Ten thousand applications in ten minutes

Evaluating scalable recruitment, evaluation and screening methods of candidates for sales jobs

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Abstract

While personnel evaluation has been extensively covered in literature, little is known about evaluation procedures screening a large number of applicants. The basis of this research was to investigate if candidates for sales positions can be evaluated in a scalable way (where the number of applications does not impact the cost of evaluation much) for an on demand sales platform.

The study consists of interviews with the recruiters and growth leads of the studied firm, a case study of a firm that has omitted resumes in their salesperson recruitment processes, and sample tests performed on candidates for sales positions. Further, some data on salespeople was collected and analysed.

In summary, the study links the findings to the restrictions of a process that requires scalability. Previous research outlines how
various indicators (personality facets, biodata, and optimism) predict sales performance in salespeople. Mental ability of candidates is relevant especially for the work training phase. Some of these findings were supported by the case study.

While traditional resumes contain information predicting sales ability, some sales managers argue that they are obsolete. Previous research shows that recruiters risk drawing broad generalizations based on resume content. Video resumes have some potential, but currently have technical and ethical limitations. Personality and mental ability tests show predictive ability for sales performance, and are scalable.

Previous research discusses limitations in many personality tests being commercial, resulting in limitations in how they may be modified; in their transparency of scoring; and validity studies being hard to conduct. Other limitations with personality tests in evaluation settings are that they are prone to faking.

The study also suggests future topics of research in how culture defines what an ideal salesperson is, and extending these findings to other areas than sales.
Sammanfattning

Medan bedömning av sökande för tjänster har täckts i tidigare forskning, är lite känt om utvärderingsprocesser som utvärderar stort antal sökande. Denna studie söker att svara på om kandidater för säljtjänster kan utvärderas på ett skalbart sätt (där antalet sökande har liten påverkan på kostnaden för utvärdering) för en säljplattform.

Studien består av intervjuer med rekryterare och growth leads av det studerade företaget, en fallstudie av ett företag som har slopat CV:n i sin ansökningsprocess, och test på kandidater för säljtjänster. Vidare analyserades befintlig data på säljare.

Sammanfattningsvis länkar studien resultaten till de begränsningar som krävs av en skalbar process. Tidigare forskning visar hur olika indikatorer (personlighet, biografisk data, och optimism) kan förutse säljförmåga. Kandidatens mentala förmåga är särskilt
relevant för träningsfasen. Vissa av dessa resultat stöds av fallstudien.

Medan CV:n innehåller information för att förutse säljförmåga, hävdar vissa säljchefer att de är utdaterade. Tidigare forskning visar att rekryterare ibland generaliserar brett baserat på innehållet av ett CV. Videobaserade CV:n har viss potential, men har etiska och tekniska brister i dagsläget. Personlighetstest och test som mäter mental förmåga visar prediktiv potential för säljförmåga och är också skalbara.

Tidigare forskning diskuterar även de begränsningar som uppstår av att många personlighetstest är kommersiella, vilket leder till begränsningar i hur de kan modifieras; i transparensen av rättningen; och att validitetsstudier är svåra att utföra på dem. Andra begränsningar med personlighetstest är att kandidater kan manipulera resultaten.

Studien föreslår även framtida forskning inom till exempel hur kultur definierar en ideal säljperson, och om dessa resultat kan utökas till andra områden än försäljning.
Keywords

Scalable recruitment, evaluation, evaluation for sales positions, screening, e-recruiting, ideal salesperson, digital recruitment, sälj, säljare, human resources, human resource management, scalability
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Foreword and acknowledgements

This paper is a result of a Thesis work conducted in late 2016 in the programme of Industrial Engineering and Management at KTH, at the school of Industrial Marketing and Entrepreneurship.

While there have been too many influences in this Thesis, providing inspiration, insights, proofreading and guidance to provide a completely exhaustive list, I would at the very least like to point out a few important sources.

A natural start would be my two supervisors. Henrik Blomgren, Associate Professor at Industrial Marketing, was my supervisor at the side of at KTH Royal Institute of Technology. Our relation in this thesis has been everything I could have asked for – with you providing me carte blanche to dive deep into topics I would not have been able to with many other supervisors, giving me permission to not use Times New Roman, and all this while providing me with inspiration and challenging my worldview. This has resulted in a challenging but very educating half year, and I owe you and your teaching style for that. Further, I also owe a lot to my supervisor at Universal Avenue, Jonatan Hedin, Head of Analytics, for spending after-work time proofreading my report and throwing in new ideas for the scope of this thesis. Naturally, my gratitude extends to the whole of Universal Avenue for treating me like a colleague and providing me with valuable insights for this work.

Not to forget, this thesis would not have been the same without my amazing support network of family and friends. A thesis is a black hole that occupies your life for a period of time and you have helped me to peek out this all-encompassing field of gravity.

Finally, I must thank the fellow students in the small Thesis seminar group I was a part of, for valuable feedback, inspiration, and
for being a part of the times of hardship that a thesis encompasses. Special thanks to the seminar leader Bo Karlsson for also providing individual feedback on our Thesis.

And at the end, I would like to thank you as a reader. You have at least consumed one page of this work exceeding a 100 pages and change. A piece of advice for aspiring thesis authors: Don’t panic.

"Everything will be okay in the end. If it’s not okay, it’s not the end."

– Lennon

Stephen Kirk

Stockholm, January 2017
1 Introduction

1.1 A brief intro to recruitment

All firms today that recruit use formal or informal recruitment strategies in their recruitment process. Using resumes for recruitment is very common, and the scales of reading resumes for applications are very large. Historically, it is not uncommon for large firms to read tens and thousands of resumes to fill a few thousands of positions (Hays, 1999). Already in the early 2000s, e-recruiting and online resume submission was forecasted to be a necessary transformation, and even in that period of time, there were third-party e-recruitment websites allowing applicants and jobseekers to post resumes online (Galanaki, 2002). The practice of using corporate websites in recruitment has also increased (Maurer & Liu, 2007). Further, the growth of e-recruitment was also significant, with usage increasing with 70 percent between 1999 and 2004 (Marchington & Wilkinson, 2012). Resumes are used by firms as it is assumed that it allows recruiters to view various qualifications of applications; it is a common assumption among recruiters for jobs that resumes contain information linked to various attributes relevant for the position in question (Cole, et al., 2003). As such, there is no question that globally, recruitment through resumes is a large activity. However, more recently, businesses are willing to forego the traditional resume for disciplines as diverse as investment and design (Silverman, 2010). For sales specifically, the common process is to screen resumes based on selection criteria, which is then followed by interviews (Khosla, et al., 2009). Psychometric tests, that assess the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate (Cole, Feild, & Giles, 2003), have also become increasingly common (Aiken, 2000).
1.2 Universal Avenue – background and business model

Universal Avenue is a start-up based in Stockholm offering a Sales as a Service-solution. Its customers are offered an on-demand salesforce. This salesforce consists of salespeople that operate on a freelance basis through Universal Avenue’s app (henceforth known as Brand Ambassadors). Universal Avenue’s customers (henceforth known as Brands) are currently firms offering B2B digital products and services for other businesses. The Brands offer payment solutions, music services and online stores. Brand Ambassadors receive training by Universal Avenue, as well as coaching by its coaching team dedicated to mentoring its Brand Ambassadors.

A target customer group of Universal Avenue are other start-ups. Traditional sales firms might not always be a great fit for these companies, as they generally incur large upfront costs regardless of outcome. Further, Universal Avenue’s business model allows Brands to test new markets, and to reach end customers that normally are hard to access through traditional means – such as small business operating locally. (Clawson, 2016)

Currently, Universal Avenue operates in Scandinavia, United Kingdom, Greece, Spain and the United States (currently, Chicago). However, there are plans to expand to the rest of North America as well as Asia.
1.3 Problematization

Universal Avenue currently receives thousands of applications each month from its current regions alone. It is expected that this number will increase for the current regions – while also increasing as Universal Avenue expands to more and more regions. If the recruitment and evaluation process generates too many unfitting applications, or too few applications, it risks being very expensive (Marchington & Wilkinson, 2012). In other words, the magnitude of the recruitment process is expected to scale.

