore human capital spending requires the fulfillment, management and maintenance of talented employees (Mabaso and Moloji, 2016).

Among factors that Mabaso and Moloji (2016) suggested, company reputation gained the greatest attention of practitioners and academics. The implementation of branding principles to human resources management has been termed as "employer branding" (Sokro, 2012; Rajkumar et al., 2015; Amelia and Nasution, 2016).

In their research Amelia and Nasution (2016) assess the effectiveness of applying employer branding to win the "war for talent". The researchers point out main objectives of employer branding that are employee retention and talent attraction. An effective employer branding strategy can contribute to better quality of applicants, reduction of recruitment costs, and more efficient communication with external stakeholders, an increase of customer

satisfaction (Sokro, 2012; Reis and Braga, 2016). Employer branding means how employers position and differentiate themselves from competitors on the labor market (Rajkumar et al., 2015). Employer branding activities contribute to organizational attractiveness because they create, convey, and reinforce the positive aspects of the company as an employer (Reis and Braga, 2016).

Employers have to understand what their potential employees value in terms of work and corporate environment. The winners of the “war for talent” are the companies who successfully address the talent shortage by attracting high-potential individuals to work. (Tsai, 2017). Modern organizations are pushed to search for new recruitment strategies to attract Millennials taking into account that such means of attracting, as newspaper advertisement is no longer effective as it was for previous generation. For example, some organizations developed mobile recruiting systems (Chenkovich and Cates, 2016). Another example is Unilever’s new selection process of young graduates for leadership development program, which includes gaming experience. By implementation of this innovative practice the company addressed Millennials tech-savvy attitudes. (Roepe, 2017).

To sum up, globalization, easy access to information and rapidly changing environment foster companies to actively benchmark and copy instruments of TA to stay competitive and distinguish employer brand. That is why companies constantly look for new innovative tools of TA and study labor market expectations and specifics. The author argues that talent mentoring can be perceived as new original instrument of TA that has been overlooked so far by academics in this perspective. Millennials do not want to be managed through traditional hierarchal management. As they were raised with constant feedback and coaching, they expect to work in horizontal organizations and to be involved in trainings and mentoring (Durocher et al., 2016). Detailed feedback is essential for personal development of Millennial employees, consequently, strong demand for mentoring arises. By talent mentoring the author of this master thesis refers to external mentoring that is initiated by the company and involves interaction of young high-potential student and employee.

### **1.3. Mentoring Theory Phenomenon**

In the context of HRM mentoring is a proven technique for developing in-house talent. Especially, mentoring practices are widely used among health care organizations that provide health-related services, insurance and health maintenance (Egan and Song, 2008; Abbot-Anderson et al., 2016). Quite recently organizations from other industries began to recognize the potential benefits of internal corporate formal mentoring including mentees’ positive work

behaviors, work attitudes, greater commitment to organization and career advancement (Hu et al., 2016).

Academics agree that mentoring is a very sensitive and unique process and give various perspectives on the definition of the term. In the academic literature mentoring is perceived as employee development and career management practice and thus discussed in the context of organizational settings (Ghosh, 2014). Inzer and Crawford (2005) describe it as a relationship between mentor and mentee or protégé where the crucial factors of success are the involvement and enthusiasm of two particular people. Bozionelos (2004) defines mentoring as a HR practice and as an individual strategy for career success. He proves his position with analysis of substantial amount of empirical research that investigated the relationship of mentoring with career success of mentees. Johnson and Gandhi (2014) give the following definition: “mentoring is a critical tool for supporting successful careers” that can evolve between students and organizational mentors and can provide a “unique type of educational support” (Johnson and Gandhi, 2014, pp. 684). Ortiz-Walters and Fullick (2015) also find mentoring to be a powerful tool that fosters management education outside of the classroom.

Mentoring allows developing mutual care and trust. Lo et al. (2013) strongly believe that it is indisputable that mentoring plays an essential role in advising and assisting the protégé in different directions “such as career and personal growth, sharing detailed information of the organization and serve as a model for the young protégés”. Especially for primary mentoring relationships it is critical for mentor to feel comfort and trust with a mentee. Both involved parties should remain at the same level of comfort. (Ortiz-Walters and Fullick, 2015). Moreover, mentoring process intensifies and supports the relationship between personal learning and career outcomes, which was proved in the study of employees in Taiwanese companies (Gong et al., 2014).

However, mentoring is a demanding process, as it requires a sufficient amount of mentor’s effort and time. If mentors do not allocate enough time and enthusiasm, talent of protégé will not be developed to full extent. (Ortiz-Walters and Fullick, 2015). On the other hand, Scandura and Williams (2001) suggest that in different kinds of mentoring relationships mentors and mentees may differ in their level of commitment to the process.

Inzer and Crawford (2005) explain the meaning of mentoring by specifying mentoring components. There is a mentor, a mentee, their unique relationship and an atmosphere where they operate. The mentor is an advisor, listener and cheerleader. The mentor has greater knowledge and experience and should be willing to share it with a protégé. The mentee must know what he/she wants from this relationship and set the goals and objectives. He/she must be open for communication. The next component is the relationship between involved parties. Privacy and

confidentiality are important features of such relationship. The mentor and the mentee should understand that mentor's advice would not always work, as there are external factors, which may affect the process. The mentor and the protégé should perceive the relationship as partnership but not as a relationship between supervisor and subordinate. The last component refers to an organization that takes place only in formal mentoring. The organization creates and develops the program itself and encourages people to participate. It functions as an observer and coordinator but not as an active participant. It provides resources and collects feedback. Mentoring programs have high importance for companies. (Inzer and Crawford, 2005).

### *Informal and Formal Mentoring*

Academics distinguish formal and informal mentoring (Bozionelos, 2004, Inzer and Crawford, 2005, Gentry et al., 2008; Ortiz-Walters and Fullick, 2015; Jyoti and Sharma, 2017). On the one hand, informal mentoring is a natural process, which comes together from voluntarily desire to participate in such kind of relationship, and usually has a long-term orientation. Informal mentors are more likely to offer several types of career development functions to a protégé and engage in positive social interactions. (Inzer and Crawford, 2005; Egan and Song, 2008).

On the other hand, formal mentoring includes a third-party, an organization, which actually develops a mentoring program and creates conditions for the process to flourish. Such relationship takes place for defined short-term period of time and in general, protégés can not chose their mentor. (Inzer and Crawford, 2005; Egan and Song, 2008). Abbott-Anderson et al. (2016) find evaluation an important aspect of formal mentoring programs. It is usually initiated by a facilitator, which can be a company. A mentor and a mentee need a mechanism that allows them to provide constructive feedback and evaluation of the mentoring relationship. Such mechanisms need to be established prior to the beginning a formal mentoring program.

Informal mentoring generally has higher chance to succeed. Though formal mentoring if successful has greater contribution to all parties. Mentor gets bonuses and advancement opportunities, renews his commitment to the profession. Mentee grows professionally and personally in positive and non-threatening atmosphere. For the organization there are tangible and intangible benefits. Mentoring increase commitment to an organization, supports leadership development, impacts positively culture of the organization, encourages employees to learn. (Bozionelos, 2004; Inzer and Crawford, 2005).

Both formal and informal mentoring relationships should be encouraged between managers and talented, high potential employees. Inzer and Crawford (2005) stress an interesting idea that the goal of formal mentoring is to promote informal mentoring throughout the

organization. The main explanation for this is that informal mentoring is absolutely voluntary process, thus, enthusiasm and involvement is higher. People always prefer to do what they want but not what they are obliged to do.

### *Mentor's perspective*

While benefits that a mentee gets are quite obvious such as career development and personal growth, mentor's perspective is unclear and thus it recently got more attention and discussions in the academic literature (Ghosh and Reio, 2013). Mentors are defined as more senior individuals who provide various kinds of psychosocial and career support to a less senior or experienced person in the role of a mentee. (Smith-Jentsch et al., 2008; Ghosh and Reio, 2013).

Ghosh and Reio (2013) outline several functions of mentors that are acceptance and confirmation, counseling, friendship and role modeling. The first function means accepting a mentee as a professional and treating with respect even in times of failure. As counselors, mentors encourage mentees to have an open and honest dialog, listen to mentees and “act as sounding boards for the protégé to understand himself/herself” (Ghosh and Reio, 2013, pp.107). As role models, mentors show an example and demonstrate professionalism, present dignified values, skills, and behaviors (Mitchell et al., 2015; Jyoti and Sharma, 2017). As sponsors, mentors can appoint mentee for a project; publicly acknowledge mentee's achievements. As coaches, mentors assist with formulating strategy to achieve goals, share knowledge, give access to certain information. (Parise and Forret, 2008). Lapointe and Vandenberghe (2017) pursue more general approach and define three broad functions: vocational mentoring, role modeling, and social support.

Academics suggest different motives that can encourage an employee to become a mentor. For instance, Janssen et al. (2014) distinguish five major categories of motives: self-focused motives (based on individual reasons), protégé-focused, relationship-focused, organization-focused, and unfocused motives. Parise and Forret (2008) give the following example of individual reasons: mentors receive personal satisfaction from observing and participating in the success of their mentees. Protégé-focused is about a mentor having positive attitudes toward benefiting a mentee and concerns for the progress of the mentee. Relationship-focused motive is based mutual equity exchanges in the relationship as the mentor expects something in return by helping the mentee. Organization-focused puts corporate benefits first when the helping behavior is beneficial for the team, for the organization. Unfocused motives are

not aimed at a particular employee or a certain need that is fulfilled by involving in mentoring relationships, but these are unplanned or subconscious based on feelings. (Janssen et al., 2014).

According to Parise and Forret (2008), there is a direct correlation between mentor's feeling about participating and the perception of benefits to be received. The ones who participate on a voluntary basis are more likely to see mentoring as a tool for personal development, satisfaction, and challenge. Mentors are more likely to direct more attention and effort to the relationship with their mentees if they are participating voluntarily. Obligatory participation as a mentor can cause resistance to the formal program and impact the quality of mentoring negatively. Janssen et al. (2014) apply a social exchange paradigm to mentoring. According to social exchange principles, which emphasize mutuality in the employee-organization relationship (Lapointe and Vandenberghe, 2017), individuals engage in relationships that they think are rewarding for them. Following this logic, mentors would be more willing to mentor others if they expect mentoring to bring benefits for them than they would be if they expect negative emotions, drawbacks and obstacles.

When mentoring is perceived from the mentor's perspective there are three main outcomes for mentors – mentoring intentions, commitment to a mentee, and relationship satisfaction (Allen and Eby, 2008). As for the last outcome Gentry et al. (2008) and Ghosh and Reio (2013) add that those who mentor have higher motivation and job satisfaction, increase their self-esteem among peers, gain a sense of accomplishment and meaning in work and generally feel more satisfied. Mentoring can facilitate relational skills and competencies that lead to enhanced career outcomes (Lapointe and Vandenberghe, 2017). Moreover, mentoring others helps mentors build a range of communication and interpersonal skills such as an ability to give constructive feedback and to communicate effectively with others.

Ghosh and Reio (2013) discuss benefits associated with mentoring for mentors. Their findings have important implications for formal mentoring programs in companies in terms of mentoring practice because they verified higher career outcomes of employees who are involved in mentoring programs. TM managers can communicate benefits to employees to increase their motivation to participate in mentoring programs (Allen and Eby, 2008). Ghosh and Reio (2013) proved by their meta-analytic study that individuals who provided mentoring tended to be more satisfied and committed than those who had not been a mentor. Second, providing career mentoring was associated with better job performance and career success. Third, providing psychosocial mentoring was associated with better job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and career success (Mitchell et al., 2015). Fourth, providing role modeling was linked with better job satisfaction and job performance. Last, perceived quality of providing mentoring was positively linked to job satisfaction, but even more to career success. Overall, providing career

mentoring demonstrated the strongest association with career success; providing psychosocial mentoring was most associated with organizational commitment; and, providing role modeling was most associated with job performance (Ghosh and Reio, 2013).

Allen and Eby (2008) based on the findings of their research suggest an important issue that organizations should consider enhancing mentors' commitment in the design of mentoring programs, for instance, by giving mentors some input into the mentoring modeling. Lapointe and Vandenberghe (2017) argue that contextual factors reflecting the organization's support for employee development are crucial. For a company it is important to realize that modern employees expect organizations to involve them in decision-making, provide with challenging and meaningful tasks, support trainings and skill development. (Allen and Eby, 2008).

