

Employer branding

A qualitative research at Pathé



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Abstract

This research is conducted for the company Pathé, the largest business operator in cinema's in the Netherlands. Pathé has annually an employee satisfaction survey (MTO) amongst employees and in 2012 there was shown a loss in the number of *ambassadors* from the company. Pathé wants to restore their number of *ambassadors* and therefore the main question of this research is: *How can Pathé create more ambassadors from their company among employees?* To answer this question theories about organizational structure, organizational culture and employer branding are explored.

The data is collected in theatres and at the headquarter via interviews. The research population consists of the employees from Pathé. Out of the 22 Pathé theatres there were three location selected. In every theatre were eight interviews held, with: the theatremanager, two supervisors and/or servicemanagers, and five service employees. At the headquarter five employees from different departments participated, which totals 29 respondents.

In general employees of Pathé are highly satisfied with their job and with the organization itself. The employees were asked to explain if and why they are satisfied with the company to find out what they specify as important aspects of Pathé. Things like flexibility, structure, challenges and freedom seem to be important and are present. A remark is that the structure can improve. The last few years Pathé has expanded tremendously and by standardizing processes the structure can adapt to its large size. Another remark is that several employees experience difficulties with the bureaucratic structure. All the different layers slow down the processes of decisions and changes. Communication can also improve, especially between the theatres and the headquarter.

Pathé works like an open system where people are treated as rational beings and the company interacts with its natural environment. In the theatres there is a clear structure in job titles. The theatremanager is responsible for the theatre. The next in line are servicemanagers who mentor supervisors and service employees. Service employees do chores like cleaning, selling tickets, food, and beverages. At the headquarter there is a variation of departments, within these departments the division of tasks and responsibilities is unclear. This causes some problems in communication and cause delay in decisions. It seems important for employees to have a clear structure where they know what their tasks and responsibilities are, and where they are free in the ways how to perform these. Equality among employees is an important factor.

The more equality is experienced, the better the communication between departments, theatres and the headquarter is.

The organizational culture of Pathé can be classified as a *clan* culture, but also features some elements from the *adhocracy* culture (figure 1). Pathé has formulated a strategy which gives direction in who the company is, what they want to achieve and how, and displays the core values they want employees to possess. The strategy creates a culture which is perceived to be open and provides high quality service for visitors. The open culture is shown in the collaboration among employees. They work like a family were people mentor each other and people are willing to help each other. Inside the theatres this team spirit causes a high level of commitment. Nevertheless, the commitment to the entire organization is low. The majority of the employees feel they are only involved in local decisions and not with decisions at the level of the headquarter. It is likely that employees experience a higher level of commitment to Pathé when they are more involved in processes of changes and decisions concerning the performance of the entity.

To increase the commitment of employees it is important to have a strong brand where employees can identify with. This brand can be achieved by applying employer branding in Pathé. Employer branding focuses on internal and external factors and wants to create a positive corporate image. Pathé is heading in the right direction. Internal, the employees already identify with the core values alert, commitment, clever, and dare. External the people from the personal environment of employees associate Pathé with quality, service and a big spectrum of movies offered. Besides the positive elements there are also possibilities for improvements. Activities concerning corporate social responsibilities can be improved and awareness of the current activities can increase. Employees mention they lack knowledge about current social activities and could only state their theatres collect their trash separately.

Another aspect of employer branding that needs improvement is the aim of this research: the number of *ambassadors*. It seems that the commitment of employees can influence the loyalty towards Pathé by factors related to organizational structure, culture and employer branding mentioned above. Pathé can increase the number of loyal employees by improving on communication, structure and corporate social responsibility.

However, it seems that the definition of loyalty should be modified. The researchers who conducted the MTO define loyalty by the willingness to recommend Pathé as an employer. From this inquiry it seems that many other factors play a role in loyalty of the employees.

They are willing to recommend Pathé as an employer, although they not always do so. The employees are satisfied with the company, but in the decision to recommend Pathé they already consider whether someone will fit the company. The employees express loyalty by this, because they do not send people who they expect to have a misfit.

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1. Introduction

During the twenty-first century societies all over the world have changed rapidly and will continue to change, due to developments in economics, technology and demographics. These developments influence the labour market of today in many different ways. In the Netherlands one of the effects is an increase in the unemployment rate of people between 15-65 years old. In 2011-2012 this increased with one per cent to 6.4 per cent (CBS, 2013). A prognosis from the Dutch employee insurances implementing agency (UWV, 2012) states that the bad economic situation in the Netherlands is caused by shrinkage in consumption, investments, public expenditures and export. The authors of the report expect that the economic situation will not improve in 2013. Due to changes in the tendency of the labour market, and demographic and societal developments UWV expects the growth in the supply of the labour force to decrease. Because of a decline in the amount of jobs the number of job-seekers will continue to grow during 2013. This prospect of a loose labour market, where there are more job-seekers than jobs, is worrisome for society. It becomes difficult to find a job and the costs for the government will increase due to the social system from the welfare state. A loose labour market also causes organizations to change, especially the role of the Human Resources (HR) department.

In the past a clear distinction was made between personal management and HR management (HRM). Personal management was perceived as a descriptive model where specialists were responsible for the company and line managers were just acting according to the central developed procedures. HRM is seen as a normative model in which the top management is responsible for the welfare of the company and the line managers aim to optimize their available assets, including employees (Legge, 1995). In time, HRM evolved into a department where employees and employers' needs are integrated. In this new role HRM also becomes an important actor in defining the strategy of the company. Together with the board of directors they determine the goals and strategy for the company and HRM has the responsibility to select talented people who can contribute in achieving those goals. Recruitment and selection techniques need to be modified to attract the talented people to the company and it is necessary to know how to keep those people within the business.

1.1 Problem statement

Pathé is a business operator in cinema's and with 22 theatres it has a leading position in the Netherlands. In order to maintain this position they always look forward and make plans for the long term as well as the short term. This research is meant to focus on the long term, in

time the loose labour market will tighten. The supply of the labour force will decrease because the baby boom generation from the sixties will leave the labour market and the entrance of women in the labour market will reach a saturation level. In this situation of a tight labour market a small number of job-seekers is available to fill a large number of jobs (Goodwin, Gruen, Iles, 2006). To adapt to these upcoming changes in the labour market Pathé is aware of the fact that it needs to be a strong company and to be pro-active in getting and keeping talented people employed .

Pathé wants to become an *employer of choice*, a company which is known for its good quality in different ways and forms (Martin, Hetrick, 2012). Annually, a research bureau conducts a survey about the job satisfaction of employees (MTO) from Pathé. One of the elements from this MTO is to sketch a profile of the employees by combining loyalty and level of satisfaction with Pathé. In annex 1 the results of this profiling are shown for 2011 and 2012. It shows that in 2012 there is a relative large group, 22 per cent, of *unattached* employees. This is a tremendous increase, in 2011 this percentage was only four per cent for new theatres and one per cent for old theatres. On the opposite, the number of *ambassadors* decreased from 60 for old theatres and 49 per cent for new theatres in 2011, to 43 per cent in 2012. *Unattached* people scored high in level of satisfaction but low in loyalty and *ambassadors* scored high both in the level of satisfaction and in loyalty.

In order to become an *employer of choice* Pathé wants to focus on *employer branding*. This is a marketing related term in which HRM tries to commit employees to their brand (Martin, Hetrick, 2012). When *employer branding* is effectively it may be able to transform these *unattached* employees into *ambassadors* by increasing their loyalty. As shown, Pathé wants to restore the amount of *ambassadors* and therefore the main question of this research is: *How can Pathé create more ambassadors from their company among employees?*

1.2 Bookmaker

In this research there will be studied what the employees' needs are and how fulfilment can increase their loyalty. After this introduction there can be found a theoretical exploration in chapter 2. In chapter 3 the theoretical framework is presented with a theoretical model. In chapter 4 the research question and research design will be shown. Chapter 5 displays the results and in chapter 6 the conclusion of the research can be found. In chapter 7 the bibliography is presented and at last chapter 8 displays the annexes of the research.

1.3 Social and scientific relevance

The changing society influences the needs and the composition of the labour force, for example people want more flexibility and security. Difficult times lie ahead for the labour market because it will get tighter in the future. In order to adapt to these changes it is important to improve the fit between organizations and persons. A useful tool could be employer branding through employee commitment. Employer branding creates a clear image of a company intern and extern, and it shows how it differentiates from others. These measures make a company more transparent and thereby visible. By creating visibility, the publicity of a company increases and job-seekers know more details about how a company runs their business. If more companies apply employer branding, there is a better overview created in which the job-seeker can easily find out which company suits him. In this way the research can be valuable for other companies as well, because it will provide guidelines and insight in the needs of employees in general. It is likely that this research provides keystones which can be useful for their knowledge about employer branding and employee commitment. The research is scientifically relevant because the results will contribute to the knowledge about employer branding. There has been many research on theories like organizational structure and organizational culture separately. Employer branding is a relatively new subject and its interest in this topic is increasing. This research is unique in its combination between those three topics and explains how the different theories on structure and culture of a company are related and how they influence employer branding.

1.4 Interdisciplinary character

In the bachelor and master of interdisciplinary social sciences scholars are taught to use different perspectives from various disciplines to solve a problem. Those different perspectives contribute in creating a complete overview of all different aspects of a problem. This research has an interdisciplinary character because different disciplines like sociology, anthropology, and economics are involved. Social interaction is important in the structure of an organization and it is also involved in cultural aspects. The labour market, marketing and communication are also factors from the different disciplines that are all interrelated in organizations and employer branding.

There is another interdisciplinary factor involved in this research; the study takes place at different levels which are intertwined. At the micro-level the experiences and needs of individual employees are studied via interviews. The organization is studied at meso-level by observations and document analysis, and at macro-level the society is involved in general terms.

2. Theoretical exploration

This chapter presents relevant literature which will contribute to answering the research question. Due to changes during the past decades in economics, demographics and society, the operational side of companies has changed as well. In order to understand how a company can attract and retain employees it is useful to understand the organizational structure and organizational culture. This information reveals how a company works and how their employees behave. Another relevant subject is employer branding, a strategy to engage employees to the company. Employer branding can be a useful tool to accomplish goals described within the strategic management of the company. The long term aim of Pathé is on the one hand finding the right person for a job in the tightening labour market and on the other hand talented people being able to find Pathé as their employer. Through the use of new channels like social media Pathé tries to find job-seekers and talents, and on the other side tries to create a positive image of the company which both should increase the possibility for job-seekers and talents to find Pathé.