In the current recruitment process of Universal Avenue, all applications are managed and reviewed manually. This is a potential problem with heavy growth or with a temporary influx of applications, as the amount of resources spent on recruitment cannot be adjusted accordingly – in other words, the evaluation process is not scalable. Both month-to-month variation of the amount of applications, and direct increase in volume of applications, can be problematic in a context where each application proportionally increases the workload of the recruitment team. For firms where aggressive growth is an essential part of their revenue, this growth may be limited by costs that increase linearly with volume. As Ries (2011) states, one driver in growth is investing the excess (marginal profit minus marginal cost) into acquiring further customers.

The increasing amount of applications need to be managed in some way. As mentioned earlier, this is currently done with a recruitment process that to some level scales with the amount of incoming applications. This risks incurring significant time and quality costs as the company scales, which might heavily limit growth – both from less investment being available, as outlined above, but also due to a lack of scalability in the current solution where candidates are evaluated manually.
1.4 Purpose and research question

1.4.1 Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate evaluation and recruitment methods of candidates applying for sales positions, and how Universal Avenue, a firm offering a Sales as a Service solution, could implement an evaluation and recruitment method system, based on these findings, that provides scalability. Before this can be answered, however, the indicators to evaluate candidates by need to be identified.

1.4.2 Research questions

From the above problematization, three research questions have been identified.

RQ1: What defines an ideal salesperson in the Universal Avenue case – e.g. an ideal Brand Ambassador?

RQ2: How can candidates for sales jobs be evaluated by the findings in RQ1, on a scalable basis?

RQ3: What are potential limitations of some of the evaluation methods found in RQ2 and from where candidates are funnelled into the evaluation system?
1.5 Delimitations

**Cultural factors will not be specifically accounted for in this study.** While culture differences are kept in mind, and queried for in interviews with Universal Avenue personnel not based in Stockholm, an evaluation of potential cultural outcomes have. Therefore, any results may vary by the context of culture.

**The study will not attempt to further generalize for other positions than sales jobs.** While takeaways are provided for how recruitment practices may be set up in a scalable way, the recruitment base in this study consists of candidates for sales positions only.
1.6 Expected contribution

This thesis contributes to the overall research body in the following aspects:

• Providing a recent overview of research outlining what makes a good salesperson,
• Providing an outline of various evaluation methods, as well as their suitability in measuring the previously described predictors,
• And finally, discussing some potential risks with these methods.
1.7 Outline

By now, I have introduced the company which the study is conducted at, as well as presented the research topic, questions, purpose as well as expected contribution and delimitations.

The rest of the report will be as follows: I will present the methodology used in this report (Chapter 2). Then, I will provide Universal Avenue’s current practices in more detail, as well as outlining their business model, to allow the user to get insight in the firm and their evaluation processes (Chapter 3). This is followed by a case study of a firm currently utilizing a recruitment process without resumes (Chapter 4).

The next three chapters (Chapter 5, 6 and 7) seek to cover each research question in detail – each providing findings for the next. These chapters are structured both as literature collection and discussion – findings are both presented and discussed.

Finally, I will discuss the main conclusions of the research (Chapter 8) as well as reflect on the findings and potential future research (Chapter 9).
2 Methodology

The aim of this report is to provide an overview of what constitutes a suitable Brand Ambassador (salesperson) in the Universal Avenue context, and how to evaluate candidates based on these criteria. In addition, this study will present potential issues that lie with the current recruitment system, and issues that need to be accounted for in a recruitment system.

The research question is founded from what Sandberg & Alvesson (2011) calls “gap-spotting” – looking for a lack of studies in the research area in question. One critique of this method of construction is that it is less likely to lead to development of theories that challenges the current research base or is “interesting” (Sandberg & Alvesson, 2011). However, it must be taken into account that the gap was found from problematization – something that is suggested as an alternative to gap-spotting more capable of disruption (Sandberg & Alvesson, 2011). While the research question at least semantically is a form of “gap-spotting”, the underlying topic came to fruit through critique and problematization of the resume as an evaluation method.
2.1 Research paradigm and design

2.1.1 Research paradigm

A research paradigm is "a philosophical framework that guides how scientific research should be conducted" (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 43). According to Collis & Hussey (2014), two main paradigms of research have emerged. The one most often referred to as positivism considers the world to be based on measurable facts and outside the researchers’ realm of control. The view of knowledge (and often, the research process) is more deductive – facts are derived from measurable phenomena. As such, there is only one reality. Later, an interpretivist framework emerged, which instead suggests that reality instead is subjective. Multiple realities exist from the viewpoint of each subject.

Now that the paradigms have been outlined, the paradigms in relation to this report may be discussed. I find an interpretivist approach more suitable for the intended research approach in this study, as the focus lies in thematically exploring evaluation criteria and methods of evaluation in a scalable context. It may be misleading to try to attempt to capture these types complex phenomena through numbers (Collis & Hussey, 2014). Through an interpretivist approach, I attempt to build up a view of the processes at Universal Avenue and contrast it to the state of affairs at another firm, as well as a substantial literature base.

2.1.2 Theoretical approach

While it is important to be aware of the existing research body, it is important not to entirely rely on the shoulders of giants; management literature perhaps has tendencies to overdo its strivings in using “theory” (Schmenner, Wassenhove, Ketokivi, Heyl, & Lusch, 2009). Because of this, theories from literature will be assumed to be supporting, rather than the core of this thesis.
2.1.3 Case study as part of a research design

I choose a case study as a research method in gathering what defines an ideal brand ambassador and how they may be evaluated. The reason for this is its suitability in capturing the various complex facets of reality, and when we wish to discover new dimensions of a problem (Blomkvist & Hallin, 2015). More specifically, there is valuable input to gather externally, and compare them to the internal needs and requirements expressed among interviewees at Universal Avenue. While comparative in nature (comparing interview outcomes at Universal Avenue with the case studies), the case study is primarily an exploratory one in regard to how other firms and people that have experience with sales and sales recruitment see the issue.

2.1.4 The qualitative and quantitative research distinction

Qualitative and quantitative data collection refers to categories of data gathering methods used in a study. Interviews are often listed as an example of a qualitative data collection, while surveys tend to be referenced as quantitative data collection (Blomkvist & Hallin, 2015). Often, qualitative data collection is associated with interpretative research, while quantitative data collection is associated with a positivist regime. (Blomkvist & Hallin, 2015; Collis & Hussey, 2014)

This distinction is not always clear – there are examples of qualitative surveys and vice versa. Therefore, the distinction may be inappropriate and at times ambiguous (Blomkvist & Hallin, 2015; Collis & Hussey, 2014). However, to generalize, qualitative methods tend to be primarily focused on understanding phenomena from the perspectives of the research subjects rather than directly utilizing the results from any research on the subjects (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This has the advantage of allowing the discovery of new variables and to understand the processes
(Shah & Corley, 2006). I elaborate on this in the interview sub-chapter – an important aspect of this research is understanding the perspectives of the respondents, and as such, most of the methodology under this study would fall under what Miles & Huberman (1994) calls qualitative research. However, I also utilize data collected from Universal Avenue that could be considered quantitative.
2.2 Research approach

In this section, I will describe the research approach performed in this study. In the following subchapters, I will shortly describe each sub-step of the research process.

![Figure 1: Visualization of the methodological approach of this thesis.](image)

### 2.2.1 Pre-study

Before the literature review, a pre-study was conducted to define the problem (and consequentially, the thesis itself). This included reading up on the firm. Further, an interview was held with the CTO of Universal Avenue to get a better understanding of potential problems the firm may face and what would be possible to build a thesis on. This interview has not been included in the literature appendix.

The material from the interview was then reviewed in collaboration with the supervisor at the university and the supervisor-to-be at Universal Avenue to attempt to build a thesis. This discussion in conjunction with a short literature review allowed for a thesis proposal to be built.