### *Value of Mentoring for an organization*

Worldwide managers began to realize value of implementing mentoring programs especially importance of relational resources in workplaces (Ghosh, 2014). Lo et al. (2013) conducted a research in Malaysia related to mentoring and job satisfaction and found out that career mentoring had a significant positive relationship with job satisfaction.

Egan and Song (2008) proved by their research that organizations benefit from internal corporate formal mentoring programs. The following bonuses were outlined: increased job satisfaction of participants, higher commitment to the organization, perceived better fit with their organization, higher job performance immediately after the program. These benefits impact organizational level performance in a positive way. (Eby et al., 2008; Kao et al., 2014; Mitchell et al., 2015; Lapointe and Vandenberghe, 2017). Eby et al. (2008) strongly emphasize such bonuses as enhancing helping behavior, situational satisfaction and attachment, and interpersonal relationships. Parise and Forret (2008), Lapointe and Vandenberghe (2017) emphasize that management support is definitely related to mentors' rewarding experience and recognition.

Lapointe and Vandenberghe (2017) argues that organizations should recognize that mentoring is a "win-win practice" that is similar to other development practices and depending on the context it is applied can bring essential benefits for organizations that help to compete in modern business environment. Organizational attitude, culture, practices and norms that promote mentoring behaviors and reward mentors for volunteering their time to mentoring activities can be powerful incentives for mentoring support (Ghosh, 2014).

Jyoti and Sharma (2017) proved that there is a positive correlation between mentoring and job performance (Fig. 3), but such important factor as self-efficacy of a mentee is crucial. Efficacious mentees are more capable and competent to learn more, thus, they benefit more from

such relationships. Consequently, an organization gets more value. To avoid the risk of involving in relationships with a mentee of low-efficacy, a company has to pay attention to selection of candidates for the role of mentee.

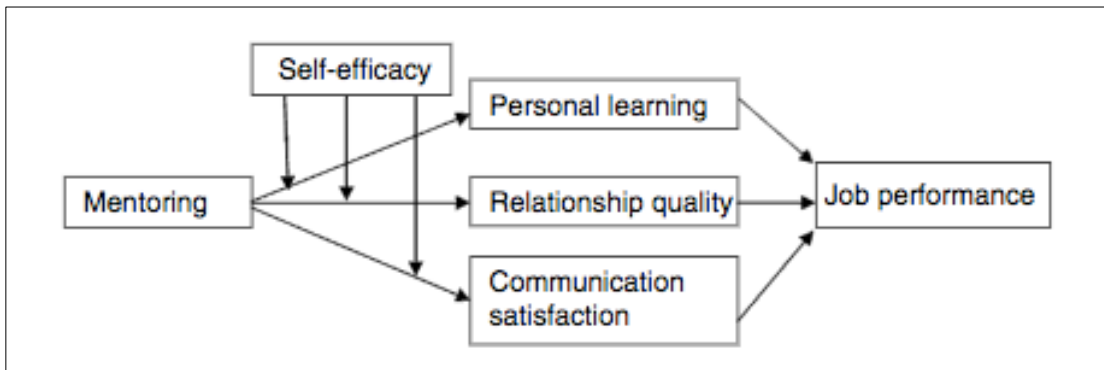


Fig. 3. Correlation between mentoring and job performance. Borrowed from Jyoti and Sharma (2017).

Literature review suggests that mentoring, indeed, is a very powerful tool and all parties involved get the most benefits out of this relationship. Moreover, mentoring practices contribute to the prosperity of organization in particular aspects discussed above. To sum up, the rapidly changing work context creates a strong demand for effective development tools (Lapointe and Vandenberghe, 2017), which increase commitment of employees and promote employer brand, and mentoring in this case is seen as promising.

#### 1.4. Mentoring as a Talent Attraction Tool

In this master thesis we argue that talent mentoring can be perceived as a new TA instrument. This section presents the summarized analytical conclusions derived from the academic literature justifying our idea and introduces the definition of talent mentoring.

Due to intensified globalization human capital has become a critical element for firm success (Schuler et al., 2011; Kerr et al., 2016; Mupepi, 2017). Growing demand for international talent pushes companies to recruit key employees beyond the boundaries of a particular country. Companies tend to be global and use geocentric approach, which allows recruiting the most suitable candidates in workforce regardless their nationality and origin (Ewerlin, 2013). Multinational firms can not keep their competitive advantages without the ability to recruit the right people in foreign countries (Ma and Allen, 2009; Durocher et al., 2016). Internationalization and companies' failure to recruit and develop local managers are the two major reasons for the shortage of international talent (Makela et al., 2010). Moreover, there is often a mismatch



between the competencies that an employer requires and actual capabilities that a potential employee possesses (Schuler et al., 2011). Recruitment functions play an essential role in attracting the right talent in the global competition for human capital (Ma and Allen, 2009).

Along with globalization and talent shortages academics widely discuss the other factors that explain why talent has become scarcer and pricier and, as a result the competition to recruit and retain talented individuals intensified (Tsai, 2017). Brain drain and talent mobility have led to more time-consuming and complex selection and recruiting (Kerr et al., 2016). Demographic changes and migration caused unequal distribution of talented workforce on the global market (Ewerlin, 2013; Farndale et al. 2015). Furthermore, aging workforce results in challenge of knowledge transfer and risk of experience loss. The right replacement is necessary and therefore, companies shift more towards the approach of hiring young graduates and developing them within organization. (Horwitz and Budhwar 2016; Broek et al., 2017; Mupepi, 2017). The largest percentage of workforce nowadays are Millennials who have expectations of pay and benefits, career development plans, work experiences and working environments that companies can not ignore any longer (Karakas et al. 2015; Durocher et al. 2016; Espinoza and Ukleja, 2016; Stroup and Zheng 2016; Costello and Westover, 2016). In addition, globalization initiated growth of important concern – work-life balance, which has high importance for Millennials (Espinoza and Ukleja, 2016). By properly addressing expectations of Millennial workforce companies have ability to attract the brightest talents (Reis and Braga, 2016).

Changes in global economic environment discussed above provoke challenges for HR and TM fields (Horwitz and Budhwar 2015). Academics identified the need to develop applicable models to solve specific challenge of attracting the best talents to an organization (Schuler et al., 2011, Meyers and Woerkom, 2014; Ariss and Sidani, 2016). Many studies provide great theoretical contribution, however, a few offer actual techniques that can be used by the organizations straight away (Lapointe and Vandenberghe, 2017).

The success of multinational companies more and more is dependent on a high-quality workforce and, therefore, they understand the importance of TM practices and the need to attract top talents (Farndale et al. 2015). Given the mentioned challenges of TM, more advanced and innovative techniques to better recognize the dynamic employee priorities and abilities are necessary. The way companies attract talents should be reconsidered (Mupepi, 2017).

Trying to cope with the challenges companies attempt to position themselves as attractive employers on the labor market. Due to the continuing shortage of experts and managerial labor, it is becoming increasingly important for companies to position themselves as attractive employers in the eyes of job seekers. (Ewerlin, 2013). Small and medium enterprises go through hard times addressing the human capital challenges due to high costs. That is why, for example, some

companies see the solution in creating shared talent pools for strategic purposes, such as knowledge sharing, research and development, co-creation. This opens up a whole new area of research on TM within labor pools and thus across and outside of organizational borders. (Broek et al., 2017). Big multinationals can afford to find more innovative and customized solutions. Tailored recruiting and attracting is required to deal with considerable labor shortages. Organizations develop employee engagement practices that became very relevant in attracting and retaining talents and create relevant motivational and career development plans. Introduction of compensation packages include base salary, allowances and medical and dental treatment, life insurance as benefits (Ahmad and Daud, 2016). However, the crucial part of TA practices is to communicate them correctly to the target group of talents. Their design will play an important role in talented individuals' choice of employer. As job seekers have limited knowledge of the employers, firms can influence the decisions of candidates by sending certain signals (Broek et al., 2017). The goal is to provide the most relevant and attractive information about company as an employer to decrease the mismatch between company and student expectations (Rajkumar et al., 2015). In the context of TM it is important for companies to send out targeted signals to create positive image among potential employees. (Ewerlin, 2013). That is why companies the concept of employer brand gained increased attention (Rajkumar et al., 2015). Organizations make an effort to promote it and increase its attractiveness. (Sokro, 2012; Amelia and Nasution, 2016; Reis and Braga, 2016).

Therefore, today companies understand the importance of close cooperation with universities to increase visibility of the employer brand among students at the very beginning (Ewerlin, 2013; Tsai, 2017). Organizations are willing to develop talents internally and look for high-potential graduates. Company's representatives, even senior staff members visit universities, give guest lectures, participate in the university career days, order consulting projects and arrange case competitions. Some organizations even offer series of master classes or read the whole course of lectures, which is integrated into the student's curriculum. Opportunity to get a summer internship is considered as the important variable in student offerings dimension. Connecting with students through alumni significantly increase the visibility and attractiveness of a company among students. (Rajkumar et al., 2015). Establishing trustful relationship between employer and potential employee in advance is especially crucial for Millennial generation of students (Stewart et al. 2017; Tsai, 2017). By these means TA starts at the pre-stage of recruitment. Employees have short personal contact with students when they try to present their company to a student and interest him/her. However, such initiatives are easily benchmarked and copied that creates a strong corporate need for new instruments of TA to increase firm's competitiveness on the labor market and to gain differentiation advantage (Reis and Braga, 2016).

Accordingly, the new TA tool should solve the challenge of attracting talents to an organization and address current trends and demands of business environment. An instrument should take into account expectations of Millennial generation; promote employer brand; involve close cooperation with universities; differentiate company among competitors on the labor market and provide mutually beneficial experience for a potential employee and an organization.

To cover all mentioned above, the author came up with claiming that talent mentoring can be perceived as a new TA instrument, which tends to have high theoretical contribution and at the same time great managerial relevance. Based on the literature review, mentoring was proved to be a very powerful and beneficial tool for the organizations depending on the way it is implemented (Eby et al., 2008; Kao et al., 2014; Mitchell et al., 2015; Lapointe and Vandenberghe, 2017). It was described by academics as a unique and sensitive process that relies on the effort, enthusiasm, and motivation of both, a mentor and a mentee (Ghosh, 2014). Therefore, a non-traditional approach of this study towards the phenomenon of mentoring will present extended understanding of the new tool of TA within TM field. Moreover, new applicable mentoring framework will aim to solve the challenge to attract the best talent to the organization.

The definition of talent mentoring as a TA instrument can be formulated as following: it is a process that is initiated and facilitated by an organization, which involves a mentor who is an employee and a mentee who is a student. Student is perceived by an organization as a potential employee in this case. Both participants are selected by an organization based on particular criteria to assure their motivation to participate. By identifying the right competencies in advance and select a student for mentoring program in accordance with them at the pre-stage of recruitment, firms will be able to recruit and manage talents effectively. Company supports and coordinates process of mentor and mentee development and motivates them for further interaction. This process allows obtaining context specific knowledge, developing skills and distinctive competencies of an employee and a student. Talent mentoring helps to close skills gap by assuring proper knowledge transfer. Therefore, organization attracts better-qualified applicants with required skills and knowledge as it is already manages them outside of the organizational context at a pre-stage of recruitment. Talent Mentoring instrument allows companies to reduce adaptation period of new employees, to promote employer brand, to guarantee better quality of applicants, to form talent pool well in advance, consequently, decreasing time period for a recruiter to close a vacancy, to initiate learning and development of current employees (Ghosh and Reio, 2013; Mitchell et al., 2015). Employees who volunteer to mentor get a unique opportunity to improve their leadership skills, to try themselves in a new role, thus their job frustration reduces and their commitment and engagement increase. Further in this thesis the author refers to the process of mentoring between an employee of an organization and a student

as external mentoring. Talent mentoring and close cooperation with universities can help a company to gain reliable access to more sources of talent and acquire a competitive recruitment advantage.

Previous discussion on TM approaches can be applied to mentoring theory. External mentoring can be fit in Meyers and Woerkom (2014) framework as tool of exclusive or inclusive approach. Mentoring within exclusive approach then refers to choosing a talented high-performing student for the role of mentee and further developing him/her and later retaining within organization. In contrary, mentoring within inclusive approach means that any individual can claim for the role of mentee because inclusive theory states that everyone is talented (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013). The main task of mentor will be then to identify the talent of mentee, develop it and find it an appropriate application. Further, we will discuss whether external talent mentoring can be applied within inclusive or exclusive philosophy.