2.1 Organizational structure

The structure of a corporation is an important guideline which provides a lot of information about the operational side. In 1976 Chandler defined *organizational structure* as ‘the lines of authority and communication between the different administrative offices and officers, and the information and data that flow through these lines of communication and authority’ (p.14). Stein and Zwass (1995) presented structure as something that displays which roles the different members of the organization hold and Walsh and Ungson (1991) add the link between the organization and environment. From these definitions it is obvious that the structure of a corporation is the framework in which people operate inside a larger entity.

During the first half of the 20th century, the classical organization theories evolved (Taylor, 1917; Weber, 1947; Mooney and Reiley 1931). These theories were mechanistic and strict which caused critics to state that it attempts to explain peoples’ motivation to work strictly as a function of economic reward. In reaction, the neoclassical theories were formed (Mayo, 1933; Barnard, 1968; Simon, 1945). These theories enhance sincere attention for human needs. Nevertheless, both classical and neoclassical theorists argue that an equilibrium in the company should be maintained which can only be done by avoiding internal conflicts, such as the manipulation of the workers and their environment. This is different for scholars who enhance the *contingency theory*; Chandler (1962) and Lawrence and Lorsch (1969), who view conflict as inevitable, but manageable.

In the 1980s the *systems theory* emerged (Senge, 1990; Scott, 1981). Fundamental to this theory is the belief that there is a relationship between the different components of an organization and that modifications to one aspect might influence other parts of the organization, for example the behaviour of employees. Moreover, organizations are perceived as open systems, constantly interacting with their environment. The theory states that by adapting to environmental changes, organizations achieve a state of dynamic equilibrium. During the past decades there has been a general transition from stable and mechanistic structures, to more adaptive and organic structures. A positive effect is that organizations became more dynamic and flexible, the negative side is that integration and coordination of activities require more time and effort.

2.1.1 Different perspectives

Different times create different perspectives. Scott (2007) drops the above stated organizational typologies because he believes those were proven not to be productive. Instead, he describes three perspectives on the existing organizational theories: the *rational*, *natural*, and *open system approach*. The organization as a *rational system* focuses on the achievement of a certain outcome. Morgan (2006) argues that the rational system is a mechanistic approach which should work as efficient as possible. In such organizations there is little attention for the human aspects, they are assigned to tasks in a clear structure. A disadvantage is that this hierarchical structure removes the responsibility from workers. 'Employees are discouraged to take initiative, but encouraged to obey orders and keep place rather than to take an interest in, and question what they are doing' (Morgan, 2006, p.30). This passive attitude causes a loss in opportunities for personal growth for employees and loss of talent and creativity for the organization. The *decision-making approach* from Simon (1947, in Morgan, 2006) is considered to be an element of the rational system approach. It views the organization as information processing brains and Simon states that organizations can never be perfectly rational because their members have limited information processing abilities. Human rationality is limited and this affects the structure of organizations. Organizations can be perceived as 'institutionalized brains that fragment, routinize, and bound the decision-making process to make it manageable' (Morgan, 2006, p.76-77). The various departments within an organization define a structure of work activity, but also of attention, information, interpretation, and decision making. Each department has its own role in the entity and has a crucial influence on an organization's daily operation.

In the twenty-first century societal, economic and technological changes caused the *rational system approach* to become under attack. Nowadays new organizational principles are becoming important and in reaction different perspectives emerge. Critics stated that the rational system approach focused too much on decision-making and therefore lack focus on important aspects like behaviour and implementation of plans. In the *natural systems approach* these aspects are included and this theory perceives organizations as collectivities. Natural systems theorists analyze organizations by pairing them with organisms competing within a niche, trying to survive. The number of organizations in the niche and external factors define the ecology of the population. The rational and natural approaches differ in the importance of goal complexity and informal structures. In the rational approach the goal complexity is low because only top management is involved and there is a formal structure, while the natural approach is the opposite. There are also differences in perception, because the rational theorists only see the task-related behaviour of individuals as relevant, while the natural theorists look at broader behaviours that impact motivation, commitment, etc. The rational approach focuses more on industrial firms and state bureaucracies and they only select aspects of behavior which are relevant to the organization. In the natural approach the focus is more on service, professional and voluntary organizations. They include behaviour as an influencing factor and perceive organizations as social contexts which affect the well-being of participants. The third perspective is the *open system approach*. Here organizations possess elements of the natural and rational approaches, but are also semi-contained. Organizations are ‘things that have a life of their own’, but they are not closed off entirely. They must fight for their identity and meanwhile stay connected to the environment.

As shown in this paragraph about organizational structure there has been a general transition towards adaptive and organic organizations where there is an increased focus on the human aspect of the business. To understand behaviour and experiences from employees it is useful to know which structure can be found in Pathé. Pathé can be perceived as an open system, there is a combination of structured roles and focus on behaviour.

2.2 Organizational culture

In systems not only the structure of an organization is important to be aware of, but also factors like culture, strategy, behaviour of employees, leadership style, organizational learning, reward systems, and motivation influence a business (Doorewaard, de Nijs, 1998; Wilderom, Glunk & Maslowski, 2000). In this section the culture will be discussed with a short link to strategy and leadership style. These factors seem to be important to describe in

this research, because Pathé focuses on a strategy since a few years and they want to know how leadership style plays a role in the entity. The *culture* of an organization is defined as ‘a system of assumptions, values, norms, and attitudes, manifested through symbols which the members of an organization have developed and adopted through mutual experience and which help them determine the meaning of the world around them and how to behave in it’ (Janićijević, 2011, p.72). Complementary to this definition, the disciplines organization and business added: the way people work together. In this collaboration factors like equality and hierarchy or team spirit play a role. Doorewaard and de Nijs (1998) and Schein (1985) added that the corporate culture creates a normative interpretation frame. This frame provides guidelines for employees about what is acceptable, correct, and desirable behaviour and makes interaction between members easier. Doorewaard and de Nijs (1998) also state that besides the normative character of the organizational culture, culture is also found to be reciprocal. ‘People create culture and culture creates people’ (Doorewaard and de Nijs, 1998). People bear the culture means that employees of an organization are able to show the culture of a company towards others. In contrast, Schein (2010) has a deterministic perspective in which employees are passive actors who bear the culture enforced by the top management. In this research the definition from Doorewaard and De Nijs will be used because there is a cooperation between the employees and top management of Pathé and together they create the culture.

2.2.1 Change strategy

Another aspect from an organization is the strategy, and this also plays a role in the implementation of changes. ‘The organizational change strategy includes the approach, method, or manner in which changes are implemented in an organization’ (Janićijević, 2012, p.29). This definition implies that changes need to be planned. Nevertheless, this is not always the case. If the change is unplanned, the consistent approach, method, or manner of implementation can be a strategy for realizing it.

During the first decades of globalization around 1980, there were many changes going on in society which also affected organizations. According to Ghoshal and Bartlett (1995) these changes in organizations can be differentiated in two different ways. The first perspective is a transformation from organizational statics to organizational dynamics. Organizations worked like systems and were structured clearly. The top management decided in which way it should operate and communicated this vertically to the frontline managers who had to implement the changes. This hierarchical structure caused problems like inflexibility, slow innovation, and

resistance to change. In the 1990s organizations began to take small steps towards an organization which works in organizational dynamics, with processes. The vertical communication between the top managers and the frontline managers slowly transformed into horizontal processes. Different departments of the company cooperate with each other and top management and frontline managers interact with each other to obtain a higher level in business.

The second perspective is a transformation from work structure to social structure. An organization with a work structure clearly delegated tasks to its employees, who simply had to carry it out. Coherent to this decrease in top down communication, the employees got involved in the company's operation. Organizations started to see the surplus value of employees in different manners and started to give them opportunities to develop new skills. This new form of relationship between the top management and the frontline managers forms the base for a social structure inside the business.

The organizational changes described above are general transitions in the way a company is structured and operates. These changes can occur through different strategies. Chin and Benne (1969) define three change strategies: *rational empirical strategy*, *power coercive*, and *normative re-educative*. Although the literature is dated, the strategies are still applicable because of their basic character. The strategies can be useful pointers in studying management behaviour in Pathé. The first strategy is the *rational empirical strategy*, where the top management is the agent of change and the change takes place from the top, down to the frontline managers. Employees are passive actors and are limited in their actions because they receive little information. The *power coercive strategy* implies that the organization is a political system. In this strategy people with power, directors and top management, plan the changes and employees execute their plans. Changes are implemented top down and employees obey orders and implement the changes. The third strategy, *normative re-educative strategy*, assumes that an organization is a social system. The behaviour of its employees is determined by shared assumptions, values, norms, and attitudes. By changing these assumptions, values, norms, and attitudes, the individual and collective behaviour will change as well. In this strategy employees are actively involved which stimulates change through a combination of top down and bottom up communication. During the past decades critics of the above stated strategies, came to believe that there was missing one strategy in the category of tasks and relations. This supplementary fourth strategy is called the *creative strategy*. It assumes that people are creative beings and that an organization is a form of improvisation.

Employees themselves are the agents of change and they create changes by individual creativity and improvisation. To create an effective bottom up communication, management is responsible to create an ambience in which employees will be, and feel free to improvise and to share their ideas.

2.3 Relationship between organizational structure and organizational culture

From the literature above it is evident that the organizational structure and organizational culture are important aspects for a company and influence each other. Cameron and Quinn (1999) state that an organizational culture is able to reduce collective insecurities, causes social structure, brings continuity, creates a collective identity together with commitment, and empowers the corporate vision for the future. Like Doorewaard and De Nijs (1998), Cameron and Quinn (1999) believe that an organizational culture must be created by the employees themselves and should not be enforced by the top management. To enable the employees to create their own culture, the structure must be comprehensive to the culture and the other way around. In the literature several models on organizational structure and organizational culture are shown. In this paragraph two well-known models will be elaborated, one of Handy (1993) and one of Cameron and Quinn (1999).