### 2.2.2 Theoretical review

In this phase, I read up on existing literature in a few disciplines:
• **Psychology**, with key areas in personality testing and correlation with various job parameters, gravitating around determinants of salesperson performance

• **Selection and assessment**, with key areas in recruitment methods and vehicles (such as resumes and videos),

• **Management**, with key areas in how firms work today in their recruitment processes, and potential issues firms face in today’s context

By heavily reading up in this phase, I managed to get an overall understanding of the current status quo in each branch of academia. With the knowledge provided here, I was able to gain understanding of various evaluation methods for evaluating applicants, and identify and group the evaluation methods that are available and used.

The methodology behind the gathering of literature is described after this chapter.

**2.2.3 Study at Universal Avenue, and validation of literature**

I have chosen to group these phases, as they together served an abductive process where literature findings affected who to interview, and interview findings adjusted the scope and focus of the literature gathering.

In this phase, I initially held informal meetings with key people at Universal Avenue to gain an understanding of the firm. I also attended several meetings with providers of various technical solutions for parsing applicants. These meetings were in different phases – some were introductory sales meetings, while others were sales meetings with firms that already had established a relationship with Universal Avenue.

The interview findings and the knowledge gained from studying the firm allowed for dismissing some evaluation methods consid-
ered in the previous step, and also provided an important platform for the study held at the recruitment days (which will be elaborated on later).

2.2.4 Case study at Riddermark Bil AB

Early literature findings and the problematization of this thesis cast light on the resume as a potentially suboptimal recruitment method for sales jobs. As such, I started looking for firms that omit the resume in their application and evaluation process. There is little academic research on this subject, so this exploration was necessary to be able to get insight in how other firms operate. Riddermark Bil AB, a car retailer, was chosen as a case subject due to their very fast growth and recent overhaul of their application process, completely omitting resumes. This allowed for understanding on how evaluation processes can be constructed without resumes, as well as the rationale in doing so.

Interviews were chosen as the primary data collection method. This was chosen to be able to compare the information to material from interviews at Universal Avenue itself. This is also aligned with the chosen research paradigm of this thesis. I further describe the choices of interviewee subjects in the Data Gathering chapter. Other data that was collected was financial reports and media coverage of the firm. Further, some correspondence was held with a manager of systems development at Riddermark Bil, to survey the details in the case study.

2.2.5 Applicant study

At 28th of November 2016 and the 19th of December 2016, Universal Avenue held a recruitment day for 42 candidates interested in the position as Brand Ambassador. The recruitment day was an all-day or half-day event consisting of inspiring talks, interviews with recruiters at Universal Avenue, and various tests. As a part of this, I held a set of logic and personality tests for the
candidates. Part of this day was allocated to a few tests that were believed to hold useful or predictive value in the scope of evaluation, or held a theoretical ability in replacing part of manual tests. The tests in question are:

- A personality test (Big Five), adapted to Swedish by Zarkission (2010). The Big Five was chosen after extensive literature review as the Big Five has comprehensive documentation in literature in regard to job applications in general and sales roles specifically (including Barrick & Mount (1991); M. S. Cole, Feild, & Giles (2003); Conte & Gintoft (2005); and Sitser, van der Linden, & Born (2013)).
- A weighted coin flip test, with a design based on a test performed by Haghani & Dewey (2016). The purpose of this test, hypothetically, was to observe playing patterns and assess to what degree candidates stick to a successful strategy. However, very little research exists on such tests.
- A logic test (which, however, is not a part of this thesis and therefore will not be elaborated on)

After the tests, the candidates had their results shared with them in a five-minute debriefing per candidate.

This approach was chosen to be able to compare all tests to a test that has been researched heavily (Big Five), but also to provide data that can be compared to sales data for Universal Avenue in the future, to be able to identify and validate personality traits and test results. Because the time scope of the thesis, no conclusions are able to be drawn from these tests in relation to future sales data of the successful candidates.
2.2.6 Wrap-up

In this step, the data from the previous recruitment day was analysed, and more literature relating to the findings were discovered. Further, a complementary interview was held with a recruiter at Universal Avenue to verify the evaluation process at Universal Avenue.
2.3 Data gathering

2.3.1 Literature

I use Mendeley for managing all papers throughout the writing process, and utilized Google Scholar, KTH Primo, Mendeley, and Harzing’s Publish or Perish for exploring and collecting literature. The initial pool of articles are collected through a set of search words (specified in the appendix), and further refined through the references of initial text.

More specifically, I had the following use of the following software and services:

- **Google Scholar**, a search engine indexing journals, books and so on, was used as the primary search method to find articles based on my search keywords.
- **KTH Primo**, KTH’s library search engine for finding journals, articles, and so on, was used to access those journal articles that I found through Google Scholar.
- **Mendeley** was primarily used to manage citations for all literature gathered, as well as to manage all metadata (such as tags) for these papers.
- **Harzing’s Publish or Perish** was specifically used to find academic work considered valuable in its subject or discipline, as it allows for powerful search ranking through filters such as total number of citations, age-weighted citation rate, and so forth. It is therefore useful to find literature that is a cornerstone in its field.

2.3.2 Interviews

Part of the empirical data gathered for this study is based on interviews. Qualitative interviews are a common approach for data collection under an interpretivist paradigm (Collis & Hussey, 2014). Before the interviews, the purpose of the interview was clearly stated. Notes were taken during all interviews, and audio
was also recorded to prevent any necessary information from being missed. Interviews generally lasted between 30 and 70 minutes, depending on the subject. Interviews were held both in English and Swedish. Where interviews were held in Swedish, I have paraphrased the contents in English in this thesis. Finally, the interview summaries were shared with the interviewees to assess the validity of the summary and provide an opportunity for additional comments and review.

Transcribing the interviews on a word-by-word basis was considered. One advantage of transcription is that it provides a fallback when questions occur, or when inadequate note-taking has been done. Transcripts can also be very useful in interview settings that discuss controversial topics, and where little credibility of what has been said can be provided from sharing a summary with the interviewee in question. Examples of these settings are court settings or when dealing with sensitive material. However, the exact wording that an interviewee used is less important in the type of study conducted in this thesis. While this thesis touches concepts of psychology, the psychologic aspects of this thesis does not relate to in what way interviewees say, act, or choose their words.

While the topics were thematically decided by predetermined questions, the majority of the interview questions were open (a so-called semi-structured interview approach). This is appropriate when attempting to build an understanding of the personal constructs of the interviewee, and where the logic of the situation is not clear (Easterby-Smith, Thrope, & Jackson, 2012), which makes it very suitable in the interpretivist research paradigm. The purpose was to understand the personal constructs of the participants, by encouraging the interviewees to speak about the topic in question and gain insights; or in the case of earlier interviews, knowledge for further literature review.
Some of the interviews conducted were informal – that is, interviews without structure, often conducted spontaneously. No questions relating directly to the research question was asked – instead, most of the interview was related to gaining an overview of the particular topic, so research could be conducted more effectively. For example, insights could be how to navigate the tools used in the interview process of Universal Avenue, who key people in the organization are, and understanding “red tape” within the organization. These are never used as actual sources in the research, but instead served the purpose of providing understanding to the researcher. Any important facts that surface under the interview, are repeated and clarified under more formal settings.

Interviewees within Universal Avenue were contacted in order to fill gaps of information where codification was not available, as well as to gain insights in what is considered an ideal Brand Ambassador and how the evaluation process is set up. Further, a Head of Growth at Universal Avenue was interviewed to gain understanding of cultural differences between markets, as well as to guide the future literature review.

Supplier meetings, while not formal interviews, are grouped in as interviews due to the similar setting.

Further, as described in the research approach, two interviews were performed at Riddermark Bil AB, where two head of sales were interviewed. The purpose was to gain a deeper understanding of what qualifies as an ideal salesperson, but also to gain insights in an evaluation process that does not use resumes. This resulted in a case study aiming to describe the reasoning taken into moving to an application process without resumes. The case study does not, however, include the implementation phase of the recruitment process in its scope, as the main scope of the
study is to understand potential evaluation processes. The interview subjects within Riddermark Bil AB were selected based on their knowledge of managing sales personnel, their sales experience, as well as their insight in the recruitment and evaluation process of candidates for sales positions.