To sum up, we argue that precisely talent mentoring should be viewed as a new TA tool. It is a strategic instrument to foster collaboration between universities and firms and assure quality recruitment of high-potential graduates. Moreover, as Ariss A. Al et al. (2014) claime nowadays focus should be switched to the relationships among individual, organizational, and institutional contexts that shape the management of talent and talent mentoring relates to such relational approach to comprehend TM. Mentoring allows communicating corporate values, mission and vision correctly while personal interaction of mentor and mentee. An employee who actually is integrated in the corporate culture can be the best ambassador to explain corporate principles and share his experiences. In addition, mentoring allows knowledge transfer from experienced employees to students who are perceived as potential employees. More importantly, the initiative addresses expectations of Millennials. They prefer to be mentored instead of being supervised, they need constant feedback for personal development, consequently, strong demand for mentoring arises (Durocher et al., 2016). Finally, mentoring helps to develop firms' specific skills and competencies in a student outside of organizational context so that company receives strong qualified employees with appropriate capabilities.

A review of the literature on TM, TA and mentoring revealed that little attention is being dedicated to the interconnections of these terms. Traditionally, mentoring is seen as a tool of employee development within organization, but not as TA practice. Literature review disclosed the corporate demand for new applicable TA instruments. The challenges of attracting the best talents to organization and forming strong attracting employer brand remain due to changes in global economic environment. The author claims that mentoring has been overlooked so far by academics and practitioners in the context of TA. Extensive literature review helped to formulate relevant research problem. This master thesis offers new perspective of mentoring concept for

beneficial use of organization in the context of TA.

Based on the identified research gaps the following research questions were formulated:

- 1) What are the specifics of talent mentoring as TA tool?
- 2) What are the main elements of talent mentoring as a process?
- 3) Which factors affect the successful implementation of mentoring program as TA practice?

The research gap can be filled by answering these research questions with a help of qualitative research method and content analysis.

## **CHAPTER II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter describes the methodology that is used in this master thesis. The research is based on a qualitative research method. The explanations and justifications concerning chosen method will be provided. Data collection instruments and overall process as well as respondent's profile will be outlined. The aim of this chapter is to provide information to the reader to exactly replicate the process of data collection and analysis to assure the transparency of the progress.

### **2.1. Data Collection**

The data collection process was explorative in nature and proceeded through a number of phases. This approach resulted in gradually improved understanding of the researched phenomenon. The author began from an investigation of available secondary data about the mentoring practices in multinational companies in Russia that included annual reports, and internal corporate documents and memos. The data was structured and analyzed with the objective of obtaining a detailed understanding of the internal corporate mentoring practices. Information with regards to main principles, types of mentoring relationships, challenges, and process elements was systematically studied aiming to provide us with the overall understanding of the phenomenon specifics and to make a preliminary analysis of potential sample of respondents. In the outcome, the results of this overview were used to select a firm for our pilot interview. Also, the collected information was used in the development of a first version of our interview guide.

In the second stage of data collection a pilot face-to-face interview with an expert who works as an HR and TM manager in multinational company in the local office in Russia was conducted. The developed questionnaire was tested and further redesigned in accordance with

expert's opinion. The expert saw the corporate need to develop external mentoring program for attracting students and promoting employer brand among them. The company uses such practice for two years so far and looking for recommendations on improving the mechanism. That is why they agreed for a meeting with the author. The company and manager's name are not revealed due to confidentiality agreement. The outcome of this interview was enhanced knowledge about nature of mentoring process and factors that contributed to implementing a successful program. In other words, the second stage of empirical research has helped to verify structure and content of questionnaire and to formulate more sharp and precise research questions.

In the third phase, the author focused on the selection of respondents by contacting coordinators of mentoring programs of Saint Petersburg State University or Moscow State University. We aimed to include mentors who work at multinational companies in Russia. The results of this stage allowed to find respondents matching the criteria and appropriate for investigation of mentoring experience and to finalize an interview guide to collect data.

The fourth phase of the research included semi-structured in-depth interviews with respondents and analysis of the transcripts with interview data. In-depth interviews were selected as the most efficient method of data collection as they are optimal for obtaining data on individuals' personal histories, perspectives, and experiences. Mentoring is a sensitive topic as it includes the relational aspect of two individuals. To get fully understanding of the issue in-depth interviews allow creating trustful atmosphere for respondent. Moreover, such instrument enabled to obtain valuable and data-rich information with relatively small sample of mentors as interviewees. Based on the availability of mentors, the author conducted face-to-face interviews. Other interviews modalities such as Skype, phone, or e-mail were used as well. To initiate the discussion, the first author asked the participants to tell about their current experience with mentee. Further, the conversation flowed naturally as respondents were motivated to take part in the interview and share their opinions in order to contribute to the development of mentoring programs. At the end of each interview, participants were asked to share any other comments about mentoring they assumed were relevant.

In total, 21 interviews were conducted during the data collection phase. During this stage our goal was to get the in-depth understanding of mentoring phenomenon. The interview guide for interviews included the following sections: (1) Background information. It is an introductory part, which is devoted to information about respondents' profile and company's profile. It included general information about the company, its size and status, the respondent's position and experience in the industry. This section was necessary to prove company and respondent's background to verify results and to confirm the validity of the data. (2) Mentoring experience. This section contributes to extended understanding of respondents profile as well as gathering

mentoring experience he/she has. (3) Internal corporate mentoring. This group of questions is focused on understanding company's policy on internal mentoring practices, specifics and challenges that company faced. It is supposed to reveal whether company can use some of the internal practices externally. The third question evaluates to what extent different benefits of mentoring can be important for an organization by means of 7-point Likert scale (1 – not important to 7 – very important). (4) Talent management processes and practices in the company of respondent. The main goal of this section is to investigate the level of organizational development in the context of its readiness to implement new talent practices. Questions aim to identify whether current processes of talent attraction are efficient and whether there is a potential opportunity to apply external mentoring programs. Moreover, the author tends to investigate experts' opinion on talent shortage and labor demand. It is crucial to understand how companies compete in "war for talents". The reasons for having these questions were argued by the necessity to get a full picture of current situation on labor market and company's awareness that new innovative instruments should be applied to stay competitive. (5) Peculiarities of mentoring process between student and successfully employed alumni. As respondents have experience of participating in external mentoring program (between student and employee), these questions tend to reveal all possible peculiarities that should be considered while designing mentoring program and to get in-depth understanding of the issue. Emotional context of the process is researched whether mentoring involves positive, neutral or negative emotions. This section of questions was included to detect specifics of talent mentoring. (6) External mentoring as a talent attraction tool. This group of questions is supposed to identify factors that should be considered while choosing an employee to be mentor or student to be a mentee and while designing mentoring program in order to successfully implement it. The type of mentoring relationships and organization of the whole process are discussed. Factors that can be crucial while selecting an employee for the role of mentor and student for the role of mentee are evaluated by means of 7-point Likert scale (1 – not important to 7 – very important). Factors that affect the successful application of external mentoring program as TA tool are divided into 4 groups such as organizational, individual from mentee and mentor perspectives and relational based on the framework of Ghosh (2014) and respondents have to evaluate them by means of 7-point Likert scale (1 – not important to 7 – very important). As it is the last part of questionnaire, respondents can leave appropriate in their opinion comments and recommendations to improve the idea and share any additional thoughts on the issue. Primarily open-ended questions were used and were complemented with multiple choice and ranking type questions. The open-ended questions provided us with valuable information about respondents' opinions without being constrained by a fixed set of possible responses. Rosenthal (2016) underlines that open-ended questions are

important for such type of interviews as they are designed to get “an in-depth understanding of participants’ experiences, perceptions, opinions, feelings, and knowledge”. Rosenthal (2016) highlights the importance of careful question design as it directly affects the quality of the received data. The final structure of the questionnaire is based on the analysis of secondary data such as reports of corporations on mentoring, information about mentoring programs available on the corporate website.

The final step in data collection included conducting one additional interview with an expert and professional coach who specializes in internal corporate mentoring, which took place after the first round of the data analysis in order to get an informed view on the results of findings and clarification of inconsistencies that were revealed during this analysis. We discussed our findings referring to interview guide sections hence, it made an additional verification of the questions and results and ensured their additional trustworthiness.

Each interview lasted between 50 minutes and 2 hours in length. All interviews were audio recorded with participants’ permission for the purposes of later transcription and further analysis. All data including interview transcripts, notes, and documents, as they were collected, were systematized and analyzed.

This five-phase research process allowed gathering and evaluating various kinds of empirical evidence from several sources that enabled data triangulation to guarantee the reliability of the final conclusions (Elo et al., 2014). The triangulation was reached due to following: multiple informants at the different phases of data collection, the same questions in interview processes, and crosschecking information throughout the research process.

## **2.2. Respondent selection**

The purposive sampling method is used in the current study as the sample is selected according to the relevance to the research (Elo et al., 2014). The main criteria for selection the respondents is the participation in the external mentoring program of Saint Petersburg State University or Moscow State University and currently mentor students, given the fact that the goal of this study is to examine talent mentoring as TA practice. In addition, such issues as working at multinational company in Russia, sufficient respondent’s experience in mentoring activities, number of mentees, and existence of internal corporate program in the company of respondent were considered. Some practical considerations such as the availability of the expert and time constraints for conducting the interview were also followed in the selection process. After a careful investigation of the respondent’s background and the other mentioned factors the author have initially selected 42 possible respondents to contact.



21 mentors agreed to participate in the interview, ensuring 50% response rate. 52% of respondents are females and 48% are males. Participants possess similar occupational group characteristics that might influence the nature of mentoring relationships. All participants were at least 27 years old (mean = 34 years), with an education level of at least a four-year bachelor degree. The average years of work experience in the industry was 7. They are employed in multinational corporations in Russia and have easy access to top management in terms of communicating new ideas. The organizations represent a wide range of industries, including FMCG, retail, IT, consulting, and manufacturing. This fact increases the relevance of the current study. In terms of size, firms employ at least 400 employees in Russia (mean = 14000 employees). For research purposes, the respondents are numbered from 1 to 21 to assure anonymity due to considerations of confidentiality.

To talk about the number of participants involved in this research, it is worth mentioning that deciding on the appropriate sample size for in-depth interviews is an important step in the research process. Commonly researchers are concerned with obtaining a generalizable sample. Nevertheless, “generalizability is not the primary objective for in-depth interviews, but rather the objective is to develop an understanding of the meaning behind behaviors” (Rosenthal, 2016, pp.511). Sampling for in-depth interviews is about finding the right balance between the need to obtain a rich experiential description from respondents, without sacrificing the equal representation of experiences across the population of possible participants. Such balance is usually achieved via the application of the “saturation” principle. It means that data collection is terminated when no new information is being received. The data saturation was reached after conducting the interview with respondent #18.

### **2.3. Data Analysis**

Data analysis in qualitative research compared to quantitative research can be a very time consuming and cumbersome process (Petty et al., 2012). That is why data analysis from the interviews was conducted in several phases. We started with application of the content analysis with an objective to categorize and structure data under the headings of the themes that are in the focus of this research and correlate with research questions. These are specifics of talent mentoring, initial elements of talent mentoring process and factors that affect the successful implementation of mentoring program as TA practice. Each category of data was coded to enable comparisons between responses (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Petty et al., 2012; Won and Choi, 2017). In terms of specifics of talent mentoring the following themes emerged: (1) talent; (2) content (3) process; (4) voluntary basis; (5) recognition; (6) formality of the process; (7) challenges; (8) emotions. Two major themes related to main elements of talent mentoring process

were revealed: (1) selection of mentee, which includes two sub-themes: determined set of goals for the program and motivation to work in a company of mentor; and (2) selection of mentor, which includes two sub-themes: willingness to participate voluntarily and job satisfaction. Referring to factors four themes were distinguished: (1) organizational factors, including three sub-themes: transparency of the process, support and formalized coordination and selection on voluntary basis; (2) individual factors from mentee's perspective, including two sub-themes: motivation and enthusiasm; (3) individual factors from mentor's perspective, including the sub-theme participation on voluntary basis; (4) relational factors, including two sub-themes: mutual trust and compatible values.