Handy (1993) classifies four different organizational cultures which can be related to organizational structure as well. The first is the *power culture*, in this culture there is an ‘absence of bureaucracy and control is exercised from a central power base through key individuals’ (Salaman, 2001, p. 40). This culture can be seen as a spider’s web, there is one central person who is in power and he or she directs tasks to employees. The second culture is *role culture*, a form of ‘classic bureaucracy that acquires its strength through functions, specialities, rules and procedures’ (Salaman, 2001, p.40). In this culture every employee is responsible for specific tasks and everyone contributes to the result of the organization. A disadvantage is that response to changes is very slow due to the various people that are involved in decisions. The third one is the *task culture*, it focuses on getting the job done and it requires flexibility and responsiveness to market changes (Salaman, 2001). Every employee should be able to contribute to the product and in various roles. The fourth and final culture from this typology is the *person culture*. ‘The main purpose of the organization is to satisfy the needs of individuals, clients or patients, and the organization itself is secondary to individual self-fulfilment’ (Salaman, 2001, p.41). The person culture is typical for businesses like medical practices, here the focus is on the clients and employees work to satisfy them.

Another typology on organizational culture which can be related to organizational structure is formulated by Cameron and Quinn (1999). Both models are relevant because they have different perspectives. For this research the model from Cameron and Quinn will be used because it is more specific and enhances the idea that culture is reciprocal like Doorewaard & De Nijs (1998).

Cameron and Quinn define four typologies along two dimensions. The first is flexibility and discretion versus stability and control and the second is internal focus and integration versus external focus and differentiation. These two dimensions result in four quadrants of organizational culture: *clan*, *hierarchy*, *market*, and *adhocracy* (figure 1). Each quadrant represent fundamental assumptions and valued outcomes of which members believe they will make the organization effective.

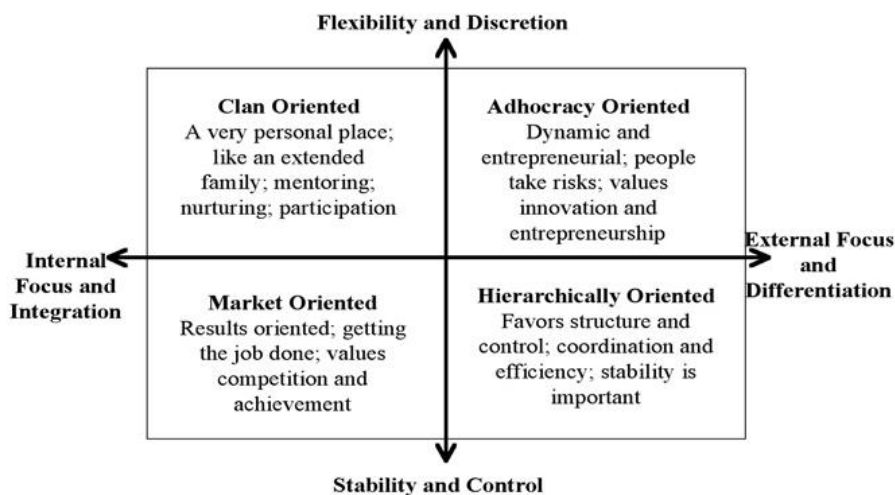


Figure 1: Types of organizational cultures and underlying ideologies (Cameron and Quinn, 1999)

The *clan culture* emphasizes ‘Employee participation, loyalty, employee commitment, and tradition (Cameron and Quinn, 1999, as in Ashkanasy et al., 2011, p.544). The employer has obligations towards its employees and managers act as mentors who need to enable employees to have a say about their work. This will enhance the employees’ feeling of participation, commitment and loyalty, which results in a team spirit. Companies with a *clan* culture emphasize flexible structures and maintain an internal focus. Power is decentralized and the company does not depend on rules, policies, and procedures.

The *adhocracy culture* focuses on flexibility and external positioning. It is featured by ‘growth, resource acquisition, creativity, adaptability, and evaluation by external entities’ (Cameron and Quinn, 1999 as in Ashkanasy et al., 2011, p. 544). The organization is dynamic and constantly emphasizes innovation and change. Managers need to prepare for the future

through creativity and by encouraging innovation. A decentralized structure causes all employees to be involved in the production and it enables the company to react fast to environmental changes.

The *Hierarchy culture* emphasizes stability and internal control. Organizations with this culture focus on a ‘smooth-running, efficient organization, which is achieved through formalized structures, rules, and procedures’ (Cameron and Quinn, 1999 in Ashkanasy et al., 2011, p. 544). The structure is vertical between top management and frontline managers, in which top managers determine a long-term plan which is executed by frontline managers.

The final quadrant is the *market culture*. This culture focuses on external competitiveness and productivity while emphasizing stability and control. ‘Task accomplishment is highlighted where leaders and employees are competitive and driven by getting the job done while responding to the markets’ (Cameron and Quinn, 1999 as in Ashkanasy et al., 2011, p. 545). Companies within this quadrant strive for improvement and the focus on winning is binding. The managers can be harsh and demanding, because in the *market* culture it is important to become leader in the market.

2.4 Corporateness and employer branding

Balmer and Geysler (2003) assembled corporate concepts like: corporate identity, image, branding, reputation, and communication. Nowadays the interest in corporateness is high, because it provides a new and powerful lens to show corporations how they can improve their overall performance (Martin and Hetrick, 2012).

For many years the branding of a product or service is known as a part of the marketing strategy in a company. The branding of companies has gained value the past years and it is important for an organization to apply it external and internal. External branding focuses on customers’ loyalty and long-term trust by delivering quality products and services. This quality supplemented with premium pricing for loyal customers will motivate customers to purchase products and services again. However, the internal branding of a company rapidly gained importance. It aims to engage the ‘hearts and minds’ of employees (Martin, Hetrick, 2012), because they are the core of the company. Originally branding is a marketing subject, although since the involvement of employees it became a shared responsibility of the marketing and HR department. Employer branding is a popular trend in businesses and it sounds promising, but it is not necessarily something which always results in benefits.

In this research there will be enhanced a definition on *branding* from Martin and Hetrick (2012, p.47) ‘A brand is a promise made and kept in every strategic, marketing, and human resource activity, every action, every corporate decision and every customer and employee interaction with the intention to deliver strategic value to an organization’. This definition shows that a strong brand lives through the entire company and that several departments are involved to make achieve success. The corporate brand also has a social value in which organizations are held responsible for societal well-being, called *corporate social responsibility* (CSR). CSR has been criticized as a cynical attempt to escape responsibilities, but it has some important features. First of all, it increases the commercial incentive because the employer is seen as trustworthy, a good employer and a good place to work. Secondly, it enforces companies that are breaking rules, to adapt their practices to societal norms (Martin and Hetrick, 2012).

Other concepts that need to be considered when talking about employer branding and employer attractiveness, are organizational image and corporate reputation (Christiaans, 2012). *Employer attractiveness* is defined as ‘the envisioned benefits that a potential employee sees in working for a specific organization’ (Berthon et al., 2005, p.156). Reasons to apply for a job or to work for a certain company are based on the *image* of an organization one has. This image is formed by instrumental and symbolic attributes. Examples of instrumental attributes are objective and concrete things like salary and leave allowances, while symbolic attributes are subjective, intangible, and abstract aspects which influence perceptions about the performance of a company (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). As stated before, *employer branding* needs to focus on internal and external needs and expectations. This focus is important to satisfy visitors, but also both current employees and potential employees. These groups are part of the stakeholders, and the various opinions from stakeholders and their interaction with each other results in a corporate reputation. *Corporate reputation* is ‘the degree of fit or alignment among the beliefs and feelings held about an organization by people and groups and what they personally or collectively value’ (Martin and Hetrick, 2012, p.74). A high reputation makes it more likely that employees will identify with the company and its mission. It enlarges the probability for employees to act like ambassadors to potential colleagues and other employees who are less-committed and, to customers.

The road towards corporateness can be divided in four stages (figure 2). In those stages the brand development is explained and the role of HRM is included in the process. In stage one there is a very limited role for branding in the strategy of the company. The brand is used as a logo for particular products for other people to recognize the product or company. In stage two companies have a good logo, so they start to create a vision and value proposition for products and services. In this stage HRM supports the individual brands and relate them to employees' values so employees can identify with these individual brands. In stage three the vision and values of the brand are strong enough to carry organizational change. The values create an identity which pays off when employees 'live the brand'. HRM provides a supporting role during this process by designing programmes for change. The final stage, stage four, is when the brand becomes the core from the strategy. HRM is the drive behind the branding process and employees identify closely with the brand values and act as brand ambassadors.

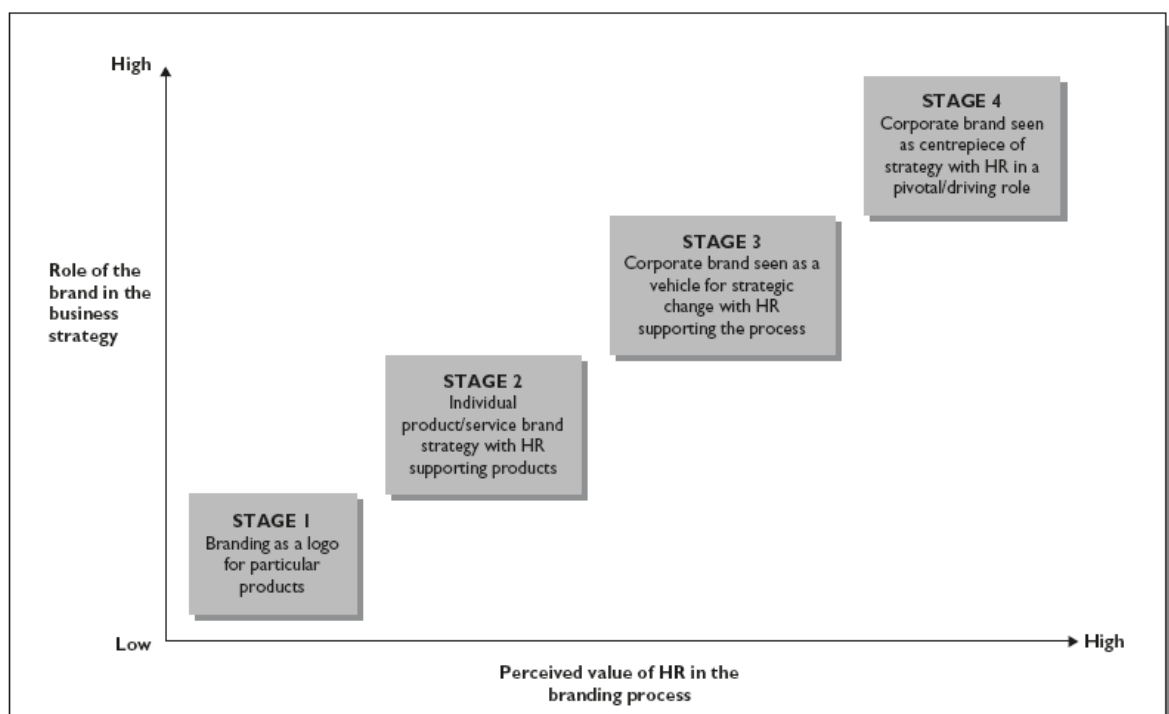


Figure 1: Stages on the road to corporateness (based on Interbrand, 2002; Martin and Beaumont, 2003 in: Martin and Hetrick, 2012)

3. Theoretical framework

In the theoretical exploration several relevant key points in studying organizations are discussed. In this research these theories are necessary to find out how a company can create more commitment among employees with the brand of the company. First of all it is important to know something about the organizational structure. This will create a first impression about how the business is running and what roles the different employees have. A company can work rather structural and hierarchical with centralized power, or it can work more dynamic and decentralized. In relation to the organizational structure the organizational culture will be elaborated. The culture is reciprocal because people create the culture and culture creates people. The combination of a structure and culture defines the way an organization copes with changes. Within a centralized structure the top management decides what is going to happen and frontline managers execute the ideas, while in a decentralized structure all employees are involved in decisions and together they create a change. In figure 3 the literature is shown in a theoretical model.