This gathering resulted in 5 formal interviews, where two form a base for a case study, and the other three were held at Universal Avenue.

I also identified a few firms with well-established recruitment process of salespeople through interviews and contacts. These were contacted, but I was unable to make contact and hold interviews with these.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
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<tr>
<td>2016-10-05</td>
<td>Informal interview, face-to-face</td>
<td>How the on-boarding process is set up; how to use Hirevue (video application); Universal Avenue’s previous on-boarding process</td>
<td>Thom Iddon, Head of Recruitment &amp; On-boarding at Universal Avenue</td>
<td>Other participants in the meeting were Thom Iddon, Head of Recruitment and On-boarding at Universal Avenue; Jonas Olsson, Acquisition Specialist at Universal Avenue. Careerbuilder is the majority stakeholder in Textkernel. Meeting was conducted as a sales pitch for Textkernel's offering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-10-05</td>
<td>Sales meeting, face to face</td>
<td>To understand a solution on the market that manages the recruitment process and parses CV’s</td>
<td>Key person at Textkernel/Careerbuilder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-10-11</td>
<td>Semi-structured interview, over video link</td>
<td>To understand cultural differences between markets</td>
<td>Mukund Chopra, Head of Growth North America, Universal Avenue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-10-20</td>
<td>Semi-structured interview, face to face</td>
<td>Discussing the recruitment process and views of the on-boarding process</td>
<td>Natalie Bettar, Universal Avenue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-11-01</td>
<td>Sales meeting, face to face</td>
<td>To understand a solution on the market that manages the recruitment process and matching</td>
<td>Key person at Happy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-11-02</td>
<td>Monthly update call with HireVue + Universal Avenue</td>
<td>Explaining the evaluation process within HireVue</td>
<td>Contact person at HireVue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-11-04</td>
<td>Sales meeting, face to face</td>
<td>To understand a market solution that manages the recruitment and evaluation process</td>
<td>Key person at CUT-E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Interview Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Interviewee Information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-11-18</td>
<td>Semi-structured interview, face to face</td>
<td>Discussing recruitment processes and drivers of salespeople success</td>
<td>Vincent Grenstad, head of facility / sales at Riddermark Bil AB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-11-22</td>
<td>Semi-structured interview, face to face</td>
<td>Discussing the recruitment process and views of the on-boarding process</td>
<td>Thom Iddon, Head of Recruitment &amp; On-boarding at Universal Avenue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-11-23</td>
<td>Semi-structured interview, phone</td>
<td>Discussing recruitment processes and drivers of salespeople success</td>
<td>John Lindholm, head of facility/sales at Riddermark Bil AB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Interviews conducted during the research process.
2.3.3 Data from Universal Avenue

Some quantitative data was gathered from Universal Avenue in the scope of this thesis. The data primarily concerned key performance indicators and Brand Ambassador data, including but not limited to signup data, sales data, and recruitment costs. Data was processed in R and Excel. Much of the data analysis was to provide a background and understanding of the firm.

2.3.4 Surveys and tests

As part of the recruitment day, tests were conducted on sales candidates. The data from the actual tests were of qualitative nature, and consisted of both answers and metadata (such as test time).

Most of the data collected, in the context of this thesis, was primarily to gather information about the duration of the surveys and similar.
2.4 Validity

One potential, study-specific issue is the validity of the self-reporting surveys that are utilized in this study. This is elaborated on in Chapter 7, where survey-specific issues are discussed.

For validity, we ask ourselves if the material used can give us an appropriate answer to the problem. The data collected needs to represent the concept that is to be illustrated for validity to be high (Collis & Hussey, 2014). Collis & Hussey (2014) covers several types of validity, such as face validity; that what is being measured actually measures what we are supposed to measure. This is something that Blomkvist & Hallin (2015) discusses; the study should be relevant to the question that is given in the research, and answer to these questions. This requires a clear and transparent research approach.

In this case, the methods used to study evaluation processes and what to evaluate candidates by in the context of Universal Avenue needs to allow the research question to be answered. I believe that this is the case, although the focus on recruitment for sales positions provides a limitation if any conclusions are to be drawn with other types of candidates.

Interview subjects were selected based on the relevance of the topic in question – e.g. recruitment and evaluation questions were had with recruiters, and salespeople discussions were held with sales managers. As such, the interview subjects have relevant background and knowledge, and I therefore believe that the validity of these are high. Further, meetings were held with a few suppliers of evaluation and recruitment services. As these suppliers know their own product or service well, the validity is high.

However, validity issues can occur in interviews if respondents do not provide their actual account of the perspective, or if the account they provided is not the full one. This may occur in cases
where the interview subject is corrupt (Collis & Hussey, 2014), or when interview respondents do not wish to be quoted or respond. In cases where this occurred, I reiterated the statement of offering respondents anonymity and that they will have full access to a summary of the interview, where they are free to provide feedback. This often resulted in respondents being comfortable with speaking freely, and as such, I believe that this has not affected the validity of the accounts of the respondents.

To mitigate the risk of low validity, the findings from the primary data was compared to the secondary data found in the literature review process. For example, if the primary data seemed to point towards a direction, this was compared to literature covering the same topic where applicable.

As mentioned previously, interviews were attempted with firms that already have established processes for salespeople. This is something that would have increased the validity of the survey, as the firms in question hold rigorous and tried-tested processes and the findings from this study could have been verified in a more holistic manner if interviews would have been held with these. This affects the validity of this study.
2.5 Reliability

Reliability refers to the accuracy of the study – if the study were to be repeated, would the results be the same? The aspect of replication is generally thought as an important aspect of reliability (Collis & Hussey, 2014). One issue of this study taking a primarily interpretivist approach is that reliability in this sense (focusing on replication) can be low. This is due to several reasons – the sample size is relatively low, and I as a researcher will most likely influence the environment where I perform my research. However, Collis & Hussey (2014) argues that this is of little issue, as such reliability would be nigh impossible to achieve. This reliability is instead established through clearly defining the procedures used to achieve the research findings (Collis & Hussey, 2014).

Where I use personality tests (such as the Big Five personality test on sales candidates), I use the same scales and question formulations as is considered common practice in the literature base. As such, the testing aspects are easily replicated. This is important in making these tests independent of the researcher, also known as inter-rater reliability (Blomkvist & Hallin, 2015).

For the coin flip test, I have provided full access to the source code. As such, it is possible for any researcher to replicate the function set exactly.
2.6 Ethics

Ethical issues have been reflected on throughout this study. While there are various frameworks outlining how to handle ethical issues, this study has utilized the Swedish Research Council’s (Vetenskapsrådet) principles of ethical research for the humanities and social science. This is the most common ethical code within social sciences in Sweden (Blomkvist & Hallin, 2015). The Swedish Research Council also produces reports on ethics, such as its Good Research Practice report outlining ethical issues, the role of the researcher, and various guidelines (Hermerén, 2011). All in all, the code outlines four standards of requirement that all research in social sciences need to adhere to. They are provided below and connected to this study.

- **The information requirement** entails that all subjects (interview respondents and questionnaire respondents) need to be informed about the study.

- **The consent requirement** requires study subjects need to agree to be studied. This was the case with all interviewees.

- **The confidentiality requirement** entails that all study material needs to be treated confidentially. This was adhered to by allowing all interviewees to be anonymous and being able to review their answers. In any other studies, respondents were anonymous.

- **The good use requirement** dictates that any data collected may only be used for the purpose stated during the data collection. All respondents were informed about the purpose of the study.

To provide an example, respondents were informed in the tests at the event day that the data would be used in research, and
that they would be anonymous in the outcome in the line of the study.

Beyond the ethics in relation to the subjects of the research, it is also necessary to follow ethics in regard to the writing process of the report. For example, it is very important to be able to determine whether anything written is already existing knowledge or novel information (Blomkvist & Hallin, 2015).

To make sure that attribution is the form of sources is managed properly and to separate between existing knowledge and knowledge I have obtained, I have used a reference manager while writing this thesis.
3 Current state of Universal Avenue

3.1 Universal Avenue’s business model

Universal Avenue’s platform, except for Universal Avenue itself, consists of three actors:

**Brands**, which offer products on the Universal Avenue platform. These are the customers of Universal Avenue, in the sense that Universal Avenue sell the products and services that these brands offer. These Brands get access to the platform of freelancing salespeople, known as Brand Ambassadors.