The verification strategy used in this study is in accordance with Morse et al. (2002) and Elo et al. (2014) who claimed that validity and reliability of results could be ensured by appropriate sample and methodological coherence. Sampling sufficiency can be evidenced by saturation and replication. By definition, replication in categories is ensured by saturating data; replication verifies, and guarantees comprehension and completeness of the research (Morse et al., 2002). We analyzed respondents' responses through content analysis and distinguished the most pronounced themes referring to talent mentoring. In other words, we used analytical replication technique to determine what constitutes talent mentoring through confirmation throughout the set of case evidence. This technique allowed for the drawing generalized conclusions (Tsang, 2014). The analysis is based on existing suggestions that when a finding is detected in more than one case, its generalizability is strengthened (Petty et al., 2012). After the completion of this stage the data from final expert interview and secondary sources was integrated to verify the accuracy of the analysis and the validity of the conclusions. Specifics, elements and factors of talent mentoring resulting in benefits for organization have gradually emerged from the data in the process of the analysis of interviews and iteration with the literature. The main value of such approach is that it leads to provide with the understanding of why talent mentoring can be used as TA tool and how specific factors can contribute to successful implementation of mentoring program.

To sum up, chapter I and chapter II prepare a reader for analysis of empirical part and discussion of findings. By this time, extended explanation of the research problem, objectives, questions and methodology was provided. The precise description of the methodology gives the reader clear understanding how the process flows.

## **CHAPTER III. EMPIRICAL PART**

In this chapter empirical part of the master thesis is presented. First of all, data is analyzed and major themes are discussed. Secondly, findings are concluded addressing research questions and objectives. Empirical part consists of two main sub-chapters that are results of data analysis and discussion followed by the research findings and recommendations.

### **3.1. Results of Data Analysis and Discussions**

All respondents involved in the research participated in the external mentoring program and mentored students for at least one academic year. We assumed that all mentors should be considered as experts in the mentoring practice as they have sufficient experience in the field. Mentoring initiative was their personal willingness to help students, try themselves in a role of mentor and support university program. The interviewees were asked to share their opinion whether such mentoring program can be used as a TA tool and initiated by an organization and to provide their professional expert ideas how to make this process effective and beneficial for an organization, which specifics, peculiarities and factors to take into consideration. Discussion of the results of data analysis is structured based on the three main research questions. As a result of analysis of the interview transcriptions, several main themes and sub-themes emerged. The themes describe the participants' attitudes towards mentoring theory in general and precisely external mentoring. A selected sample of the respondents' answers is presented with verbatim quotations to assure the trustworthiness of results (Elo et al., 2014). Some of the themes intersect or even coincide with sub-themes, which proves that even while discussing different aspects of the one topic the same important issues arise. This justifies that triangulation was achieved in current study.

#### **3.1.1. Specifics of Mentoring as a Talent Attraction tool**

The first part of the empirical research is dedicated to the question what are the specifics of mentoring as a TA tool. In this study we investigate long-term mentoring programs. Mentoring as any other process possesses peculiarities starting from the basic understanding of why the practice is necessary to challenges it causes.

##### *Talent Attraction*

Modern multinational organizations focus on attracting high potential young graduates and developing them within a company. Respondents #7,11,15,18,20 clarified that there are

exceptions from such approach in case a company hires for senior positions or for a position, which requires very specific knowledge of an industry. In general, companies understand the importance of collaboration with universities to attract young talents and promote employer brand among students. The most popular and widely implemented tools for attracting high potential graduates are various development programs such as leadership development programs or rotation management trainee programs. These programs are meant to develop and keep talent in the organization. Other popular instruments are case competitions and business games that engage students by providing experience of solving a challenge. During such activities managers spot talented students and invite them for an interview. As respondent #4 underlined:

*“Today many companies and ours in particular pay more attention to quality recruitment, not quantity recruitment. The quality of skills and knowledge a young graduate possesses is essential in the era of talent scarcity. Case competitions and business games help us to quickly detect students with required skills and attract them. Even though organizing such events is costly, it is beneficial for company because it saves a lot of time and effort of recruiters and brings the most talented candidates to the interview. Our company recognizes the need to invest in such practices.”*

According to most of the respondents, companies face a problem of talent shortage. Mentors explain that they see it as a gap in the expectations between graduates and companies. Graduates who belong to Millennial generation expect that employer will provide them with an extensive training on developing particular skills, offer high salary, interesting and different tasks. On contrary, an employer expects young graduate to already possess required skills, offers average salary and quite monotonous work. Organizations realize that as employers they need to adjust their packages and offerings to the labor market expectations to remain attractive for talented candidates. These findings are in line with existing literature which emphasizes the necessity to attract and manage Millennials differently (e.g. Chenkovich and Cates, 2016; Durocher et al. 2016; Tsai, 2017). The secondary data analysis revealed that companies seek to differentiate their employer brand by implementing new TM initiatives and constantly compete to be recognized as the best company to work for.

Respondent# 8 said:

*“Current labor market demands organizations to be more flexible in terms of compensation and benefits that they offer, working conditions, remote work communication and to look for new ways of attracting talents”.*

The mismatch of expectations mentioned above is huge and mentoring can attempt to address it. During long-term personal interaction with a mentee, a mentor shares his real day-to-day work experience so that a mentee can get full understanding of actual business world, communicates values and principles of organization, promotes organizational culture. At the

same time by offering such an interesting talent mentoring program an organization shows to potential employees that it cares about learning and development of workers.

TA instruments that became common already such as case competitions and guest lectures from company are easily copied. Rapidly changing business environment requires organizations to look for new instruments. Positioning mentoring as a new innovative TA tool will help a company to get a competitive advantage on the labor market. Respondent #21 expressed potential outcomes of mentoring:

*“I suppose that talent mentoring can be a fantastic TA tool. It can increase loyalty of a young graduate because the graduate sees that company recognizes the potential of a student and ready to invest in his/her development. Moreover, talent mentoring reduces workload for recruiters. They do not need to go through dozens of CVs but just the best ones involved in the program.”*

Corporations nowadays realize the importance of human capital and that is why are willing to invest in TM practices. Respondent #5 stressed:

*“Companies are ready to assign an employee to mentor students if they see clear fit and high potential in a candidate.”*

All interviewees agreed that mentoring could be applied as a TA tool. Moreover, as mentoring involves development of an employee in a role of mentor, it can be perceived both as talent attraction and talent development practice, consequently bringing benefits in various aspects to an organization. This idea expands existing research on mentoring (e.g. Abbot-Anderson et al., 2016 and Hu et al., 2016) when this instrument is perceived only from talent development perspective. Moreover, mentoring creates a talent pool and a recruiter can start looking for the right candidate among the students involved in a program.

### Content

One of the most pronounced themes revealed in this research is that mentoring is a rewarding experience for all parties involved. Throughout the program mentor and mentee interact on professional basis pursuing particular goals that are set in the beginning. Participants satisfy their needs of esteem and self-actualization. Respondent #19 gives the following definition of mentoring:

*“Mentoring refers to the academic and practical project work that mentee does with a help of mentor and both of them benefit from such activity”*

Respondents #2,4,6,13,16 emphasized that mentoring is a unique tool of understanding yourself both for a mentor and a mentee. Respondent #4 stressed:

*“When you answer mentee’s questions, from the fist view, you repeat basics, but if you reflect later on, you start analyzing your professional and personal activities and get fresh*

*outlook on the issues based on the mentee's comments and remarks. You open up things, which you have not thought before. You open up new horizons for yourself. "*

Respondent #11 gave the following definition:

*"Mentoring is not counseling. And the most challenging task for a mentor is to understand the difference. The mentor can provide influential ideas, but the last call makes a mentee by himself."*

A mentee gets an easy access to wide range of information about an industry and a company, about business trends and environment. Students already have theoretical knowledge, however, usually it differs from real business world. A mentor shares honest opinion and his feelings of the business world with students. He does not use any marketing tricks but presents unbiased view how things work.

The findings illustrate that mentoring is original in its nature as the content of the practice highly depends on the participants' interpretation.

### Process

Mentoring requires mutual trust and commitment. It is long-term relationships, which evolve and mature with time. As interviewee #7 described:

*"It is not about one meeting over coffee to have fun and a nice chat. It goes beyond than that. It is an individual long-term project in pair with particular phases. The process can flow and can have some difficulties while moving from one stage to another."*

Respondent #9 compared evolvement of mentoring relationships with well-known Bruce Tuckman's framework "Team formation" that includes "forming, storming, norming, and performing". Pair of mentor and mentee is compared to a small team. During forming stage participants learn about the opportunities and challenges, and then agree on goals. As respondent #1, 10, 12, 17 stated, firstly, mentor needs to understand what mentee wants and have to explain whether he/she can help. The interaction starts from introducing each other as personalities and then professional side follows. Storming usually includes disagreements and personality clashes, different opinions on the same issue. The most important for a mentor on this stage as respondents #5,6,11 suggest is to keep his/her view but not to impose his/her opinion to a mentee. Both are allowed to keep or change own position on voluntary basis. However, to move from this stage to the following one, a mentor and a mentee have to reach consensus how they tackle the issue. Some pairs have good personality match and that is why they skip the storming stage and move directly to norming. Norming means accepting each other and understanding that team pursues the same goal. Personality clashes result in greater intimacy on this stage and team moves

to the performing stage. The last stage includes delivering actual results depending on the goals of interaction.

Mentoring process is affected by many external and internal factors that are discussed further in this master thesis.

### Voluntary basis

The most crucial issue of mentoring process is its voluntary nature. It should not be forced due to high risk of losing its core value. The findings correspond to the research of Parise and Forret (2008) who find voluntary participation in mentoring program critical. Both members should have the need in this process and willingness to participate. From mentors perspective respondents #6,11,17,20 underlined that after working for several years in the industry an employee understand that he/she has a sufficient experience and knowledge of an industry to share with younger generation. This means that mentors have internal impulse to help and assist student's personal growth. Moreover, mentoring satisfies such needs of a mentor as esteem and self-actualization. They have need in being respected and valued by juniors. In academic literature (e.g. Janssen et al., 2014) such motives were identified as self-focused motives. Mentors based on their experience provided mentee's perspective as well. Mentees should be motivated by their desire to learn, to improve certain skills, to get professional opinion on some issues. They should see a unique opportunity in this relationship, which benefits them. Understanding all mentioned bonuses they should make an independent decision to participate. Only in this case they will get the most out of it. Respondent #1 adds to this:

*“Forcing participants to involve in mentoring process can ruin the whole program and negatively affect their attitudes to such initiatives. It should be built on engagement and personal will to bring positive emotions and benefits.”*

### Recognition

The other widely discussed theme is recognition of employee's mentoring activity. As it was mentioned earlier mentoring is a demanding process, which requires an employee's commitment in terms of time and effort. Organizations should show its appreciation of mentor's hard work and recognize such initiatives. Company's support will increase intrinsic motivation within employees. All respondents agreed that acknowledgment should be non-monetary. Respondent #3 explains what most probably will occur when company introduces monetary motivation for being a mentor:

*“As soon as company offers financial bonuses for mentoring activity, some employees will agree to be a mentor pursuing financial benefit but not their own willingness for helping others and personal development. That means that financial motivation in a sense will force an employee to participate in the program.”*

Respondent #14 emphasizes:

*“Mentoring comes from your heart. For mentor it is about what you want to do. People should not get involved in mentoring pursuing financial increase or promotion, they should do it based on their internal wish to do so.”*

Respondent #18 mentions that generally mentors are senior staff members who have high sufficient salary and, consequently, value non-monetary rewards from a company more. Respondent #10 provides examples of nonfinancial rewards:

*“Non-monetary rewards which have high emotional appeal are the most suitable way to recognize mentoring activity of an employee. They can vary from a public thank you during annual meeting and certificate for developing and raising young talents to holiday package tour. They should be unexpected bonuses for employees to avoid the risk of involving in mentoring to get recognition. It always should be vice versa.”*

Non-financial rewards can satisfy employees by making them feel like a valued part of an organization and showing them that they are appreciated. The core value of mentoring is its voluntary nature. Pursuing satisfaction of needs for esteem and self-development mentors are motivated to engage in the role of mentor regardless recognition. However, acknowledgement from a company is always pleasant and serves as a great motivational instrument.

### Formality of the process

The following important aspect of the mentoring process is whether mentoring should be formal or informal. Formal mentoring is more effective if a mentor and a mentee make a good match. By formal mentoring respondents mean that apart from a mentor and a mentee, there is a third-party, which is an organization that serves as a facilitator, coordinator and moderator in this relationships. An organization provides learning materials and explains what is expected from participants, sets the timeline, constantly motivates participants for further interaction, collects feedback on the process and evaluates success. Respondent #17 provides explanation why formal mentoring is more effective when it serves as TA tool:

*“I believe that only formal mentoring programs can succeed as TA tool because participants feel greater responsibilities. An organization gives clear guidance what is expected from participants. It helps mentor and mentee set particular targets and work towards achieving them.”*

This idea affirms the thoughts of Bozionelos (2004) and Inzer and Crawford (2005) concerning greater contribution of formal mentoring programs to an organization.