Nowadays it becomes more usual for companies to work dynamic and organic than mechanistic. This results in companies which work more decentralized and new terms like corporateness and employer branding emerged. By creating a strong brand, associated with the company, it is likely to improve revenues. A brand must be strong towards customers, but it is also important to focus on employees. Employer branding is a strategy which focuses on employees by creating shared values so employees will become ambassadors for the organization. An ambassador is satisfied with the company and spreads this enthusiasm among others.

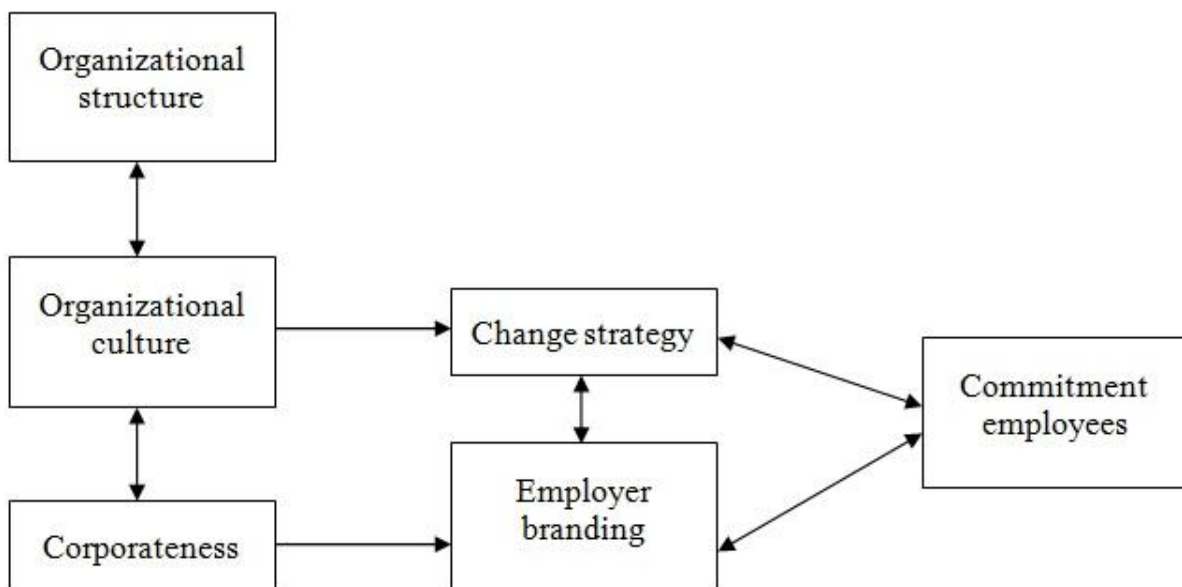


Figure 2: Theoretical model

4. Research design

4.1 Research question

In the introduction it is shown that the aim of the research is to find out how a company can increase the level of commitment from employees. The research is conducted for the company Pathé in the Netherlands. Pathé wants to know how they can change their *unattached* employees into *ambassadors* from their company. According to this question the following research question and sub-questions were formulated.

How can Pathé create more ambassadors from their company among employees?

Sub-questions:

1. *What are important aspects of Pathé for employees?*
2. *Which factors of organizational structure are important for employees from Pathé?*
3. *Which factors of organizational culture are important for employees from Pathé?*
4. *Which factors of employer branding contribute to the willingness of employees to recommend Pathé as an employer?*

Due to changes in the labour market it can be useful to implement the strategy of employer branding to create a strong brand for a company. In order to be able to expand the brand, first the organizational structure and organizational culture must be known, they can supplement each other. The corporate image that will be created internally and externally, will contribute to the publicity of Pathé and might attract people to work for the company.

4.2 Definitions

In this paragraph the most important concepts within the questions of this research will be defined.

Employer branding is seen as ‘a brand is a promise made and kept in every strategic, marketing, and human resource activity, every action, every corporate decision and every customer and employee interaction with the intention to deliver strategic value to an organization’ (Martin and Hetrick, 2012, p.47).

Organizational structure as ‘the lines of authority and communication between the different administrative offices and officers, and the information and data that flow through these lines of communication and authority’ (Chandler, 1976, p.14).

Organizational culture is ‘a system of assumptions, values, norms, and attitudes, manifested through symbols which the members of an organization have developed and adopted through mutual experience and which help them determine the meaning of the world around them and how to behave in it’ (Janićijević, 2011, p.72). Like Doorewaard and De Nijs (1998), and Cameron and Quinn (1999) this research enhances the idea that an *organizational culture* is reciprocal. It must be created by the employees themselves and should not be enforced by the top management.

Unattached employees are employees from Pathé who in the results of the MTO are satisfied with Pathé, but score low on loyalty.

Ambassadors are employees from Pathé who in the results of the MTO are satisfied with Pathé and score high on loyalty.

Loyalty The researchers from the MTO define employees as loyal if they are willing to recommend Pathé as an employer with friends and family.

4.3 Research strategy

The origin of this research is the problem of a relatively low number of *ambassadors* within Pathé. To find out how to increase this number of loyal employees and to become an attractive employer, a practice-based research will be conducted. This type of research ‘aims to do research for development, implementation, and evaluation of solutions from practical problems that are relevant for persons, groups or organizations outside the academic world’ (Boeije, et al., 2009, p.79).

This type of research works with the regulative cycle, this is not a research cycle, but displays the thinking process of decision-makers. The first phase is the awareness of a problem which is followed by a diagnostic research in which the current situation is described. With this description a plan will be formulated and an intervention will be implemented. After implementation the last phase is evaluation of the product (Boeije, et al., 2009).



Figure 3: The regulative cycle (Boeije, et al., 2009, p.90)

In this research the first phases up until the plan evaluation will take place. Pathé experiences a problem with employees who are satisfied with the organization, but not really loyal in recommending the company as employer. In order to find out how to increase this number it is necessary to know how they can improve the situation for employees and how they can create higher commitment and loyalty. The diagnostic research will display the current experiences and behaviour of employees and these findings can be used to formulate a plan. This plan can be found in the thesis as the recommendations for Pathé.

Obviously, the research aims to gain insight in the experiences and behaviour of employees and that is why there is chosen for an interpretative approach. The research question is descriptive so a complete perspective can be formed. Through these methods idiographic knowledge will be obtained because everybody shares personal experiences and stories which will describe the uniqueness of the situation.

4.3.1 Research population

Pathé is a large company with circa 1400 employees in the Netherlands. The majority consists of service employees, approximately 1100 people. About 200 other job titles work in the theatres and about 80 people work at the headquarter. The research question focuses on the employees of Pathé and in order to get a representative population it is necessary to be careful in selection.

There are 22 Pathé theatres in the Netherlands, which are all different in size and all have a different identity. Pathé has a headquarter with departments who have their own specialty, and they facilitate the theatres. The 22 theatres can be categorized in cultural, mass, and outsiders. In a cultural theatres there is a different spectrum of movies and there are more events. Pathé Tuschinski in Amsterdam is chosen to represent this category because this is the flagship of the company and is well-known. The mass theatres are large theatres which work like machines. On a daily basis there are thousands of people who visit the theatre to see a movie. Pathé Arena is chosen as a representative here because it is large and is also located in Amsterdam. It is an advantage that both theatres are located in Amsterdam because it excludes an extra variable and makes it easier to compare. The last group are the outsiders, these theatres are located in different regions further away. To represent this group Pathé De Kroon in Zwolle is chosen because this theatre is located in the north of the Netherlands, is small in size and became Pathé since 2011.

The theatres all have the same structure in job titles: theatremanager, assistant theatremanager, servicemanager, supervisor, service employee. According to the MTO results there has been made a selection. Per theatre the theatremanager was selected, two servicemanagers and/or supervisors, and five service employees. At headquarter there were five employees selected from the departments: HR, marketing, food and beverages, programming, and finance. In total 29 respondents participated in the research.

4.4 Data collection

The research for Pathé is performed on the basis of the results from the employee satisfaction survey 2012 (MTO). In order to create a better understanding of these results, there is chosen to collect data through the qualitative method interviews. To create an image of the background the researcher read documents about the strategy and operation of the company and was physically present at the headquarter. The interviews took place within the natural environment of the employees, the theatre they work. This is important because it is likely that the employees feel comfortable there and are open in their answers (Boeije, et al. 2009). The researcher went to the selected theatres for about a week per location to know how the theatre works and how the ambiance is. There is chosen for semi-structured interviews because with this method there is freedom for the researcher and employee to name other related issues or talk about several issues more extensively. It is the role of the researcher to stay objective and to make the respondent feel comfortable to answer openly.

The data is gathered from April 25th up until June 4th 2013.

4.5 Data analysis

After the data collection the audio of the interviews is transcribed and made anonymous. In a first phase, the *exploration phase*, the documents are reviewed to explore concepts. These concepts become categories in Nvivo, a computer software which helps to analyze qualitative data. These concepts develop during the *specification phase* and are filled with content. In Nvivo the different quotes about the concepts will be categorized. This will be followed by the third phase, the *reduction phase*. Here the information per category is structured and this creates a good overview. The last phase is the *integration phase*, here the theory is elaborated by the new information.