**Brand Ambassadors**, who are salespeople working on commission by selling the products of Brands. A Brand Ambassador is independently contracted, and is not employed by Universal Avenue. These Brand Ambassadors sell the products to Venues. They do not necessarily need to operate in the city that they have applied in, and can work in any market where Universal Avenue has venues in their database.

**Venues**, that are the end customer of the Brands, and targets of the Brand Ambassadors. These are typically retailers, boutiques, bars and restaurants. These venues are accessible by Brand Ambassadors from a map. The Brand Ambassadors sell the products of the Brands to these and establish a sales relationship with them.

This results in a payment structure where the Brand Ambassadors receive commission for each sale. The monetary sum of the commission varies depending on product. Smaller packages and products generate a smaller commission than larger ones.

Some of the key benefits that Brands are offered, compared to traditional sales firms, are performance based pricing (where the commission is directed by the amount of sales, rather than an initial amount for the sales service itself), on-demand scalability
(sales can be activated at any time in any location where Universal Avenue offers the service), and direct real-time feedback (as all sales are logged to a back-end which the Brand has access to).
3.2 Universal Avenue’s recruitment process

Figure 2: The recruitment and on-boarding process of Universal Avenue. This figure is also available in a larger format in the appendix.

In Sweden, Universal Avenue advertises the Brand Ambassador recruitment through Blocket, advertised as sales positions; Arbetsförmedlingen, advertised as sales positions, Facebook, with targeted ads; and an internal referrals program, where Brand Ambassadors may invite other potential Brand Ambassadors.

The recruitment process is as follows:

- An applicant visits the application landing page; most commonly through one of the sources listed above.
- The applicant provides basic data of oneself covering education, age, and so on, over two pages. These questions are provided in the appendix Application form.
- The applicant chooses to provide either a CV (resume), or a video interview.
- By now, the first set of user interaction is done. A recruiting specialist within Universal Avenue screens either the CV or the video interview, depending on which the participant chose.
- If the application gets accepted, there is a follow-up phone call in place with the candidate in question. The phone call
consists of a few questions – both standard questions, and
questions related to the application itself.

- If the applicant gets rejected (either after the application
  or the phone interview), they receive an e-mail with a re-
  jection message.
- If the applicant passes the phone interview, they are on-
  boarded and receive all details necessary to download the
  Universal Avenue application to their smartphone.
- Further, they participate in a group conference that is cen-
  tred around Universal Avenue and the on-boarding pro-
  cess, which is followed up by a Q&A.
- The Brand Ambassador is now inside the system, and may
  follow up with Ambassador Coaching, performing surveys,
  and Sales coaching before they can be certified for a brand
  and start hitting the streets.

As illustrated in the process, the recruitment specialists in Uni-
versal Avenue make a subjective judgment about the abilities of
the candidates. Further, all candidates are manually evaluated at
the various decision steps (illustrated in the diagram with dia-
mond shapes).
Figure 3: Funnel of applicants who become Brand Ambassadors. Internal data for September 2016. The amounts illustrated are per Brand Ambassador, and the actual numbers are obfuscated. This funnel can be interpreted as “for every Brand Ambassador that makes a sale, there are 25 signups”.

The number of signups for the Brand Ambassador position have constantly lied above several thousand on a month-per-month basis in 2016.

Figure 4: Ratio between signups and Brand Ambassadors making sales. The number should be read as “x applicants for every Brand Ambassador that makes a sale”. The number is calculated by taking the number of signups for the previous and actual month, and dividing by the number of Brand Ambassadors making a sale that month.

One method of observing the success of the application process is calculating the amount of applications required for a Brand
Ambassador to make a sale. By utilizing the data available on Brand Ambassadors, the average amount of days from signup to first sale can be calculated. Here, Brand Ambassadors who signed up in 2016 are used. Calculating the average time to first sale for all Brand Ambassadors signing up in 2016 gives an average of 30 days from activation to first sale. Because of this, the average amount of applications in the previous and current month is used in Figure 4 above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BA ID</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Signup date</th>
<th>First sale</th>
<th>Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BA213</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>2016-02-17</td>
<td>2016-03-25</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA214</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>2016-01-18</td>
<td>2016-02-25</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA215</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>2016-02-01</td>
<td>2016-03-18</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Sample data of the date of signup and date of first sale for Brand Ambassadors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BA ID</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Signup date</th>
<th>First sale</th>
<th>Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BA213</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>2016-02-17</td>
<td>2016-03-25</td>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>BA214</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>2016-01-18</td>
<td>2016-02-25</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA215</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>2016-02-01</td>
<td>2016-03-18</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5: Cost per activated Brand Ambassador, indexed to the cost of January 2016 (index 100); Sign ups per activated Brand Ambassador (same as above). Data for 2016.

To sanity check this, we compare this to the cost per activated Brand Ambassador, which is calculated by dividing the recruitment cost for a given month with the amount of activated Brand Ambassadors. Here, the costs for the same month is used, as most costs in the recruitment process occur toward the end of
the recruitment process for a candidate. In this chart, the cost has been indexed toward the cost for January 2016. As expected, the cost per Brand Ambassador on a month-per-month basis follows said ratio. This allows for some understanding of costs in the recruitment process.

- The cost of the recruitment process has a relation to the number of sign-ups.
- When the ratio between sign-ups and activated Brand Ambassadors decreases, costs per activated Brand Ambassador goes down.

From this, it is possible to draw a conclusion that an evaluation process that either:

- improves the ratio, without lowering the quality of approved Brand Ambassadors,
- makes the cost rely less on the amount of incoming applications, or
- screens out unsuitable candidates earlier,

would benefit the firm.
3.3 The Universal Avenue workflow and app

The dashboard of the Universal Avenue mobile app.

The Universal Avenue Academy, where Brand Ambassadors receive training.

Example question in the Universal Avenue academy.

The Universal Avenue venue map, where Brand Ambassadors can view all nearby venues and take action.

The venue view. Brand Ambassadors can access the history for any venue (who has visited and any sales performed), as well as any notes that other Brand Ambassadors have provided. This particular venue is “locked”, that is, another Brand Ambassador has closed a sale with that venue.

The Universal Avenue dashboard, where Brand Ambassadors access their statistics.
The core of the Universal Avenue workflow is the application, which is available for iOS and Android. Through the app, Brand Ambassadors take all actions as a Brand Ambassador, such as close sales, provide feedback, and make surveys.

Before a Brand Ambassador can sell a product, they first need to complete the training course known as the Academy in the application. Beyond this, they also need to receive a certification from the particular brand they wish to sell. This is done by completing a training course about that particular Brand and then finally certifying themselves in it. This is to make sure that the Brand Ambassador understands the product, and how to pitch and sell the product.

The Brand Ambassadors make sales by either visiting a venue “cold”, or by calling the venue by phone first. All Brand Ambassadors also have a coach assigned to them that are able to give them support and ideas.

After a visit or a phone call, the Brand Ambassador marks the venue with a status in the application. The statuses are:

- **Sale** – the Brand Ambassador has sold one or several products to the venue.
- **Market survey** – the Brand Ambassador has performed a survey at the venue, and the information of the survey is now added to the venue in the UA database.
- **Book** – the Brand Ambassador has booked a meeting with one or more key people at the venue.
- **Feedback** – The Brand Ambassador has not sold anything and will either return on a return visit, the Brand Ambassador did not speak to the right person, or the venue is not interested in any products that Universal Avenue offers.

Brand Ambassadors can also perform up to five market surveys, and more if requested. The purpose of the surveys is to measure
if the venue is interested in any of the products that Universal Avenue offers, and to add that information to the venue. These surveys are often performed by phone. Brand Ambassadors receive commission for these surveys.

Brand Ambassadors have access to a map showing all venues (target customers) at their current location, except for those that have stated that they are not interested.