Respondent #11 refers to one of the challenges of mentoring process that is losing motivation to continue interaction and points out the following:



*“Role of official coordinator in this case is very important because he/she can use some instruments to increase motivation, to help if a problem or misunderstanding occur. Sometimes mentor and mentee can be stuck with some issues and they need unbiased moderator.”*

Organization expects to benefit from mentoring program in various ways that will be discussed later that is why it is an interested party that should be aware how mentor and mentee relationships evolve. Without periodic assessment of the process it is difficult to estimate whether process is beneficial for all parties. In this case interviewees do not talk about total control of the program but about support and guidance. Mentoring is voluntary process and there is always a risk of losing motivation. Secondary sources suggest that ideally formal mentoring should foster informal one (Inzer and Crawford, 2005). If an organization at the very beginning chooses participants with caution and they make a good match, then they most likely will have common interest in cooperation and interaction and will not require organizational push.

### Challenges

Mentoring is a demanding process that requires a lot of contribution from both parties, thus difficulties may occur. Mentors identified the following challenges that they faced and introduced suggestions on how they can be overcome:

Respondent	Challenges	How challenges can be overcome
#3,5,8,9,15,16,20	Lack of contribution from a mentee	At the first stage carefully check motivation of mentee and select only the most motivated students
#1,5,10	Mentee does not prepare for meetings	Talk about the problem and explain the importance of preparation.
#2,7	Mentor’s workload increases and he/she can not allocate as much time to the process anymore	Talk about the problem with facilitator from the company side and either change the mentor or adjust the program for mentee
#4,9,11,12,13,19,21	Evaluation of results	1. Set clear goals and objectives in the beginning 2. Organization should communicate expectations from the process to the participants from the start
#5,9,10,13,	Mentor should find a verge	Ask more questions and listen than talk

15,16	between influencing mentee's opinion and mentee's world view, counseling and getting mentee to talk and answer his own questions himself	and advise.
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Table 1. Challenges of mentoring process.

The interviewees were in consensus that the participants of mentoring program are humans and anyway some challenges can occur due to individual features of a particular person. However, if an organization plays a role of facilitator and constantly supports participants by providing ideas how to solve challenges and discussing possible solutions, mentioned challenges will be most likely overcome easily. Moreover, many respondents emphasized the importance of relationships and trust between mentor and mentee, as the ability to honestly talk about challenge plays an important role in further prosperity of the program.

The most discussed challenge is the evaluation of results because it is an important aspect of further development of the program. Our findings expand the discussion of Abbott-Anderson et al. (2016) who emphasize the significant role of evaluation. Due to individualistic nature of mentoring programs it is difficult to assess and compare the results as every pair has different goals at the beginning.

Emotions

Mentoring involves positive emotions. It provokes interest, enthusiasm and fulfillment. In addition, the process satisfies mentor's needs in esteem and self-actualization. Mentors feel respected and valuable if they can express their business view, understanding of business environment and processes and motivate mentee to expand knowledge in this sphere. For mentors it is a great opportunity to think about their routine work from the new perspective because when mentee asks questions, specifies details of work, mentors unconsciously start thinking on issues they did not think before. Moreover, as mentee is a student and does not have hands on experience on real business, he/she gives fresh unbiased thoughts on business issues, which is a treasure for mentor. Respondent #7 described his feelings as following:

*“Every time I talk to my mentee I feel rush of vivacity.”*

Respondent #4 shared slightly different view:

*“When I see that my mentee every time comes with new questions, motivated to learn more, I feel that my professionalism is recognized and valued. I feel that I achieved something in*

*my life. This motivates me to give back to younger generation and to grow in my professional career. “*

Employees who are involved in mentoring have opportunity to improve their leadership and counseling skills. They find mentoring a rewarding experience in terms of self-development. Therefore, generally they feel more valuable and satisfied at work that positively affects an organization. These conclusions support the research of Gentry et al. (2008) and Ghosh and Reio (2013) who discuss mentor’s motivation to participate in mentoring programs. As for mentee’s prospective mentors from their point of view emphasized feeling of excitement, energy, curiosity and eagerness to learn. The theme emotions illustrated that mentoring induces positive emotions both for mentor and mentee.

### **3.1.2. Elements of Talent Mentoring**

Respondents identified that initial selection of mentor and mentee is important as it directly affects the efficiency and productivity of interaction. Mentor and mentee should be chosen with caution based on particular criteria. . Descriptive statistics was applied to explain the major factors for participants selection. “Selection of mentee” and “Selection of mentor” are recognized as themes.

#### Selection of mentee

Chart 1 illustrates that determined set of goals for the program and motivation to work in a company of mentor are the most significant factors and thus are recognized as sub-themes.

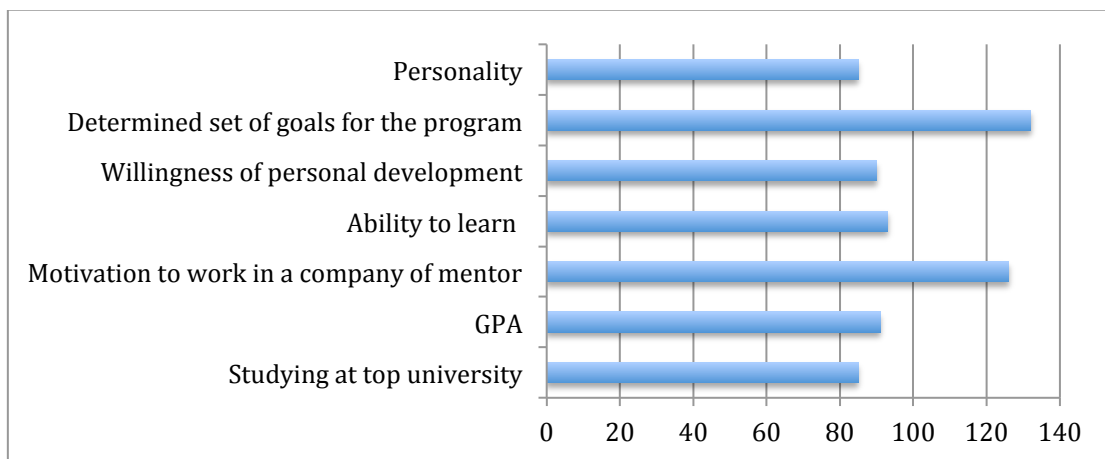


Chart 1. Factors affecting selection a student to be mentee.

### *Motivation to work in a company of mentor*

Selection a student for the role of mentee is extremely important as it lowers the risk that mentee will not apply for a position after completing mentoring program. When a student knows exactly why he is interested in particular company, what he wants from his/her future employer, it is easier for HR managers to evaluate the fit for the program.

### *Determined set of goals for the program*

Goal and result-orientated students deliver better results. When a student is determined it is easier for a mentor to set further direction. Respondent #7 said:

*“I strongly believe that for a mentee mentoring process is more beneficial when a mentee knows and understands why he/she participates in the program. He/she is more result-orientated and for me as a mentor it is easier to work with such person. Such interaction is more productive.”*

Apart from these major factors, HR manager should also consider such factors as personality, willingness for personal development, ability to learn, GPA and studying at the top university. For example, respondent #13 mentioned that personality tests are good and helpful instruments to find the best match for a pair mentor mentee, thus, personality plays an important role as well.

### *Selection of mentor*

When an organization chooses an employee to be a mentor, main factors it should consider are willingness to participate voluntary and job satisfaction that is depicted on the Chart 2.



Chart 2. Factors affecting selection an employee to be mentor.

Voluntary participation was previously discussed and again arose as a sub-theme. Mentor #11 said:

*“In our company at the moment we apply mentoring only internally. While application was open there were actually more employees who volunteered to be a mentor for newcomer than there were new staff members.”*

This definitely demonstrates that mentors see other benefits for themselves than a monetary recognition and ready to participate voluntarily.

### *Job satisfaction*

Mentor transfers his perception of the company and his role to a mentee. It can be the first insight of the organization a mentee gets ever. As a potential employer company wants it to be pleasant and positive. That is why job satisfaction is highly important.

Respondent #12:

*“I am satisfied with my job and with my employer. Consciously or unconsciously I share my satisfaction with others and they get very positive image on what is my company about.”*

The other factors such as personality, availability, emotional intelligence, commitment to the organization, ability to teach, counseling and leadership skills, willingness of personal development, previous mentoring experience, significant experience in the field and management level should also be checked during the interview for the role of mentor.

Our findings illustrate that selection of both participants is crucial as the whole program can rely on it and therefore reaffirm the research of Jyoti and Sharma (2017) where academics emphasized the importance of the right decisions on selection. Organization should carefully choose the best applicants who are willing to and have capabilities to deliver the value to an organization by means of their interaction. Mentoring is very sensitive process and good match directly influences how productive further relationships are.

### 3.1.3. Factors that affect successful implementation of an external mentoring program as a Talent Attraction practice

The most important part of the empirical analysis focuses on revealing the factors that influence the successful implementation of mentoring instrument. The factors are divided into organizational, individual from mentee and mentor perspectives and relational based on the framework of Ghosh (2014). Respondents agreed that such division is logical as it reflects factors that look at the phenomenon of mentoring from different angles.

#### Organizational

As it can be seen from the Chart 3 below, the most extensively stressed organizational factor that the interviewees mentioned is transparency of the process. The other widely discussed sub-themes are support and formalized coordination and organizational culture.

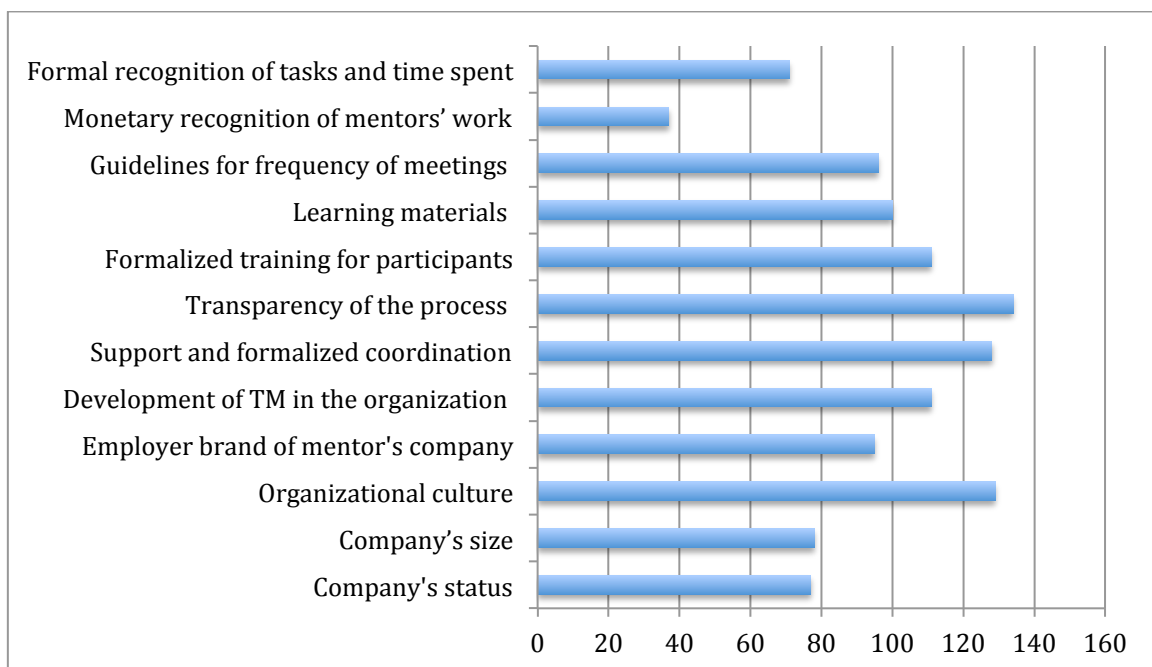


Chart 3. Organizational Factors.

### *Transparency of the process*

Before getting involved in a mentoring program participants should understand what exactly an organization expects from them. Knowing this information they can estimate how much time a program requires and what exactly they can get from it. Transparency of the process gives feeling of fairness. Moreover, during the interviews respondents #4,7,9,19 stressed that not only participants of mentoring program should know about the process, but other employees as well in case they want to get involved.

### *Support and formalized coordination*

This sub-theme intersects with the sub-theme “formality of the process” mentioned earlier. Participants require organizational support and coordination to stay motivated, to be sure that they are on the right track. Moreover, while an organization constantly assists participants, it is aware how the process flows.