In the analysis the descriptions of people and situations is central and the different perspectives are compared to create a complete image. If relevant the different functions and location will be mentioned in the analysis.

4.6 Reliability and validity

Reliability tests if the observation covers the reality. The observation must be found through other research as well. 'It should not be on accident' (Boeije, et al., 2009, p.148).

In qualitative research this criteria of research has different methods than in quantitative research. It is difficult to repeat the interviews the same time with each respondent, though by asking initially the same questions there is a basis which is repeated with everyone and makes the results more reliable. To enhance the reliability, observations can empower the results from the interviews. This type of *method triangulation* (Boeije et al., 2009) is a way in which is tested if the results of the inquiry are reliable. Another way to increase reliability is this section about the research design. The different choices and phases are explained, in this way it becomes controllable for other people and it enables them to decide for themselves to trust the results.

Validity is 'the absence of systematic errors which distort the results of the research' (Boeije, et al., 2009, p.149). In qualitative research validity is determined by the accuracy of the interpretations of the data by the researcher and the presented evidence for these findings. In qualitative studies it is likely that researchers are *going native*, they adapt to the environment which they study. It is unsure how this affects results, but it has effect. During this research the researcher became aware of this aspect as well. The presence at the headquarter and theatres influence the perception of the researcher, in this way both perspectives can be explored. The awareness of this difference makes interpretation of the answers from both groups of respondents easier and is an advantage in analysing the interviews. Reactivity was limited because the employees were interviewed in a separate room and they knew the researcher was working independent from Pathé.

5. Results and analysis

In this chapter the results of the research will be presented in order to answer the sub questions. In the analysis different functions and locations will only be distinguished if necessary.

5.1 What are important aspects of Pathé for employees?

One of the first questions in the interview was: *Are you satisfied with the organization Pathé?* This general question triggers the mind of the respondents to think about the company and how they experience it. Therefore their answers were divergent, though much coherence can be found.

In general everyone is satisfied with Pathé, although at the same time there is criticism to a certain degree. Several aspects came forward very frequent. First of all it seems to be important for employees that Pathé is flexible. Flexibility in working hours and time schedules, but also in processes and tasks. To make this flexibility effective it is necessary to have a clear structure. A clear structure is perceived as a framework for employees about their responsibilities and tasks, and they feel free in how to carry out those tasks.

Pathé is an organized ehhh machine, you could say so. In the past this was véry different. It is pleasant.. to have more structure. (Servicemanager/Supervisor, Zwolle)

Pathé is experienced as a structured company, though it can improve by making adjustments to its larger size. In a few years Pathé expanded from ten to 22 theatres in the Netherlands. This forces the company to become more professional with the aid of uniformity and procedures in all theatres.

It is a large company who needs to get used to the fact they are large. Things are not as structured and standardized as they should be and I think people often want to stick to their own things, while with this size it is impossible. (Employee headquarter)

Those adjustments are still going on, but the last few years there has been an improvement in education which resulted in more interaction between the headquarter and theatres. A good example of this improved communication is the *spotlight*, a digital booklet with news and information from headquarter and theatres which is sent to all employees monthly.

One remark which is enhanced by several employees is that since the expansion, Pathé became bureaucratic. It is difficult to change something because of all the different layers and all these people need to be involved and need to approve in a decision.

A theatre manager says: *Sometimes it is an organization which thinks terribly long about decisions and where many people need to decide about something.*

A service manager says about this: *I am not able to change something inside the theatre by myself. It goes via my theatre manager, he is nearby, so no problem. He needs to ask permission to his region manager and if it concerns something big, maybe it needs to be asked on a higher level. You can always share ideas, but it is difficult to change something because of the large size of the company.*

Although communication had improved, it still can become better. People from different layers in theatres state that the social communication should improve. Employees only hear about their flaws, they would feel more appreciated when they get a compliment more often. Another thing to improve in communication is the more interaction between employees from the headquarter and theatres, they should have a mutual perspective.

In order to create this mutual perspective employees from theatre would like to see employees from the headquarter more often in their theatre. During these visits they can speak with the local employees who see different things, know what is going on, and what needs to be done.

Other aspects that seems to be important to employees are challenges and variety in their job. People from all layers mention these elements to contribute to satisfaction of their job and the organization who provides this. In Pathé employees from all layers mention those aspects to be present. Other positive aspects about Pathé are: wages are paid in time, time schedules communicated early, secondary working conditions (moviecard) and for headquarter also personal growth, flexibility, structure, dynamic and innovative, and professional.

A general remark is that the satisfaction is partly caused by the product. People really love to work inside a cinema or to work with film. A remarkable result is that every employee is satisfied with their own location, but they find it difficult to say this about the organization itself.

5.2 Which factors of organizational structure are important for employees from Pathé?

Pathé works with more adaptive and organic structures like an open system. An open system is a combination of the rational and natural systems approach. For Pathé important factors of the organizational structure, from employees' perspective, will be discussed in the topics structure in job titles, equality and communication.

5.2.1 Structure in job titles

In order to get insight into the different job titles the employees were asked to explain the tasks corresponding with their job title and how their function contributes to the entire organization. The theatremanagers describe themselves as a spider in the web who is responsible for all different aspects of the theatre. This diversity in tasks makes the job challenging and free. Within the given structure they are free in the way how they achieve the outcome. The function of theatremanager contributes to Pathé by acting as the connection between theatre and headquarter.

A theatremanager used a metaphor: You are some sort of funnel, the smallest part. Every communication from headquarter passes through the theatremanager, and everything, feedback from service employees.. concerning policy or issues, will communicated to headquarter by theatremanager.

The servicemanagers and supervisors feel the responsibility to keep everything going via coaching and directing employees on the floor. A supervisor performs the same tasks as service employees plus a little extra and they are the link between service employees and servicemanagers. Servicemanagers are more leading and also do some administrative work. Both servicemanagers and supervisors, experience their jobs to be variable, challenging and pleasant. The servicemanager contributes by coaching service employees and making the visitor satisfied. The supervisors perceive their job not to be necessary, though valuable on busy days.

The service is in our title, servicemanagers, so we are working to provide service here in the theatre. We try to fulfil the expectations from the visitors. (Servicemanager)

Service employees define three different tasks which they perform. The first is ushering, this includes cleaning auditoriums, toilets and the building. The second task is buffet, here they sell food, beverages, and tickets. The final task is box-office, which includes selling tickets and hosting. They experience their job as being simple, flexible and pleasant. The rotation between the different tasks works fine and makes it variable. Furthermore, they mention the social interaction to be positive. They contribute by providing good service to satisfy visitors. They feel they are the face of the company because they actually execute the work and are the first one to be spoken to. In relation to this service employees mention it is important to work with a smile and provide the best service you can for visitors.

I think it is the most important, maybe the most uncomplicated, but the most important task from the organization, service employee. This is who the visitor sees and what the visitors experience, that is the image they associate with Pathé I guess. (Service employee, Zwolle)

At the headquarter tasks differ according to the various departments. Employees from headquarter perceive their job to be challenging, variable and pleasant. Some of them also mentioned it to be hard-working which makes it necessary to prioritize tasks related to time. At the headquarter people there is really a team spirit within departments. Employees perceive not their function to be contributively, but their entire department.

All respondents are aware of the structure in Pathé theatres and everybody is able to explain the different functions. The structure of the headquarter is not clear for everyone. All theatre employees know about the existence but especially service employees and some supervisors are not aware of activities from the headquarter. Management employees are familiar with the different departments but in general they want employees from headquarter to become more visible in theatres.

The lack of knowledge among service employees raises the question whether it is necessary for them to know about activities from the headquarter. The majority of service employees is interested to know more, but a few people are not because they just do as they are told by their managers and simply obey instructions.

5.2.2 Equality

To find out how employees experience the structure within the theatre they were asked about equality among employees. In theatres there is no equality in tasks and responsibility, but they do feel treated equally. Some people mention that they feel unequal compared to the theatre manager. This is caused by the perception of him being the ‘boss’.

The social interaction is very open, sure there is, someone, decides in general what needs to be done and if you do something wrong you will hear about it, which is just normal... but you do not feel less or something, not at all. Because of the friendly interaction. (Service employee, Zwolle)

Between theatres and the headquarter there is no equality experienced. This inequality is related to the different tasks and position in the company, but is not experienced in personal treatment. This difference is not considered to be inconvenient because theatres and headquarter are two different things which should supplement each other.

Within the headquarter employees feel more equal, also in function. The only exception are managers, they are perceived to be different because they have certain privileges and directly report to the CEO. Here also the treatment of employees is experienced to be equal. In both theatre and headquarter there is a friendly relationship among employees and people are willing to help each other.

5.2.3 Communication

Theatremanagers describe Pathé as a flat organization with transparency. Other employees do not mention this specifically but in their answers it is shown that they do feel free to drop ideas, suggestions and remarks at the management level, which features a flat organization.

If it is something specific which needs to be arranged at management level, I will tell the first manager I bump into. Or theatremanager or assistant theatremanager, it does not really matter, the first from this group I will pass. (Servicemanager/Supervisor, Arena)

There are different ways for ideas and suggestions to reach management. Supervisors and managers have meetings to share thoughts and service employees have one or two times a year a meeting to share ideas. Those meetings are valuable to employees because the teams are together and there is a really open atmosphere. During the entire year it is possible to drop suggestions in a special 'idea box'. In Pathé Arena there is also a special group of service employees who represent this group and tell managers what is going on and give feedback. Managers can also share ideas with different departments at the headquarter.

In theatres the managers take opinions from employees into account, but it is not always possible carry ideas out due to financial limitations or better suggestions. At the headquarter it is not always clear where to go to with ideas. It is important to know who is responsible for what in a structure, because the current lack of this knowledge causes problems in cooperation and communication.

5.3 Which factors of organizational culture are important for employees from Pathé?

In this paragraph the factors of organizational culture that are important to employees from Pathé will be discussed according to strategy, collaboration and commitment.

5.3.1 Strategy

About five years ago Pathé formulated a strategy to create more clarity in their operations. This strategy includes a vision, mission, ambition and core values. The vision is about who they are, the mission is how they are going to achieve this, ambition is where they want to go,

and the core values are guidelines for how their employees should behave in order to be part of the company. Every employee should be acquainted with this strategy because during the selection procedure they are told about it. In the interviews it came forward that communication about the strategy can be improved.