When a Brand Ambassador has made a sale, or booked a meeting with the venue, the venue is locked – no other Brand Ambassador can make a sale at that venue. This allows Brand Ambassadors to establish a relation to that particular venue and establish trust. The lock lasts until the booked meeting in case the Brand Ambassador has booked a meeting, and for a longer period of time.

When Brand Ambassadors close a sale, they receive commission for that sale.
3.4 Views of the recruitment process from recruiters

3.4.1 On predictors for a good Brand Ambassador fit

Both recruiters mention that successful Brand Ambassadors come in a wide variety of backgrounds. One recruiter provides an example of a Brand Ambassador that completely lacked any previous sales experience, but turned out to become one of the top Brand Ambassadors at Universal Avenue.

“There is a Brand Ambassador that has had great success. I checked his original video application after he won a sales contest at Universal Avenue. In retrospect, his video application was excellent, and he really managed to catch the eye of the recruiter. [...] And, before this, he had no sales experience at all.

His personality was enough.”

— Recruiter at Universal Avenue

One recruiter also argues that enthusiasm is important when it comes to establishing trust with customers, which in turn is important because losing a customer is expensive.

3.4.2 On what to look for in a resume

Both recruiters mention that there is no clear specification on what to look for in a resume – that is, there is no real codification of the specifications of requirement.

Both recruiters interviewed mention that they do look for previous experience in a resume. However, the methodology provided

by the recruiters differ. One recruiter mentions business to business sales in particular for something to look for, and considers experience in people-oriented industries such as restaurants as well. The other recruiter mentions looking for some form of entrepreneurship in the resume, such as the candidate having started a business, as the recruiter believes that this showcases the enthusiasm that was mentioned earlier as a predictor.

The recruiters observe age in a resume as well, but not as a segmenting factor itself. Instead, the age adjusts the approach they view the resume depending on the age of the candidate. One recruiter observes that younger people tend not to have much sales experience. The other recruiter keeps an eye on young people holding several jobs in a short time, which the recruiter considers a predictor for ambitiousness. Age might also be relevant in the other extreme – for example, one recruiter mentions that older people that do not work with anything digital may have a higher barrier in using all the digital tools that Universal Avenue utilizes in the sales missions.

3.4.3 On the suitability of the resume

While the view of resumes among recruiters are mixed, a common conclusion is that it is insufficient for the evaluation of salespeople. One recruiter considers the resume a useful tool, but insufficient by itself. Another recruiter thinks the resume is not particularly suitable recruitment tool in this context; this due to factors the recruiter considers important (personality, enthusiasm, and the ability to build relationships) being very hard to show in a resume. More specifically, the recruiter who argued that enthusiasm is especially important believes that the resume does not showcase enthusiasm, unless they are mapped to various achievements in the resume and subsequently explained. To pro-
vide a negative example, if the resume contains a list of personality traits without any positions or achievements to back it up, it tends to come off as cliché to the recruiter.

3.4.4 On video as a recruiting tool

In general, recruiters at Universal Avenue agree that video as an assessment tool has several advantages. One recruiter mentions that video better showcases factors the recruiter considers relevant – presentation technique and personality aspects such as enthusiasm. The other recruiter paints a similar picture, with aspects as presentation skills and body language being easy to judge in a video, allowing for a much richer picture to be drawn of the candidate.

One recruiter, however, paints some issues with the current implementation that Universal Avenue has. First, the automatic assessment that the video provider offers is not useful as an evaluation tool. When queried about if other tools provide a better evaluation, the recruiter says that it hasn’t seen any good solutions for evaluating videos automatically. Further, there are some issues of localization – the video tool only supports English, which limits scaling up the video process to other markets; and the costs of translating the tool would be substantial. However, the recruiter mentions that these issues are not only the fault of the provider. There are actions that Universal Avenue could take to improve the results the tool provides, such as dividing up the questions into multiple video segments. Finally, there are some technical issues with the current implementation; it requires different technical solutions for different devices, and has some issues such the actual software not loading properly in all system configurations.

Further, both recruiters see some issues with video in general. Both recruiters mention that some candidates feel uneasy about
the thought of recording a video of oneself and sending it in. One recruiter elaborates on this by mentioning that the format Universal Avenue offers not being very clear; it is not always clear what will occur during the video interview for the candidate.

One recruiter suggests that the convenience of the resume is a reason that so few candidates opt to use the video interview. Many candidates may choose between a resume and a video file, and already have a resume handy as it is a common format. The video interview is also more complicated for the candidate – at a mobile device, the candidate is forced to download an application.

3.4.5 Personality tests in an application process

When asked if a personality test as a method would be suitable in the recruitment process under the assumption that it holds predictive value, a recruiter stated that it would be especially interesting to incorporate early in a recruitment process. However, it is dependent on the length of the test – if it takes too much time, it can result in a heavy drop-off and is perhaps more suitable to conduct later in the recruitment process. As such, the later in the recruitment process it is, the longer the test can be without heavy drop-off. The recruiter stated that this may be due to the candidate already putting time in the application process. Other factors to consider are if the test can be held remotely or not and the complexity of the test. Naturally, tests that can be performed remotely are easier to conduct early in the process as such tests can be performed in the digital application process.
4 How do other firms cope? A case study of Riddermark Bil AB

All numbers regarding financial results are taken from the annual report of Riddermark Bil AB for the year 2015.

4.1 From gravel yard car broker to one of the largest car retailers in Stockholm

Riddermark Bil was founded by its founder Alexander Riddermark on a gravel field in Uppsala in 2006, then in his early 20s. Six years later, in 2012, Riddermark Bil had a turnover of around 1200 cars that year. Focusing exclusively on used cars, the cars Riddermark Bil often purchase tend to be cars previously leased by companies, who in turn allow Riddermark Bil to act as a middleman, offering service of the cars and managing all details of customer sales. This strategy has allowed an aggressive growth – allowing Riddermark Bil to deliver around 3000 and 4000 cars for 2013 and 2014 respectively. With headquarters based in Veddesta (in Barkarby, Stockholm), Riddermark Bil has opened three more facilities in the Stockholm area under 2016 (in Tyresö, Arlanda and Länna).
Today, Riddermark Bil AB is a car retailer selling pre-owned cars toward both the B2B and B2C segments. They have had an aggressive growth strategy, growing their turnover by around 500 percent between 2012 and 2015 (for a turnover of roughly 662 million SEK in 2015), positioning themselves as one of the larger car retailers in the Stockholm region. During the same period (2012 to 2015), the personnel force has increased from 9 to 39 employees. A majority of these are salespeople. Riddermark Bil have held four recruiting rounds with their new recruitment process described below, recruiting 14 new salespeople.
4.2 The recruitment process of Riddermark Bil

Currently, Riddermark Bil does not use resumes in their recruitment process for new salespeople. The applications are generally advertised through Facebook and their website. Their new application process has also been covered by newspapers such as Dagens Nyheter\(^2\). The four recruitment rounds following this new methodology has resulted in 14 new salespeople currently working today at any of Riddermark Bil’s five facilities.

- The first step of the application process asks informative questions (sales experience, team-based questions, and self-evaluation questions based on attitude).
- For the applicants that pass this step, they get to participate in further evaluation on site. This step uses interviews, written tests, and a practical test focused on vehicles.
- Finally, those that pass the previous test get a job offer.

For their latest recruitment round, there were 180 incoming applications, that resulted in 6 new employed salespeople. These employees have varying backgrounds, some as diverse as farmers and brokers.

4.3 Findings

The following subchapters are thematised to the different subjects that were discussed during interviews with sales managers at Riddermark Bil.

4.3.1 The role of resumes and sales experience in a recruitment process

The consensus among those responsible for recruitment at Riddermark Bil is that resumes are obsolete, and it is with this view-
point that Riddermark Bil has designed its new recruitment process. Two problems are highlighted with the traditional resume process:

- Resumes are not representative of what ability the person has when it comes to sales, and
- Resumes may not be representative of the person itself (e.g. someone else may have written the resume in question).