### *Organizational culture*

Company’s ability to change and readiness to implement new innovative practices plays an important role and effects to which extent the new initiatives will be successful. For example, it influences how employees are eager to engage in such practices as mentoring. Respondents #1,10,15,17 emphasized that not all organizations can apply external mentoring programs straight away. It may take some time for TM managers to communicate the value and mission of mentoring to employees. Companies, which already have internal mentoring programs are more likely to quickly integrate the external practice in their culture. Respondent #21 said:

*“Employees who work in organizations that actively foster internal corporate mentoring are already aware about the initial value of mentoring, understand benefits for themselves and are used to such activities. Essentially, for them it will be much easier to engage in external mentoring program. Of course some specifics of working with students should not be disregarded.”*

If motivation for constant change and development is deeply rooted in organizational culture, process of implementation external talent mentoring program, its acceptance and prosperity is more likely to be successful.

Other organizational factors such as employer brand, development of TM in an organization, formalized training for participants, guidelines for frequency of meetings, providing learning materials, formal recognition of tasks and time spent on mentoring can also affect the success of a program to lesser extent, thus, should not be disregarded.

*Individual (mentor)*

Chart 4 demonstrates the most discussed sub-theme referring to individual factors from mentor’s perspective, which is participation on voluntary basis. It was already discussed earlier.

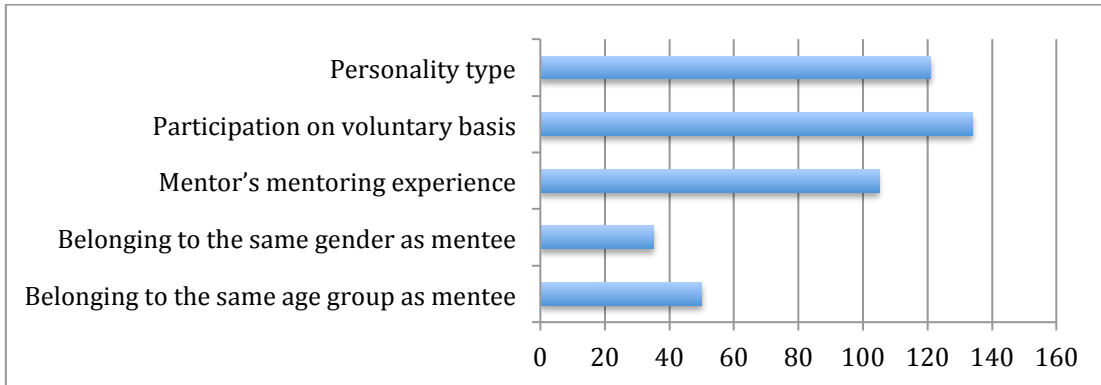


Chart 4. Individual Factors. Mentor’s perspective.

The other factors as previous mentoring experience and personality type are important as well. Respondent #18 said:

*“Some people are just more inclined to help and share knowledge than others, consequently, overall the program most likely will be more successful.”*

*Individual (mentee)*

The next group of factors demonstrated on the Chart 5 relates to individual factors from mentee’s perspective. The most discussed sub-theme that emerged is mentee’s motivation.

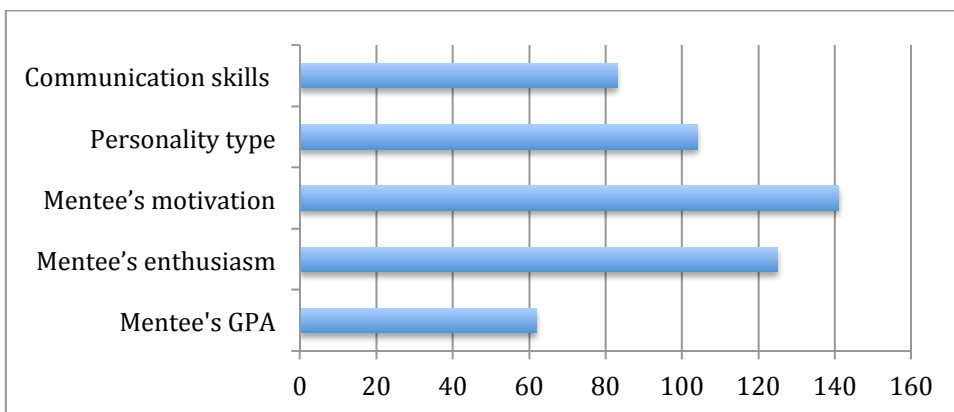


Chart 5. Individual Factors. Mentee’s perspective.

*Mentee’s motivation*

Enthusiasm and motivation of mentee are the key drivers of mentoring relationship. As mentors suggest, mentoring is more beneficial for mentee, that is why they expect mentees to initiate communication. Mentees are interested party in this case and are responsible for



prosperity of the interaction and its intensity. These conclusions are in line with ideas of Jyoti and Sharma (2017) on self-efficacy.

### Relational Factors

Chart 6 illustrates that mutual trust and compatible values are the most essential factors, which are distinguished as sub-themes.

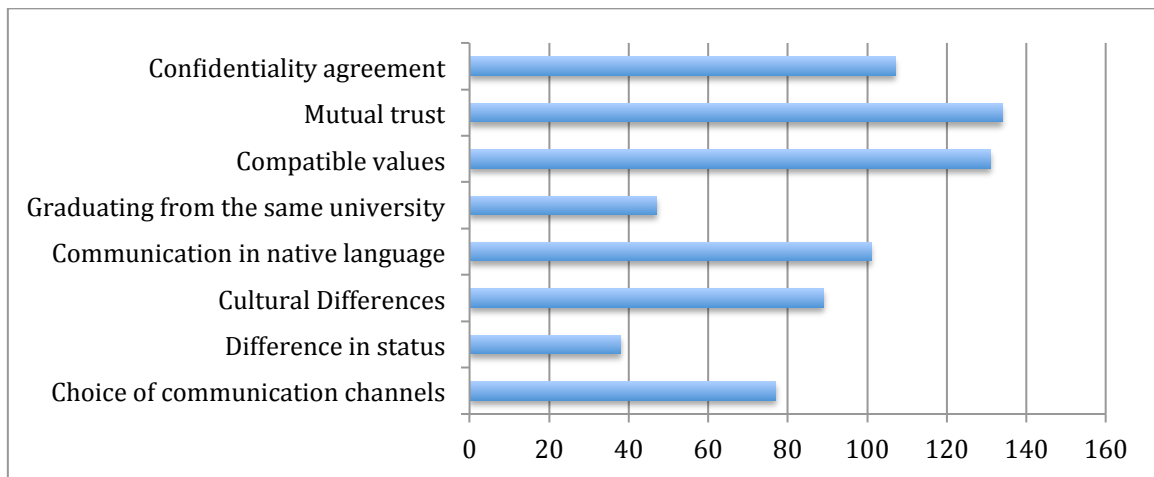


Chart 6. Relational Factors.

### *Mutual Trust*

Trusting relationships are the base of successful interaction between participants. Mentor should never judge a mentee and vice versa. Respondent #9 underlined the importance of mutual trust:

*“As soon as me and my mentee reached the stage of complete honesty, when we shared our personal stories and even private issues, it became easier to understand each other. I perceived success of my mentee as my own and was proud of his achievements when he shared with me fairly.”*

Mentoring is very intimate process as it involves close interaction of two people. The process can be easily destroyed by deception as any other kind of human relationship.

### *Compatible Values*

A mentor and a mentee can perfectly match by their professional interest but still have tension in their relationship. If values and their worldview do not match, most likely conflict of interests will arise. When a mentor and a mentee look at the same direction, the process is more productive. Respondent #13 argues that after the first meeting it can be clear whether both a mentor and a mentee feel comfortable with each other:

*“The very first meeting is crucial. Normally it includes more personal discussion to understand a individual with whom you are dealing. After the meeting facilitator needs to gather feedback if a student and an employee were comfortable in their interaction and are willing to continue their interaction.”*

Our explorative study revealed that in addition to mentioned factors companies should pay attention to confidentiality, cultural differences, choice of communication channels, communication in native language, graduating from the same university.

### Benefits of mentoring for an organization

Another widely discussed theme is “Benefits of mentoring for an organization” that can be considered as outcomes of talent mentoring for a company.

Mentoring has great value for an organization and a number of positive benefits. Descriptive statistics was applied to reveal the most significant benefits for organizations that are illustrated in Chart 7. Employer branding, increased commitment of employees, initiating learning and development, promoting corporate culture are recognized as sub-themes because they were wider discussed and emphasized by mentors.

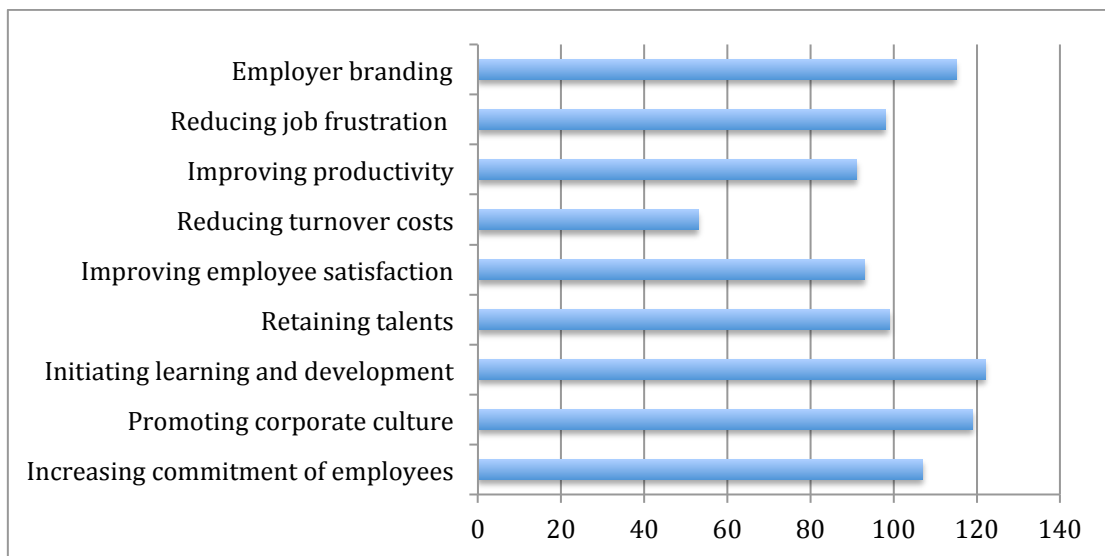


Chart 7. Benefits of mentoring for an organization.

### *Employer branding*

Mentoring as TA practice can be considered as an employer branding tool as well, therefore increasing its value to a firm. Due to high importance of employer branding in modern business environment (e.g. Sokro, 2012; Rajkumar et al., 2015; Amelia and Nasution, 2016) this can be considered as a valuable outcome. Mentoring involves individual approach towards working with students and close cooperation with universities that will positively affect employer brand if a company pursues a goal of hiring high-potential graduates. Students who participate in

mentoring program share their emotions and achievements with peers and initiate WOM effect.

Mentor #15 said:

*“In competitive business environment organizations put efforts to build good and recognized employer brand and mentoring definitely contributes to that as it is based on direct collaboration with universities. This means that students are aware of the opportunities presented in the company.”*

#### *Increased commitment of employees*

External mentoring practice not only attracts young high potential graduates to an organization but it is crucial for engaging experienced staff members. When employee gets involved in mentoring activity he/she gets a fresh new outlook on his day to day work. He reconsiders values and principles of an organization and presents them to a student in an honest way. He reflects what he likes the most at his work and company in general. Respondents #1,11,15 emphasized that even understanding that an organization provides such opportunity for growth and development is valuable. Respondent #19 said:

*“Mentoring can increase loyalty of employee dramatically. When I shared my experience with the student I reevaluated my daily work, my tasks and responsibilities and understood how much I enjoy what I do, and how grateful I am to my employer.”*

Mitchell et al. (2015) and Lapointe and Vandenberghe (2017) proved in their research that commitment of employees increases when mentoring is applied. Thus, our findings support their conclusions.