When asking about the strategy of Pathé it rings a bell for everybody, but almost none of them were able to name the keypoints. After giving those keypoints almost everybody referred to the right content.

It is just a very commercial company, so they want to sell as much as possible and provide high quality service. I think that is important to Pathé, that we really deliver a service to the visitor and so to say, make them feel comfortable. (Service employee Tuschinski)

Yes, ehm... To become the number one in film. By means of becoming the best in.. audio, visual, entertainment, everything, so to say the total package. (Servicemanager/Supervisor, Zwolle)

So people do apply the strategy though are unable to call the exact names. At the headquarter the opinions about the strategy vary. All employees think it is good to have a strategy, but half of the respondents from headquarter believe them to be rather vague. These people rather focus on something in the short term with direct result instead of this long term outcome. There is a large group of respondents who did mention a part of the strategy without any help: the core values. Those are well-known because employees get to hear those repeatedly via methods like workshops, *spotlight*, *take-fives*, *zooms*, and *e-learning*.

5.3.2 Collaboration

Collaboration between employees is an aspect which displays much of an organizational culture. Employees describe the culture of Pathé as open, with a good cooperation between colleagues and different departments. In general people feel free to talk to each other and they act friendly towards each other, but cooperation can improve. Communication between employees has been improved through social media. Most of the theatres have a group page on *Facebook* where people share documents, change working shifts and communicate about various subjects. The collaboration between different departments in theatres is good. In some cases there is a little distance experienced, in Arena they formed a special group of service employees who can deliver feedback to the servicemanagers to diminish the gap between them.

In general you are a team with your colleagues, you help each other. If someone is unable to do something, others will help. And qua management and supervisors it is the same. If it is busy, managers will take over as host or will help with cleaning. There are different organizational levels, but if necessary, than we are one team. (Service employee, Arena)

The employees in theatres communicate via radiotelephones which are easy resources and work effectively. Inside the headquarter there are more difficulties experienced in cooperation between different departments. Here there is more a feeling of *them* and *us* which makes it more competitive and more difficult to work together.

You need to watch out for.. ehh a collaboration of 'You will do this for me' instead of 'We are going to do this together'. (Employee headquarter)

Theatremanagers and servicemanagers say there is cooperation between the different locations, they call or email each other with questions. Service employees feel different about it, they experience very limited cooperation. They mention that theatres deliver employees when needed and they share products when they are out of stock in their own cinema.

The collaboration between the theatres and the headquarter are experienced differently. The theatremanagers and servicemanagers are positive, they can easily communicate via email or telephone. Supervisors are quasi-positive about the collaboration because they feel less involved, they receive less information about the company. The majority of service employees lack knowledge about headquarter to judge about cooperation between theatres and the headquarter. They perceive the headquarter to be far away and more hierarchical. Within the theatre people work there is obviously a team spirit where every employee mentions the willingness to help amongst employees.

5.3.3 Commitment

According to the employees the culture of Pathé focuses both on employees and visitors. The open culture with high quality service is there to provide a pleasant evening out for visitors, and it is them they want to impress. The role of the service employees is to show this culture in their actions so Pathé needs to aim at them to get the culture to the visitors.

It is likely to assume that employees who bear the culture of Pathé are also very committed to the company. Nevertheless, service employees state to be committed to their own location and want to do something extra here. In contrast, they feel little or not committed to the entire company. Again, this answers displays the distance between service employees and the

headquarter. By working harder in their own theatre the revenues increase and they unconsciously display commitment to improve the overall performance of Pathé.

Personally I feel more committed to Pathé Zwolle. Yes, that is the location where I work. I don't know. I am not really related to headquarter, so I have a better connection with Pathé Zwolle. (Service employee, Zwolle)

The commitment with Pathé improves with function, the higher the position, the higher the level of commitment to the organization.

I do not mind to work some extra hours. Ehm.. You all hope that Pathé is doing as good as possible and you try to contribute to that. And.. just.. just proud, with your employer, I mean.. yes. (Employee headquarter)

5.3.4 Involved in decision and change

The change strategies of Chin and Benne (1969) explain a lot about an organizational culture. In Pathé the normative re-educative strategy fits most according to the answers of the respondents. In this strategy employees are actively involved in changes which creates a combination of top down and bottom up communication. It seems that involvement in these processes is an important factor because in that way people feel more connected to the company. The majority of the service employees, supervisors and servicemanagers feel involved in the processes of decisions and changes in theatre. They experience opportunities to share ideas and opinions and feel free to give feedback. Obviously the theatremanagers are involved in these processes inside their theatre, but they also feel involved with decisions at the level of headquarter. There are various project groups where people from different theatres and from the headquarter are involved and they develop ideas. Remarkably, the employees at headquarter feel they have none to very limited influence in these processes. They contribute in plans, but only managers work closely with the top management, and they decide.

From these findings Pathé seems to be dynamic and flexible in general. According to the model of Cameron and Quinn (1999) Pathé can be classified as a *clan* oriented company (figure 1). Employees act like a family where managers and supervisors have a mentoring role. Although, Pathé has an internal and external focus. This duality causes Pathé also to show some elements of the *adhocracy* oriented culture. Employees refer to Pathé with characteristics like innovation and taking risks which can be read in the next paragraph.

5.4 Which factors of employer branding contribute to the willingness of employees to recommend Pathé as an employer?

Corporateness includes many elements which are related to the internal and external organizational image. In order to get employees to recommend a company as an employer it is necessary to create a strong brand where employees can identify with and which creates a higher commitment. There are different phases in this process (Figure 2) and it seems that Pathé is moving towards phase three out of four. They have a strong corporate brand which is related to the strategy. The HRM department views the corporate brand already as aid for strategic change, but the brand seems not strong enough yet. In this paragraph the corporateness will be discussed with emphasis on employer branding.

5.4.1 Association company

To find out how the employees perceive Pathé as an employer they were asked to explain in a few sentences or a few words what Pathé as an employer means to them. Answers were very divergent, but the most common aspects will be elaborated. Pathé offers a nice work climate, and for service employees a good social network. They are perceived to be structured and reliable which provides security for employees. Other aspects were flexibility, informative, innovative/dynamic, and chances for personal growth. These aspects are experienced to be positive and make people enthusiastic about Pathé.

Pleasant, informative, challenging, innovative.. something like that. (Theatremanager)

A place where you can work within the framework of management and supervisors although.. you need to have your own responsibility like I keep myself busy. (Service employee, Arena)

Their answers are in line with their general opinion about Pathé shown in the paragraph about important aspects of Pathé. Employees are satisfied but they believe it can still improve on several things like communication and interaction. The words associated with the company are quite the same for both headquarter- and theatre employees.

5.4.2 Core values

All employees have a positive association with Pathé and are familiar with the strategy and core values of the company.

Pathé has formulated four core values they want their service employees to have: alert (Alert), commitment (Betrokkenheid), clever (Clever), dare (Durven). To remember those values easily they form the letters ABCD. Almost half of the respondents came up with ABCD

themselves, the other half could take it over with help. The values are well-known, used during work, and recognizable for employees.

5.4.3 Experience environment

People from the personal environment of employees are all familiar with Pathé and overall they are positive about the brand.

Pathé has a lot to offer so to say. I mean, in every theatre there are other movies and a large spectrum of movies also. And.. for example, we have a very diverse buffet, although.. that is something negative, it is quite expensive. (Service employee, Tuschinski)

Employees from the region of Amsterdam did mention that there is no real other choice, there are only film houses around. In Zwolle people needed to adjust to the new owner. Now they are positive, although there is little disappointment about the spectrum of movies offered. The brand Pathé is strong and raises certain expectations concerning quality and the spectrum of movies, which they are not able to fulfil entirely in Zwolle.

5.4.4 Corporate social responsibility

Employees' response on the subject of corporate social responsibility is quite low. They needed a broad explanation to get them thinking about the subject and their most common example is separation of trash. The second thing mentioned is the saving of energy and the third is charity. Only a recent campaign with Unicef was mentioned, which is remarkable because Pathé has a long relationship with BIO kinderrevalidatie, a foundation for child revalidation, but only a few employees mentioned this.

I think that if you do something like that, it is important to show that to every layer of the company. (Service employee, Arena)

In the headquarter there is even less awareness of corporate social responsibility activities. It is remarkable that almost all employees are convinced that the company has responsibility for societal well-being and should be more active. Employees have difficulties to name how to improve because they lack knowledge about recent activities.

5.4.5 Ambassador

Almost everybody would recommend Pathé as an employer to others. The MTO results from this question show different results. This deviation can probably be explained by the fact that the majority says there is no fit between friends/family and organization. The employees

make a selection themselves in recommending Pathé as an employer and some employees do not want to work with friends and family.

Not everybody. It is not suitable for everybody, absolutely not. Ehm, though I recommended people for sure. (Servicemanager/Supervisor, Arena)

6. Conclusions

In chapter 2 and 3 the theory for this research is elaborated. It became evident that the organizational structure, organizational culture, and corporateness play a role in employer branding and commitment of employees. In the first paragraph of this chapter the results from the data analysis will be related to these theories to answer the main question of this research: *How can Pathé create more ambassadors from their company among employees?* In the second paragraph there is a reflection on the research and in the final paragraph recommendations will be given according to the results.

6.1 How can Pathé create more ambassadors from their company among employees?

Ambassadors are employees who are highly satisfied with the company, and score high on loyalty towards Pathé. In the employee satisfaction survey 2012 (MTO) loyalty is determined by the factor recommending Pathé as an employer to friends and family. If someone scores high for this question they are defined as loyal and if someone scores low he is not loyal to the company. Employees who scored high in satisfaction, but low on loyalty are called *unattached* employees. To create more *ambassadors* Pathé needs to increase the loyalty of *unattached* employees.

According to the MTO and the employee profiles, *unattached* employees need to create the willingness to recommend Pathé as an employer with friends and family. When asking the question whether respondents would recommend Pathé to friends and family, the majority answered with yes. This is a different result than in the MTO. It seems this discrepancy can be explained by the fact that many employees make a selection themselves. They will only recommend Pathé if the person fits the organization. According to employees people need to be able to deal with flexibility. People should be willing to work extra hours and help employees by changing shifts for example. Also there are specific function related aspects which cause employees to select friends and family. For example, the function of service employee is seen as an ideal part time job during study. Therefore this job will mostly be recommended to students. Supervisors and managers are job titles which require leading and mentoring skills and will only be recommended if someone possess these skills. A job at the headquarter is related to a department and people should be a specialist in a certain area to be recommended to apply for a job.