Nonetheless, one manager argues that they are useful as a complement, and that it might fill a role as being part of the process. When asked to elaborate, the manager mentions that sales experience itself may be useful as a predictor in some cases. On the other hand, this is not something the other manager agrees with. While sales experience might help a salesperson at a new position to “learn the ropes” quicker, the manager argues that it is not necessary to be a good salesperson, and that a talented salesperson without experience will reach the level of an experienced salesperson quicker. The manager highlights the current disposition of its personnel as an example of previous experience not being important, which includes people who previously held positions as day care personnel and tire assemblers.

4.3.2 Evaluation factors during the recruitment process

In Riddermark Bil’s new recruitment process, both sales managers mention that observing how well the candidate performs in sales is part of the sales process.

However, the initial sales skill is not the only factor Riddermark Bil judges by. Both sales managers also mentioned that they also observe the development curve of the candidate. A good salesperson that lacks potential of development tends to stagnate in
their sales in comparison to the ones that have a capacity of development. One manager argues that this is the reason that their testing process is so long.

4.3.3 Riddermark Bil’s interpretation of ideal salespeople

The sales managers provided the following factors and traits that they believe that talented salespeople hold.

A salesperson should be an optimist, as both sales managers mentioned independently. When queried on why optimism is important for being a salesperson, the following factors were mentioned:

- It is important to be able to be able to keep working in harder times. More specifically, a salesperson should be able to handle customers saying no, without affecting the performance of the salesperson. This is a factor mentioned by both managers.
- Further, both managers also mentioned that being optimistic affects sales, in the way that customers do appreciate a salesperson being positive and happy.

“Buying a car should be an enjoyable experience”
   – Sales manager at Riddermark

Both managers also mentioned that a salesperson should possess a competitive spirit. When queried on why, the following factor was mentioned:

- The goal of being number one and competing against oneself in the pursuit of better results is important in delivering said results. A common method is setting sales goals.

3 Original quote: “Det ska vara kul att köpa en bil”.
However, both managers independently noted that it is of importance to primarily compete against oneself, as one runs the risk of burnout if competing against another salesperson. One manager mentioned that this is especially dangerous if competing against a person that is more experienced than oneself.

A salesperson should also have the ability to build trust. The personality trait associated with this was formulated differently between the managers. One manager considers this a trait of the socially adapted and flexible salespeople, while the other manager mentioned this in the context of discussing why trust is important and that negligent people tend to perform worse as salespeople. According to the managers, building trust is important because:

- The trust for the salesperson extends to the product. One manager believes that trusting the salesperson makes it easier to trust the product, which makes future interactions with the customer easier and allows for more sales to be closed.
- It allows for recurring customers; similar to the previous point. One manager argued that in the initial customer meeting, most of the job is about selling oneself rather than the product. If a customer is satisfied and comes back, trust is already established. This allows for concurrent sales interactions having primarily a product focus – which makes the next sale much easier. The other manager, however, argued that the product is in focus in general and that the customer comes for the product.

4.3.4 Experiences and results of the new recruitment process

When asked about the experiences in the outcomes of the new recruitment process, one manager highlights that the purpose of
the recruitment process is that employees should stay as permanent employees.

The other manager mentions this as one of the biggest outcomes of the new recruitment process. The new group of salespeople that came in through the new recruitment process have a much greater retention rate, according to the manager. They tend to stay at the company longer and not leave for other positions. When queried about the role in the new recruitment process in this change, the manager believes that this is due to the tests being much more encompassing. Those that are not a perfect fit for the position either voluntarily decide that the position is not for them during the evaluation process, or during the testing part of the evaluation process.

4.3.5 The utility of referrals for sales positions

Both sales managers consider referrals from other salespeople on potential sales candidates. One sales manager does not see any downsides to this at all. The other sales manager highlights a few potential problems. One of these are that salespeople might not refer other salespeople with too much sales ability, in fear of the new salespeople having the potential on reducing their provision based wage. However, said sales manager observed that this tends only to be a problem in places where there are a finite set of customers, such as stores or facilities.
5 Part I – the ideal Brand Ambassador (salesperson)

In this chapter, I will outline the results from literature, the interviews at Universal Avenue, and the case study, to synthesize what would constitute an ideal Brand Ambassador. All statements that are from the literature base are supported with a citation, while statements referring to interviews are noted as such. With "ideal", I intend to present various measurable attributes that indicate sales performance based on said research. Despite this, most findings are generalizable for salespeople and sales positions in general.
5.1 Personality traits and motivation as predictors

To avoid conflicts of terminology, “motivation” is defined as suggested by Barrick, Stewart & Piotrowski (2002) according to (Mitchell, 1997, p. 60)’s definition – “those psychological processes involved with the arousal, direction, intensity, and persistence of voluntary actions that are goal directed”. This definition seems not only to capture motivation in the sense of enthusiasm and desire for a subject (as commonly associated with a lexical definition, such as how Oxford English Dictionary (2015) defines motivation), but also nuances into ambition and a goal-oriented mind-set. As such, we will use motivation in this report as an umbrella term to describe all these. As elaborated on below, personality traits and ambition turn out to be related concepts, which is why personality traits and motivation according to the above definition share this subchapter.

Adhering to the initial definition of motivation as being enthusiasm and desire, a recruiter at Universal Avenue notes that motivated candidates generally on-board quicker and more seldom drop off during the first period of the recruitment process. This is also supported by an interview with a Head of Growth at Universal Avenue, who argues that intent and motivation are the biggest predictors of success. While literature is sparse on measuring this type of motivation, Vinchur et al. (1998) noted that interest in sales had a strong relation both for actual sales and sales ratings. As such, no clear conclusion can be drawn if this is applicable for all sales positions or just an indicator for Brand Ambassadors.

Observing ambition, several studies establish a link between achievement strivings and high performance in sales. The findings of Martin (2015) suggest that almost all “high performers” in
sales test high on measures of achievement orientation, and a study in a Swedish context (Larsson-Broman, 2010) shows a correlation between achievement strivings and sales performance. Specifically, Larsson-Broman (2010) finds a significant relationship with self-evaluation questions oriented around achievement (such as “I am seldom happy with my results” and “I set very high goals for myself”) and sales performance. These salespeople also tend to work harder. This is in line with the findings of the case study at Riddermark Bil, where both sales managers argue that salespeople with a competitive spirit tend to be better performers.

In literature, personality traits are often measured through the Big Five inventory, which is a self-report inventory measuring five personality dimensions. The Big Five as a test and its contents is elaborated on in the next chapter (Chapter 6). There is evidence that conscientious and extraverted individuals tend to make better salespeople. More specifically, people who score higher in the Extraversion and Conscientiousness personality dimensions in the Big Five have better sales results. The biggest study on this is perhaps Vinchur et al. (1998). In a metastudy of 98 other studies, Vinchur et al. (1998) finds a correlation between a measure of “Achievement” (a subset of the Conscientiousness field in the Big Five personality trait model), and both objective sales and supervisor ratings of performance. Similar findings are reported by Barrick, Mount & Strauss (1993), who find that the Conscientiousness field is directly related to ratings from supervisors and indirectly related to sales performance. Achievement is also related to the concept of polychronicity (the willingness and urge to multitask as opposite to focusing on a single task). Individuals scoring higher on polychronicity tend to have greater achievement strivings (Conte, Rizzuto, & Steiner, 1999). However, little
other literature was found linking polychronicity to sales performance.

However, there might be more variables at play than the direct outcome in the two Big Five dimensions. For one, Extraversion has a bigger impact in job performance for jobs requiring social skills (Judge & Zapata, 2015). The findings of Barrick et al. (2002) also indicate a consistent relation in how various personality traits affect job performance. More specifically, striving for accomplishment and status in turn facilitates effects of the Big Five personality traits of Extraversion and Conscientiousness. In the case of Extraversion, status strivings account for a majority of the relationship between Extraversion and performance. In other words, extraverted employees tend to be motivated by status strivings, which in turn enables better performance in the role of a salesperson. Similar chains of reasoning can be applied for Conscientiousness – salespeople scoring high on conscientiousness are likely to strive for accomplishments, which through status striving links to actual sales performance. This is also supported by Barrick et al. (1993), who shows that individuals with high conscientiousness perform goal-setting to a higher extent and commit to these goals, which in turn is associated with greater sales performance.