#### *Initiating learning and development*

When a mentee asks for a professional advice or an evaluation of project work, he pushes the mentor to expand his knowledge. Mentors are experienced staff members, however there is always a space for improvement. Respondent #13 said:

*“I do not always have ready made answers for my mentee. Sometimes I need some time to consult with my colleagues. As I want to help my mentee I feel motivated to research on the topic even if it goes beyond my professional expertise.”*

Respondent #11 added to that:

*“It is hard to acknowledge but there were couple of cases when I learned new and unexpected facts about business environment that student shared with me based on the results of his project. I just felt in love with process of mentoring more. I do not only share my experience but I get a lot in return.”*

Moreover, mentoring is a great tool for employees to improve their leadership and communication skills. For instance, constant interaction with a mentee gives a mentor an opportunity to try different leadership styles. As respondent #8 explained:

*“Modern business environment changes rapidly and instruments that were effective two years ago are counted outdated today. That is why companies have to search for new approaches constantly and consider different options. I find mentoring an advanced tool for developing senior managers. They get to the position when they think that they know pretty much everything but in our time that becomes impossible. Mentoring fosters learning in engaging way.”*

Consequently, organizations benefit from mentoring program in two main aspects: attracting new talents and developing experienced ones.

#### *Promoting corporate culture*

As it was mentioned earlier mentors are usually experienced employees who are fully integrated in corporate culture and value organizational principles. All respondents said that they discussed their corporate culture and organizational values, shared what they liked the most about it because mentee’s were interested in this issue and asked detailed questions. Respondent #8 mentioned:

*“I was surprised that my mentee was so enthusiastic to learn about our corporate culture at the first place but not about business model or industry. The reasonable explanation for this is that he could read about almost everything on the official website but culture can not be described, it should be experienced.”*

Respondent #6 adds the following benefits of mentoring that can be important for organizations:

*“I believe that mentoring favors networking, sharing ideas among employees and building trusting relationships between people, developing tailor-made career tracks for mentees.”*

Other benefits were still identified as valuable and should be considered by organizations. Our findings expand the research of Eby et al. (2008); Parise and Forret (2008); Ghosh (2014); Kao et al. (2014); Mitchell et al. (2015); Lapointe and Vandenberghe (2017) who outlined the positive benefits of mentoring.

To sum up, all respondents agreed that mentoring could be used by organizations as a powerful TA tool. Today it is not widely used by modern organizations even internally as talent development tool, and all respondents find it as a lost unseen opportunity. Depending on an industry and a company, mentoring program can be adjusted to address the needs of organizations.

### 3.2. Research Findings and Recommendations

Phenomenon of mentoring has been studied for more than two decades and is acknowledged by academics and practitioners (Hu et al., 2016). However, it has not been discussed from perspective of TA earlier. This research was to examine whether mentoring could be perceived as a TA tool. All respondents agreed that external talent mentoring practice could be used as a TA instrument. Interviewees underlined that, firstly, companies can start applying mentoring internally to integrate mentoring in corporate culture, then externally as exclusive practice and after that externally as inclusive practice.

Based on the empirical analysis the following framework (Fig. 5) was composed.

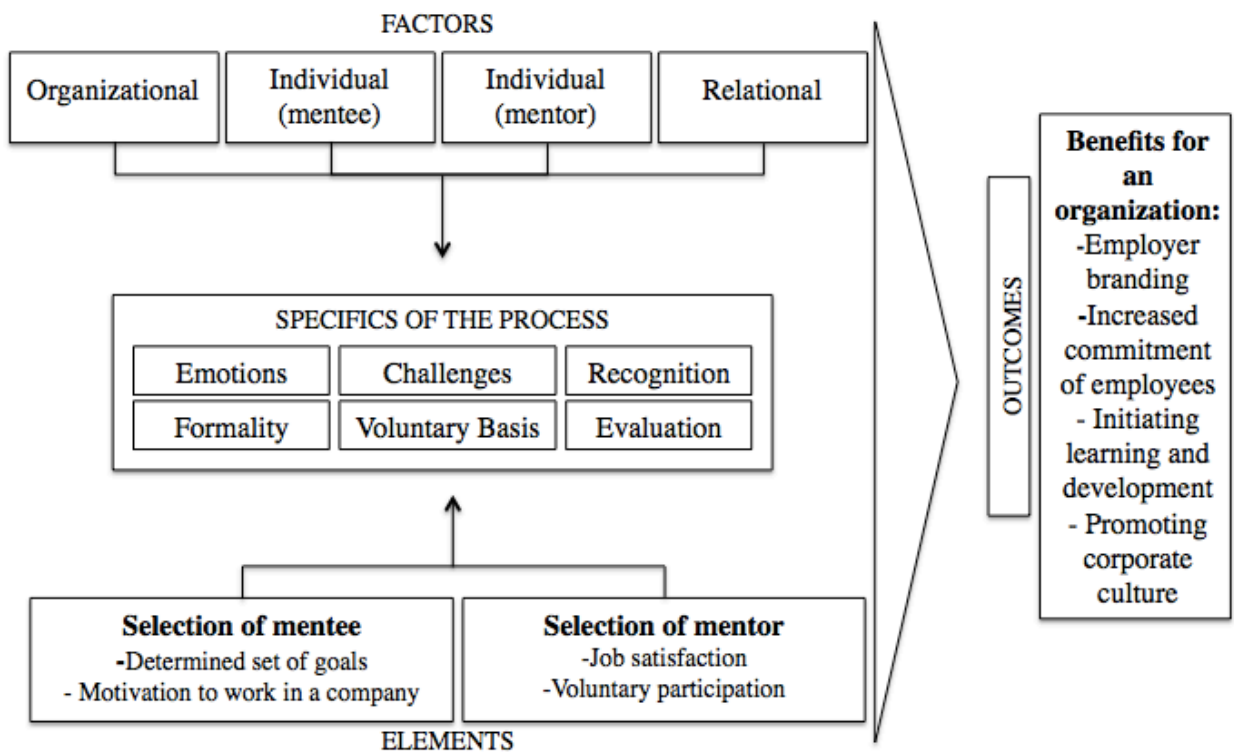


Fig. 5. Framework: Talent Mentoring.

The proposed framework describes the relationship between identified main elements, specifics and factors of talent mentoring and illustrates the value that talent mentoring brings to an organization. The analytical significance of this framework lays in its ability to provide guidance for companies that look for innovative instruments of TA and are ready to implement external talent mentoring. The framework shows the peculiarities of the process and crucial building stones for development of the instrument. Mentoring is highly dependent on individual skills, capabilities and motivation of participants. Therefore, elements affect the specifics of the process. Organizational, individual from mentor's and mentee's perspectives, and relational

factors were identified as crucial ones to affect the success of the overall process. Together elements, specifics and factors influence the outcomes that an organization gets.

The recommendations on the designing external mentoring program are offered further. Such program can include five phases, however, it can be adjusted based on the individual progress of the participants.

The “phase 1” focuses on organizational and administrative activities. HR manager or TM manager executes it. The responsibility is great because correct selection and further match of a mentor and a mentee will eliminate risks of failure in the future. Selection of all participants has to be done on voluntary basis and the most motivated should be chosen. Company should have established contacts with top universities and choose students who are willing to work for this particular company and have determined set of goals for the program. While selecting an employee for the role of mentor, his/her job satisfaction is another major factor to consider. Moreover, as employees represent company’s interest in front of students, company has to organize training on corporate culture and values prior to the start of the program. As for better matching decision, HR managers can ask potential participants to take online personality test and consider the results of such test as individual characteristics and fit among them affect the progress and relationships of a pair.

During the “phase 2” the first meeting of a mentee and a mentor occurs. If a company organizes the program for several pairs, it will be very effective to invite all participants together for an introductory event, which can include official and unofficial parts. One of the crucial things from a company’s perspective is to communicate expectations and goals of the program as well as all organizational details. Unofficial part can include free time when participants can get to know each other as they like feeling of belonging to community. Apart from getting to know each other as individuals and establish first contact, mentors and mentees in pairs should discuss responsibilities and goals of their interaction. Together a mentor and a mentee can think about individual development plan for the mentee and present it in front of facilitators. It is advisable to ask a mentee to sign confidential agreement, as a mentor definitely will share some of the company’s information. After the first meeting company coordinator should collect the feedback to find out whether all mentees are comfortable with their mentors and vice versa and willing to start active work. In case there are some issues, they should be eliminated at the beginning.

The “phase 3” includes the actual process of interaction between a mentor and a mentee. Each meeting should be dedicated to a specific topic or task to make it more efficient. Depending on the company needs and expectations the content and number of obligatory meetings can vary. However, the facilitator should provide minimum number of required meetings to decrease the risk of not goal-oriented interaction. For example, career-planning session, learning about

company's products and services, solving tasks related to everyday work of the mentor, improving particular soft skills such as presentation or negotiation skills or hard skills. If a mentor and a mentee agreed on working on particular project, they can have meetings related to update of the progress. From a company perspective engaging a student to work on a project with guidance of professional is very useful because it reveals skills and abilities of the student and contributes to research and development of the company. Facilitators can organize interim meetings to follow up the progress of a pair of a mentor and a mentee. Moreover, depending on the needs of participants a company can offer trainings or coaching sessions and seminars. Such events increase loyalty of participants both to a program itself and to an organization.

The "phase 4" is a reflection phase. A mentor and a mentee take some time to reflect their active communication and restate initial goals and targets, think how to continue their interaction and what has to be done before the final assessment.

The "phase 5" is a final stage of the program, which is meant to assess mentee's progress. If a student worked on a particular project, then it can be project defense. This stage should be adjusted depending on the individual performance of a particular individual. Company should arrange a closing event to summarize achievements of each pair and each mentee. Mentors should get non-monetary recognition for their efforts. The mentoring program can result in successful hire of a student, if he/she performed according to company's expectations and even exceeded them. Mentoring relationship between a mentor and a mentee can continue in professional or personal basis despite the fact whether a mentee was offered a position or not. Many interactions finish as a friendship if both participants feel the match of interests.

In sum, the five stages present the ideal process of external mentoring program. Moving from one stage to another occurs after successful completing of previous stage. Talent mentoring framework together with recommended five-stage program description could be used as a starting point for an organization, which is willing to apply tailored recruiting to attract high-potential young graduates.

Obviously, there are some risks that have to be considered before application and some peculiarities related to the company profile and industry it operates. Respondents specified that external mentoring program is not a universal solution to attract talented graduates for all companies. As respondent#9 said:

*"Such practices will be widely popular among, for instance, IT, audit, engineering and healthcare firms. Generally speaking, this tool will be the most beneficial for companies, which hire from particular universities and require quite specific skills that are not taught during lectures."*

To talk about risks that a company can face applying external mentoring practice, the following were emphasized. First of all, there is a risk that mentee after completing the mentoring program will not proceed with application for a full-time position. Secondly, the interaction between mentor and mentee can terminate due to increased workload of an employee. Thirdly, in the beginning a mentor and a mentee as personalities were not perfectly matched by HR manager and that is why conflict of interests occurred. Organization can try to foresee these risks and attempt to eliminate them.

To cover all discussed above, we argue that our findings have important implications for TM and HR managers and to TM field where little research has been done on intersection of TA, TM and mentoring. Researchers claim that TM is a relatively new multidisciplinary field, which needs further extensive research (Tarique and Schuler, 2010). Ariss and Sidani (2016) underline that TM remains underdeveloped both in theory and practice. More specifically Thunnissen et al. (2013) and Ariss et al. (2014) propose the need for future research on the role of stakeholders such as universities in shaping TM and how firms can take their interests into account in improving TM. The field needs to be investigated more in different contexts and environments and the focus should be broadened to a wider multi-stake-holder perspective (Collings et al., 2015). Our research deepens an understanding about the role of TM and TA in modern business environment and proposes a new applicable tool of TA. In addition, our study addresses universities as stakeholders and studies the relational aspect of company cooperation or partnership with universities.

Furthermore, this research contributes both to TM field and to the mentoring theory. Previous studies on mentoring have studied the practice in the context of talent development (Inzer and Crawford, 2005; Egan and Song, 2008; Abbot-Anderson et al., 2016; Hu et al., 2016). Our findings are generally consistent with previous reviews where academics argued that mentoring has positive effects on job performance and career development of employees (Eby et al., 2008; Kao et al., 2014; Mitchell et al., 2015; Lapointe and Vandenberghe, 2017). In this study, we empirically illustrated that mentoring can be applied not only as talent development tool but as well as TA instrument. The conclusions about specifics of mentoring process are in line with the research of Parise and Forret (2008) who find voluntary participation in mentoring program critical as well as management support. We also offer novel insights about the other specifics of talent mentoring. Our findings on the importance of the selection process of both a mentor and a mentee are conforming to the research of Allen et al. (2008) who underlined the significance of selecting a mentor and a mentee and their proper matching. Moreover, we applied the framework of Ghosh (2014) to structure factors that affect the successful application



of external mentoring program as TA tool and extended the existing research on mentoring. In addition, we explore the benefits which talent mentoring brings to an organization expanding the research of Eby et al. (2008); Parise and Forret (2008); Ghosh (2014); Kao et al. (2014); Mitchell et al. (2015); Lapointe and Vandenberghe (2017) who underlined the positive benefits that mentoring brings to an organization. Moreover, our findings extend the research on attracting Millennial workforce in particular by mentoring (Durocher et al. 2016).