In this answer about recommendation it is evident that there are many other factors which play a role in recommending Pathé as an employer and thus in loyalty. Loyalty towards an

employer follows from commitment to a company. In earlier chapters it is shown that a high commitment evolves when employees are satisfied and can identify with the company.

6.2 Discussion

In this section the limitations from the research will be presented. Due to the detection of a discrepancy between the definitions of loyalty it became difficult to answer the research question. It will be impossible to compare the percentage of *ambassadors* from 2013 with the MTO results from 2012 because the definition of loyalty needs to be modified. Nevertheless, it is possible to say something about important aspects of employer branding that contribute in creating *ambassadors*, these are shown in the previous paragraph.

6.2.1 Discussion of methodology

In this research the quantitative MTO results conducted by a research bureau form the basis. To create a better understanding of the experiences from Pathé employees in theatres and the headquarter there is chosen to perform a qualitative research. To guarantee the validity of this research the research is carried out systematically. Resources like a voicerecorder and the computer software Nvivo help to process the information systematically and precise. The reliability of this research is quite high because the researcher has been present in the theatres and at the headquarter which creates better understanding and interpretations from both perspectives.

6.2.2 Recommendations for a follow-up research

For a follow-up research on the subject of creating *ambassadors* within Pathé it is recommended to interview more employees from a larger number of theatres. With a larger selection of respondents it is possible to compare the results on different factors, for example on the size of the theatre. A second recommendation is to repeat this same kind of qualitative research after the MTO of 2013. In that way the results from both inquiries can be compared and it will show whether the quality of the MTO increased or not.

6.3 Recommendations for Pathé

In this paragraph recommendations resulting from the research will be elaborated. Most of all it seems valuable for Pathé to adjust the analysis about employee profiles in the MTO. The profiles are determined by loyalty and satisfaction. This seems to be a good combination, but loyalty should be defined by different factors like the degree of commitment to the company.

To increase the satisfaction and loyalty there are a few things Pathé can improve. First of all, the structure within the headquarter seems unclear. At the headquarter the department HR is

developing a new overview of job titles and related responsibilities and tasks. This new overview would probably create more clarity and will empower cooperation within the headquarter and between the headquarter and theatres. The second recommendation is to elucidate the company's strategy to create enthusiasm amongst all the employees. The majority of the employees state that part of their satisfaction with Pathé is created by the product. They experience working with film and cinema as positive so Pathé can respond to this feeling by including more aspects of film in the strategy.

A final recommendation is to improve communication between the headquarter and theatres. To formulate an appropriate advise for different theatres it is good to be aware of current situations in a theatre. It is suggested that employees from headquarter should visit the theatres more often to keep up to date.

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8. Annexes

1. MTO results

Results MTO 2011

TEVREDENHEID	Ongebonden 1%	Loyalisten 59%				
	8 of hoger, niet aanbevelen	8 of hoger en aanbevelen				
	Potentiële weglopers 10%	Teleurgestelden 30%				
	7 of lager, niet aanbevelen	7 of lager, wél aanbevelen				
	LOYALITEIT					

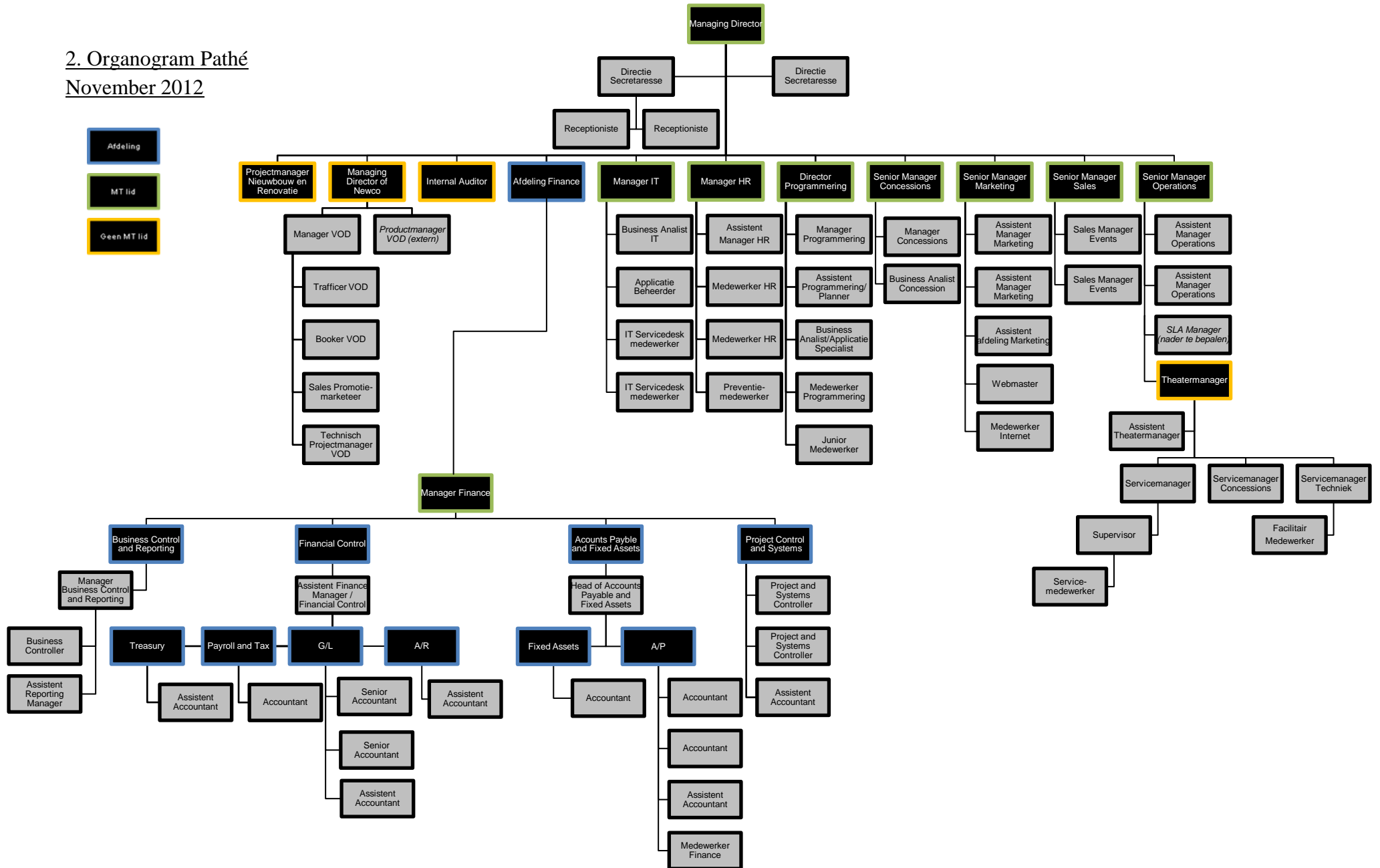
		Loyalisten	Teleurgestelden	Ongebonden	Weglopers
2011	Totaal	57%	32%	1%	10%
2011	Nieuwe theaters	49%	37%	4%	11%
2011	Oude theaters	60% ↑	30% ↑	1% ↓	10% ↓
2010		58%	28%	3%	11%
2009		54%	29%	3%	14%
2008		43%	31%	5%	21%

Results MTO 2012

TEVREDENHEID	Ongebonden 22%	Ambassadeur 43%		
	8 of hoger, niet aanbevelen	8 of hoger en aanbevelen		
	Potentiële wegloper 14%	Teleurgesteld 10%	Twijfelaar 11%	
	7 of lager, niet aanbevelen	7 of lager, wél aanbevelen		
	LOYALITEIT			

Ambassadeur	Tevreden met Pathé (8 of hoger) en zal Pathé zeker aanbevelen
Ongebonden	Tevreden met Pathé (8 of hoger) maar zal Pathé niet (zeker) aanbevelen
Twijfelaar	Redelijk tevreden met Pathé (cijfer 7) en zal Pathé waarschijnlijk aanbevelen
Teleurgesteld	Niet (helemaal) tevreden met Pathé (7 of lager) maar zal Pathé zeker aanbevelen
Potentiële wegloper	Niet (helemaal) tevreden met Pathé (7 of lager) en zal Pathé niet (zeker) aanbevelen