Importantly, by investigation talent mentoring as a talent attraction practice we showed how to drive employee talent attraction and development through business mentoring programs and what are the key points HR Professionals should focus starting an external mentoring program.

## **CHAPTER IV. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

### **4.1. Conclusions**

TM is defined to be one of the primary drivers of change in the twenty-first century. (Stone and Deadrick, 2015). Organizations realize that wise application of TM practices can help them to gain competitive advantage (Guthridge et al., 2008; Schuler et al., 2011; Mupepi, 2017). Human's skills are the main resources of the knowledge based economy and, consequently, the way in which talent is "distributed" becomes an indicator for the level of development of an organization (Serban and Andanut, 2014). Competition for talent, aging workforce and globalization, talent mobility and talent shortages, high expectations of Millennial generation are the factors that push companies to greater promote their employer brand and corporate culture, to apply new recruiting techniques to be more attractive for graduates (Broek et al., 2017; Mupepi, 2017). Therefore, the need for new TA instruments arises.

In this research we empirically illustrated that talent mentoring can be perceived as new innovative TA tool because it addresses current trends and demands of business environment. More precisely, it considers expectations of Millennial generation; contributes to building an identifiable and unique employer identity; involves close collaboration with universities; allows company to gain a competitive advantage on the labor market.

In the beginning of this master thesis three main research questions were set, which pointed out the direction of the research. The analytical objective of this study was to develop further understanding of how talent mentoring can be used as a TA practice. This master thesis revealed that mentoring talented students can be used as a powerful TA tool by organizations. It can be applied in terms of exclusive theory and after that on inclusive basis. With regard to the

research question 1, we identified major specifics of talent mentoring process that are the key ones to be considered by HR or TM managers. As for the question 2, we pointed out the importance of selection a mentor and a mentee and their proper matching. The research question 3 refers to the factors that affect successful implementation of external talent mentoring program, specifically, organizational, individual from mentor's perspective, individual from mentee's perspective and relational.

## **4.2. Theoretical Contribution**

This study contributes to the TM literature as well as to mentoring literature by developing further conceptualization of mentoring in TA context. It aims to fill the gap identified by literature review. Mentoring has not been discussed in TA context in extant literature and this research sheds the light on the new application of mentoring. Investigation of mentoring as a TA tool allowed to extend the research on TA and, consequently, TM (Tarique and Schuler, 2010; Schuler et al., 2011; Thunnissen et al. 2013; Ariss and Sidani, 2016). Furthermore, the role of universities as stakeholders in shaping TM was addressed in current study (Thunnissen et al., 2013 and Ariss et al., 2014).

This master thesis proved empirically that mentoring can be perceived as a TA tool by organizations and found out major specifics, elements and factors that can be crucial for successful implementation of such instrument. The study contributes to mentoring theory expanding the research of Eby et al. (2008); Parise and Forret (2008); Ghosh (2014); Kao et al. (2014); Mitchell et al. (2015); Lapointe and Vandenberghe (2017) by underlining how an organization can benefit from implementing external mentoring program. Our conclusions expand the research on Millennial workforce attraction in particular by mentoring (Durocher et al. 2016). Moreover, current study introduced "Talent Mentoring" as a new term, provided definition of such process and introduced the framework of talent mentoring, which illustrates the relationship among major factors, elements, specifics and outcomes of talent mentoring.

Identifying important specifics, elements and factors that affect successful implementation of talent mentoring as a TA instrument will hopefully guide future theory and empirical work to expand our understanding of organizational attractiveness for talented potential employees in an increasingly globalized world of work.

### **4.3. Managerial Relevance**

The current study offers in-depth understanding of TM processes in modern business environment and provides explanation why multinational organizations need new innovative TA tools. Talent mentoring as a new instrument of TA can help firms to gain a competitive advantage on the labor market among employers and to attract young high-potential talents. It represents a strategic applicable tool, which can be easily integrated in the TM corporate strategy of a multinational company.

In sum, firstly, by investigation talent mentoring as a TA practice we illustrated the key points that HR professionals should focus starting an external mentoring program. Identified relationship between elements, specifics and factors that influence successful implementation of talent mentoring process will help an organization to shape mentoring program based on its peculiarities, adjusting it to the corporate needs and goals. The results of this master thesis can help organizations to facilitate the talent mentoring process and also guide organizations in both selection of participants and the design of the program.

Secondly, knowing the benefits of talent mentoring such as promoting corporate culture and employer brand outside the company, initiating learning and development of current employees and increasing their commitment to an organization, company can promote them internally and to the external stakeholders, mainly universities. Current study especially recognizes the trend of modern multinationals hiring young graduates and developing them internally and increased attention to quality recruitment. Talent mentoring allows an organization at the pre-recruitment stage to attract talented individuals and turn them into potential loyal employees with high performance.

Thirdly, talent mentoring framework together with recommended five-stage program description can be used as a initial point for a firm, which is willing to apply tailored recruiting and to attract high-potential young graduates, especially suitable for attracting Millennials due to their preferences to be mentored instead of being supervised.

### **4.4. Limitations and recommendations for further research**

As every research this master thesis has its own limitations. Firstly, the findings of this study are based on the relatively small sample size (n=21). Despite of how good the purposive sampling, data collection, triangulation or data analysis techniques were, the generalizability of these findings should be done with caution. However, such limitation does not invalidate the

conclusions drawn from the findings. It prepares the basis for future research of a larger sample. Secondly, the study relied on the honesty and truthfulness of respondents. There is a chance that the participants were not honest in their evaluations to full extent. However, to avoid this risk the researcher took every precaution to assure the participants that all provided information is strictly confidential and used only for research purposes and their anonymity is protected. Thirdly, external mentoring programs were studied in Russian context as experts work in multinational companies in Russia. The findings can be slightly different in other countries due to cultural peculiarities. While we introduced a universalistic talent mentoring framework, we recognize that there might be country specific differences in the TM systems that were not directly addressed in this master thesis.

The proposed model should be tested as prototype to prove other possible outcomes of the tool such as reduced adaptation period of employees who participated in mentoring program, their better understanding of corporate values and culture, their higher performance in comparison to those newcomers who did not participate in the program, formation of talent pool for organization well in advance.

Moreover, further research is needed to measure effectiveness of the model based on particular KPIs. These KPIs may vary according to the organizational values and include turnover intention, turnover rate, employee performance and etc. Furthermore, as any HR process external mentoring practice should be evaluated in terms of economic perspective, for instance, by cost-benefit analysis.

In conclusion, this research presents holistic view that mentoring can be used as a TA practice. In some industries it will bring greater benefits to an organization depending on the nature of business. Further research can focus on more in-depth analysis of peculiarities of application tool of talent mentoring to a particular industry.

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## APPENDIX 1. QUESTIONNAIRE

### (1) Background information.

<b>Respondent's Profile</b>	<b>Please fill in or select appropriate response</b>
1. Age	
2. Gender	
3. Education	
4. Position	
5. Years on this position	
6. Years in the company	
7. Management level: <input type="radio"/> first level management <input type="radio"/> middle management <input type="radio"/> top management	
<b>Company's Profile</b>	<b>Please fill in or select appropriate response</b>
1. Industry	
2. Company	
3. Company's size (number of employees)	
4. Company's status (national/ international)	
5. Level of access to top management: <input type="radio"/> easy access (can propose new ideas easily to top managers directly and get feedback straight away) <input type="radio"/> complicated access (can not propose new ideas to top managers directly but to middle managers and can get feedback after a long time)	

### (2) Mentoring experience.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How many years of mentoring experience you have?</li> <li>2. How many mentees you had?</li> <li>3. How would you define mentoring process?</li> <li>4. Why did you decide to become a mentor?</li> <li>5. Have you participated in mentoring programs as a mentee yourself?</li> <li>6. What has been the most rewarding aspect of mentoring for you?</li> <li>7. What has been the most frustrating aspect of mentoring?</li> </ol>
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### (3) Internal corporate mentoring.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does your company implement any internal mentoring program?            If yes, is it official or unofficial mentoring?            If no, would you like to have such program?</li> <li>2. Would you suggest your boss to use mentoring program in your company?</li> <li>3. Do you think that mentoring program for employees is a useful tool for a company? Please rate to what extent the following benefits can be important for organizations?</li> </ol>
--

Benefits	1 – not important    7 -very important						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Increasing commitment of employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Promoting corporate culture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Initiating learning and development of employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retaining talents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving employee satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reducing turnover costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving productivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reducing job frustration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employer branding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please, list other benefits \_\_\_\_\_

- How do you see benefits of the mentoring program for yourself as an employee?
- Do you feel that being a mentor provokes stronger commitment to the organization?

**(4) Talent management processes and practices in the company of respondent.**

- Describe a process of talent attraction in your organization.
- How many employees your organization hires per year? How many of them are young graduates?
- Does your organization face a problem of talent shortage?
- Do you think current process is an efficient way of attracting talents in today's "war for talents"?
- Which approach towards understanding of the term "talent" is closer to your organization: inclusive or exclusive?
- Does your company have any special leadership programs or projects for students/ graduates?
- How to detect a talent/ high potential young graduate? (Ex. Special project)

**(5) Peculiarities of mentoring process between student and successfully employed alumni.**

- Do you think that you have created a bond with your mentee during your interaction?
- Do you think that you have influenced mentee's mind in any way?
- Do you talk with your mentee about your corporate culture and organizational values?
- What emotions do you feel after meeting with your mentee?
- Which obstacles in the interaction process with your mentee you have faced?
- Describe communication process with your mentee.
- How do you see path of establishing relationship between mentor and mentee? What are the possible stages?

- 8. Describe main challenges and opportunities that can arise in mentoring process.
- 9. How to evaluate success of such mentoring program?
- 10. What do you think differentiates students who decided to participate in such mentoring program? (Ex. High-potential)
- 11. Would you hire your mentee?

**(6) External mentoring as a talent attraction tool.**

- 1. Do you think that mentoring (employee – student) can be perceived as a talent attraction tool for companies?
- 2. How company can establish such process? Should it be formal or informal mentoring?
- 3. Who should monitor a mentoring program then? (Ex. Only company, company and university, only university)
- 4. How company can select employees to be mentors? How company can coach mentors?
- 5. Please rate to what extent the following factors can be crucial while selecting an employee to be mentor?

1 – not important      7 -very important

Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Management level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Significant experience in the field	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Previous mentoring experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Willingness of personal development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leadership skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counseling skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to teach	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commitment to the organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emotional intelligence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Willingness to participate voluntary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please, list other factors \_\_\_\_\_

6. Please rate to what extent the following factors can be crucial while selecting a student to be mentee?

1 – not important    7 -very important

Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Studying at top university	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GPA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Motivation to work in a company of mentor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to learn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Willingness of personal development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Determined set of goals for the program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please, list other factors \_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you think that implementing such tool will affect employer brand? In what way?
8. Do you think that such initiative of an employee to be a mentor should be recognized in a monetary way?
9. What are the main drawbacks of such tool (external mentoring program)?
10. What are the main advantages of such tool?
11. Please rate to what extent the following factors can affect the successful application of external mentoring program as talent attraction tool?

1 – not important    7 -very important

Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Organizational</b>							
Company's status (national/international)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Company's size	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Company's organizational culture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employer brand of mentor's company	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level of development of talent management in the organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support and formalized coordination from a company	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transparency of the process and clear detailed guide to action	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Formalized training for participants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning materials (ex. Brochures, webinars) on mentoring provided by company	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guidelines for frequency of meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monetary recognition of mentors' work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Formal recognition of tasks and time spent on mentoring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Individual (mentor)</b>							
Belonging to the same age group as mentee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Belonging to the same gender as mentee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mentor's mentoring experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participation on voluntary basis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personality type	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Individual (mentee)</b>							
Mentee's GPA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Mentee's enthusiasm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mentee's motivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personality type	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Relational</b>							
Choice of communication channels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Difference in status	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultural Differences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication in native language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Graduating from the same university	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Compatible values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mutual trust	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Confidentiality agreement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. What are your overall recommendations on implementation of such tool?							

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!