2. Organogram Pathé November 2012



3. Correlation matrix

Pearson Correlations

	Locatie	Werken bij	organisatie Pathé als werkgever	Pathé als werkgever aanraden aan anderen	Arbeidsomstandigheden	Inhoud van het werk	Werk sfeer & Samenwerking	Leidinggevende(n)	Arbeidsvoorwaarden en beloning	Opleiding en ontwikkeling	Communicatie	Ik voel me serieus genomen in mijn werk	Ik doe zinvol werk	Ik weet wat er in de organisatie (Pathé) speelt	Ik voel me er thuis	Ik ben trots op het werk dat ik doe	Ik ben trots om voor Pathé te werken	Ik ga graag naar mijn werk	Over een jaar werk ik nog steeds bij Pathé	Ik voel me een onderdeel van een team	Ik doe graag een stap extra om bij te dragen aan het succes van Pathé	Er is een gezonde balans tussen werk en privé
Locatie	1	,721	,553	,500	,587	,484	,526	,650	,426	,451	,603	,406	,336	,274	,397	,360	,382	,382	,345	,338	,332	,270
Werken bij	,721	1	,487	,505	,614	,555	,581	,609	,440	,447	,537	,422	,389	,280	,454	,431	,431	,487	,399	,382	,361	,326
organisatie Pathé als werkgever	,553	,487	1	,453	,479	,423	,362	,429	,457	,482	,468	,293	,333	,278	,265	,305	,361	,261	,258	,238	,250	,212
Pathé als werkgever aanraden aan anderen	,500	,505	,453	1	,423	,405	,384	,477	,388	,418	,456	,305	,295	,250	,323	,332	,390	,321	,305	,289	,294	,212
Arbeidsomstandigheden	,587	,614	,479	,423	1	,539	,465	,522	,504	,495	,539	,394	,363	,276	,376	,369	,381	,399	,359	,324	,341	,321
Inhoud van het werk	,484	,555	,423	,405	,539	1	,402	,471	,395	,526	,440	,400	,481	,289	,339	,516	,443	,401	,389	,296	,364	,190
Werk sfeer & Samenwerking	,526	,581	,362	,384	,465	,402	1	,612	,373	,362	,500	,322	,241	,167	,402	,269	,264	,368	,270	,413	,224	,231
Leidinggevende(n)	,650	,609	,429	,477	,522	,471	,612	1	,430	,469	,615	,461	,319	,243	,384	,345	,348	,374	,330	,398	,301	,253
Arbeidsvoorwaarden en	,426	,440	,457	,388	,504	,395	,373	,430	1	,546	,433	,292	,262	,202	,236	,302	,330	,276	,280	,244	,205	,238
Opleiding en ontwikkeling	,451	,447	,482	,418	,495	,526	,362	,469	,546	1	,526	,358	,365	,288	,264	,367	,395	,298	,324	,306	,295	,196
Communicatie	,603	,537	,468	,456	,539	,440	,500	,615	,433	,526	1	,358	,302	,226	,272	,269	,297	,305	,307	,310	,248	,293
Ik voel me serieus genomen in mijn werk	,406	,422	,293	,305	,394	,400	,322	,461	,292	,358	,358	1	,567	,431	,541	,551	,513	,519	,447	,559	,502	,348
Ik doe zinvol werk	,336	,389	,333	,295	,363	,481	,241	,319	,262	,365	,302	,567	1	,435	,461	,617	,567	,509	,457	,447	,539	,347
Ik weet wat er in de organisatie (Pathé) speelt	,274	,280	,278	,250	,276	,289	,167	,243	,202	,288	,226	,431	,435	1	,371	,412	,401	,394	,279	,345	,402	,251
Ik voel me er thuis	,397	,454	,265	,323	,376	,339	,402	,384	,236	,264	,272	,541	,461	,371	1	,519	,549	,633	,465	,617	,499	,391
Ik ben trots op het werk dat ik	,360	,431	,305	,332	,369	,516	,269	,345	,302	,367	,269	,551	,617	,412	,519	1	,723	,569	,484	,479	,538	,276
Ik ben trots om voor Pathé te	,382	,431	,361	,390	,381	,443	,264	,348	,330	,395	,297	,513	,567	,401	,549	,723	1	,559	,527	,480	,561	,297
Ik ga graag naar mijn werk	,382	,487	,261	,321	,399	,401	,368	,374	,276	,298	,305	,519	,509	,394	,633	,569	,559	1	,512	,548	,550	,427
Over een jaar werk ik nog steeds bij Pathé	,345	,399	,258	,305	,359	,389	,270	,330	,280	,324	,307	,447	,457	,279	,465	,484	,527	,512	1	,399	,479	,310
Ik voel me een onderdeel van	,338	,382	,238	,289	,324	,296	,413	,398	,244	,306	,310	,559	,447	,345	,617	,479	,480	,548	,399	1	,451	,358
Ik doe graag een stap extra om	,332	,361	,250	,294	,341	,364	,224	,301	,205	,295	,248	,502	,539	,402	,499	,538	,561	,550	,479	,451	1	,307
Er is een gezonde balans tussen werk en privé	,270	,326	,212	,212	,321	,190	,231	,253	,238	,196	,293	,348	,347	,251	,391	,276	,297	,427	,310	,358	,307	1

1. The red coloured cells display a correlation >.500

2. The table is in Dutch so the comma should be read as a dot.

4. Regression on recommending Pathé as employer

Coefficients^a

		Standardized Coefficients
Model		Beta
	I am proud to work for Pathé	,158
	Work climate and collaboration	,124
	Working conditions and remuneration	,122
	Manager(s)	,121
	Content of work	,114
	Communication	,114

a. Dependent Variable: Recommending Pathé as an employer to others

,752

I am proud to work for Pathé	6%
Work climate and collaboration	5%
Working conditions and remuneration	5%
Manager(s)	4%
Content of work	4%
Communication	4%
Total explained	28%

Regression on recommending Pathé as employer

Explained variance	0,278
valid N	1063

5. Employee profiles per location

Profile	Location				
	Headquarter Pathé	Pathé Amersfoort	Pathé Arena	Pathé Breda	Pathé Buitenhof
Loyalists	47%	54%	39%	39%	34%
Unattached	18%	7%	20%	21%	43%
Disappointed	16%	12%	9%	16%	6%
Doubter	14%	7%	12%	8%	9%
Walk away	5%	20%	20%	16%	9%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Profile	Pathé City	Pathé De Kroon Zwolle	Pathé De Kuip	Pathé De Munt	Pathé Delft
	Loyalists	17%	38%	43%	53%
Unattached	10%	45%	8%	19%	21%
Disappointed	3%	10%	13%	8%	15%
Doubter	27%	3%	12%	10%	12%
Walk away	43%	3%	23%	10%	12%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Profile	Pathé Eindhoven	Pathé Groningen	Pathé Haarlem	Pathé Helmond	Pathé Maastricht
	Loyalists	47%	57%	31%	53%
Unattached	10%	19%	22%	36%	20%
Disappointed	12%	3%	19%	6%	12%
Doubter	18%	5%	20%	3%	12%
Walk away	14%	16%	7%	3%	20%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Profile	Pathé Rembrandt – Utrecht	Pathé Scheveningen	Pathé Schouwburgplein	Pathé Spuimarkt	Pathé Tilburg
	Loyalists	26%	55%	32%	49%
Unattached	15%	17%	25%	19%	28%
Disappointed	11%	13%	11%	7%	3%
Doubter	19%	11%	23%	7%	10%
Walk away	30%	4%	9%	18%	10%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Profile	Pathé Tuschinski	Pathé Zaandam	Rembrandt – Arnhem
	Loyalists	30%	32%
Unattached	52%	32%	11%
Disappointed		13%	5%
Doubter	12%	11%	3%
Walk away	6%	13%	27%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%

1. Blue is *unattached*.
2. Yellow is *loyalty* >40%.
3. Red is *unattached* >40%.
4. Orange is *unattached* >30%.

6. Employee profiles per function

profiel	Functie									Grand Total
	TM	ATM	Service manager	Service manager techniek	Supervisor	Service medewerker	Facilitair medewerker	Medewerker HQ	Afdelingshoofd HQ	
Loyalisten	62%	61%	44%	33%	48%	41%	33%	36%	64%	43%
Ongebonden	29%	11%	28%	33%	22%	22%	29%	21%	18%	22%
Teleurgestelden	5%		7%		4%	10%		21%	9%	10%
twijfelaars	5%	17%	10%	17%	14%	11%	14%	18%		11%
Weglopers		11%	10%	17%	12%	15%	24%	5%	9%	14%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

7. Topicijst

Mijn naam is Bernice Boeding. Ik volg de master Social Policy and Social Interventions aan de Universiteit van Utrecht. Voor mijn afstuderen heb ik gekozen voor de richting Human Resources en daarom voer ik een onderzoek uit voor Pathé en loop ik stage bij de HR-afdeling op het hoofdkantoor. Ik zou willen vragen of ik het interview mag opnemen met een audiorecorder, op die manier kunnen we gewoon een gesprek voeren en kan ik het later uitwerken.

Algemeen

Ik heb mij net voorgesteld, ik zou willen vragen of jij ook een korte introductie van jezelf kunt geven. Locatie

Naam

Functie

Leeftijd

Aantal jaren in dienst

- Taken van functie
- Hoe draagt jouw functie bij in het geheel?
- Ben je tevreden over de organisatie Pathé?

Organisatiestructuur

- Kun je iets vertellen over de samenstelling van Pathé?
 - Hoe is de structuur opgebouwd? Welke functies zijn er?
 - Heb je het idee dat iedereen gelijk is?
 - Als jij een goed idee hebt of een op- of aanmerking, bij wie kan je dan terecht? en heb je het idee dat er iets mee gedaan wordt?

Organisatiecultuur

Pathé heeft een strategie ontwikkelt voor de komende jaren, deze bestaat uit vier pijlers. Ben je hiermee bekend?

- Visie: waar staan we voor
- Missie: waar gaan we voor
- Ambitie: wat willen we bereiken
- Kernwaarden: ABCD: Alert, Betrokken, Clever, Durven.

Samenwerking

- Hoe ervaar jij deze tussen: afdelingen/onderling/vestigingen+Hoofdkantoor

Waarden en normen binnen Pathé

- Wat denk jij dat Pathé wil uitstralen qua cultuur?
 - Richten zij zich op medewerkers of op bezoekers?
 - Is er een wij-gevoel of is er een hiërarchie?

Betrokkenheid

- Voel je je betrokken bij Pathé? Bij eigen vestiging?
- Word je betrokken bij beslissingen/veranderingen/strategieën?

Corporateness/employer branding

Associatie met Pathé

- Zou je in een paar zinnen kunnen zeggen wie Pathé als organisatie is voor jou?

Identiteit

- Wat zijn de kernwaarden die je associeert met Pathé?
 - Gedeelde waarden
 - Buiten de vastgelegde waarden, nog eigen toevoeging?

Imago

- Hoe beoordelen mensen uit je omgeving Pathé?
 - Zijn ze ermee bekend?
 - Film liefhebbers?
 - Baantje

Reputatie

- Hebben zij een positieve of negatieve associatie?
 - Vertrouwen zij op het 'merk'? kan Pathé zich fouten veroorloven?

Corporate Social Responsibility

Wat tegenwoordig heel populair is onder grote bedrijven is maatschappelijk verantwoord ondernemen. Dit kan verschillende vormen aannemen, bijvoorbeeld duurzaamheid in het bedrijf, milieubewust zijn, maar ook maatschappelijke betrokkenheid. Dit kan ook verschillende vormen aannemen zoals: rolstoeltoegankelijkheid, mensen met een beperking in dienst nemen, en het steunen van goede doelen.

- Zijn er activiteiten of taken die je in verband kunt brengen met Maatschappelijk Verantwoord Ondernemen?
 - Succesvol?
- Zou hier meer aan gedaan moeten worden?

Ambassadeurs

- Zou je Pathé als werkgever aanbevelen aan familie/vrienden?
 - Waarom wel/niet?
- Hoe denken collega's daarover?

Dit waren mijn vragen. Heb je zelf nog vragen of op/aanmerkingen?

Bedankt voor het gesprek.

Zou je aan het eind van mijn onderzoek graag een samenvatting van de resultaten zien?

Noteer email adres.

8. Codes