As for the other measures in the Big Five inventory, there seems to be little evidence that the other measures show any impact in sales performance. Neither Emotional Stability, and perhaps more surprisingly, Agreeableness, show much impact when it comes to sales performance (Barrick et al., 2002; Sitser, van der Linden, & Born, 2013). Part of why Agreeableness might not play a significant role might be explained by Judge & Zapata (2015), who found that Agreeableness plays less of a role for job performance in competitive contexts. Further, meta-analyses (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Vinchur et al., 1998) were unable to show a link
between performance in sales roles and the personality traits of Emotional Stability or Openness.

The General Field of Personality (GFP) shows some utility when predicting sales performance. The General Field of Personality is a hypothesized model encompassing positive traits of the Big Five dimensions (Emotional Stability, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Extraversion and Openness) (Musek, 2007; Rushton & Irving, 2008). Two broad performance measures of sales positions – the general job performance and the ability to gain new customers – are predicted by the GFP (Sitser et al., 2013).

A few “narrow” personality traits in other personality tests can be predictors for (and against) sales performance. For example, the trait of “social boldness” had a negative relation with the rated sales performance and results of individuals (Sitser et al., 2013). The trait of “social boldness” is a measure of courage and bravery, but the negative relation might be explained by this being perceived as arrogance by some.
5.2 The relevance of biographical data and experience

Biographical data (henceforth biodata) is defined in this context in accordance to Vinchur et al. (1998), who observes that studies use a pool of multiple constructs to define it (such as grades and education, previous work history including sales experience, and in older cases even more dubious or irrelevant measures such as age and marriage status). Schmidt & Hunter (1998) elaborates with a few data measures, focusing on past life experiences such as high school experiences and hobbies. From this definition, biodata does not necessarily come in form of a resume, although resumes tend to encapsulate biodata in a condensed fashion.

Biodata shows some validity for predicting job performance in the application process. More specifically, for some entry-level positions, biodata has some validity as a predictor (Hunter & Hunter, 1984). Focusing specifically on sales, biodata is a good predictor for both sales ability and cognitive ability (Vinchur et al., 1998), and tests designed for predicting these show a good potential validity. However, Verbeke, Dietz, & Verwaal (2011) argue that biographical variables (such as sales experience) show inconsistent results in regards to predicting sales performance.

Naturally, there will always exist salespeople who challenge this. One of the top Brand Ambassadors at Universal Avenue completely lacked previous sales experience before becoming a Brand Ambassador. According to a recruiter at Universal Avenue, the Brand Ambassador would probably have been overlooked if the evaluation had been based on biodata. Connecting this to the case study of Riddermark Bil, sales managers argued that many excellent salespeople would have been missed if they had focused too heavily on the sales experience of candidates. However, one of the sales managers at Riddermark Bil and recruiters
at Universal Avenue argue that sales experience can be relevant in some cases.

Interestingly enough, Schmidt & Hunter (1998) also mention that biodata correlates with the general mental ability (suggesting that biodata are in part reflects the mental ability of the candidate indirectly), a finding that will be explored further.
5.3 Mental ability

General mental ability, also known as general intelligence (Schmidt & Hunter, 2004) or the g factor (Gottfredson, 1997), is a construct that measures the ability to deal with complex information processing (Gottfredson, 1997). It has shown to correlate and forecast a variety of life factors, such as crime rate and school dropout (Lubinski & Humphreys, 1997), and even everyday tasks such as banking and understanding transport schedules (Gottfredson, 1997). It is a construct defined initially over a 100 years ago by Spearman (1904), who assumed that the g factor would be a combination of factors such as memory and psychomotor ability. The general mental ability predicts job performance and in-training performance for a wide variety of jobs (Schmidt & Hunter, 2004). Schmidt & Hunter (2004) draw the conclusion that general mental ability is even more principal than personality and even job experience in regard to job performance. Specifically for sales jobs, general cognitive ability (a test attempting to capture general mental ability) is a predictor of sales ratings, but has low predictive value for actual sales outcomes (Vinchur et al., 1998).

The earlier findings show that biodata can predict general mental ability, and general mental ability in turn can predict sales ratings. Vinchur et al. (1998) draws the conclusion that general mental ability predicts sales ratings from supervisors (but not objective sales). This can be linked to the findings of Schmidt & Hunter (1998), who suggest that biodata can serve as a predictor for general mental ability; especially when paired with work samples, integrity tests, or interviews. This suggests that biodata can serve as a proxy to measure some qualities of sales performance. However, no clear conclusions of this can be drawn, especially
as Vinchur et al. (1998) shows little validity of general mental ability being a predictor for objective sales.

The findings of Schmidt & Hunter (2004) shows that in-training performance is also heavily influenced by the g factor. In the case study of Riddermark Bil, the sales managers argue that candidates even without previous experience in a sales position can outperform experienced salespeople if they are quick to learn. This should be contrasted to the g factor being considered a predictor to learning performance (DeGeest & Downes, 2012).
5.4 Optimism

One key characteristic of sales jobs is that salespeople tend to work alone in a higher degree (and this being the case at Universal Avenue as well, according to the recruiters interviewed). Additionally, sales is an industry branch where workers face rejection from customers frequently (Rich, 1999; also, see case study of Riddermark). Therefore, being able to manage the negative feelings associated with said subjects is important. Rich (1999) paints a descriptive picture of this subject:

“Salespeople who are optimists become successful because they persevere. In the face of routine setbacks, even major failures, they keep going. Pessimists get discouraged and gloomy after a stretch of unsuccessful cold calls, and start looking for excuses to end the day early. Optimists, however, remain enthusiastic and continue to believe that the next call will result in a sale. Eventually, they are right.”
- (Rich, 1999, p. 53); my emphasis

As such, there is reason to believe that optimism might help salespeople in their daily jobs. So what is then optimism? It is widely viewed as believing in the best possible outcomes when faced with uncertainty (Peale, 1952) or being hopeful about the future or the success (Oxford English Dictionary, 2015). Optimism as a measure is linked to better physical health and protective coping methods (Carver, Scheier, & Segerstrom, 2010).

There is some evidence that optimistic salespeople tend to be more productive. The findings of (Rich, 1999) suggest that optimistic salespeople have a significantly higher likelihood of being more productive. This is supported by (Larsson-Broman, 2010), who in an overview provides several studies linking optimism to sales performance; as well as the case study at Riddermark Bil,
where sales managers have experience of optimistic salespeople performing very well. However, as concluded in chapter 5.1, emotional stability as a personality dimension does not seem to hold much predictive value when it comes to sales performance. This suggests either some conflicting results with the findings here, or that emotional stability and optimism are not interchangeable definitions.

Further, optimism is important in managing failures that are inevitable in sales. The findings by Dixon & Schertzer (2005) show that optimism has a role in shaping the attributions for customer rejections in salespeople, which might account for the belief that optimistic people cope with failure in a better way. There are various examples of this. The conclusions of Larsson-Broman (2010) suggest this as well, where optimists tend to attribute failure tend to more specific and temporary variables (for example, failure being temporary) than pessimists (who in general believe that failure will affect more parts of their life for a longer period of time); a similar conclusion as Rich (1999) draws, as illustrated in the following quote:

"Alternatively, a pessimist explains failure with reasons that are permanent, pervasive, and personal. For example, a pessimistic salesperson who has just been rejected is more likely to think "I'm no good at sales, and I never will be. Customers don't want my company's products, especially if it means buying them from me." This salesperson takes failure personally, and believes that things will never change. The optimistic salesperson, on the other hand, is more likely to think "My sales presentation didn't work this time, but it will the next time. I'll be even more successful as I learn more through our training program."

– (Rich, 1999, p. 54); my emphasis
These findings are reflected in the case study at Riddermark Bil. The sales managers have drawn the same conclusion from experience – a salesperson should be able to handle multiple customers saying no without it affecting the attitude of the salesperson.
5.5 Conclusion of Part I

There is a substantial literature base that shows that some personality dimensions have validity when attempting to predict sales performance. Especially the Big Five has a substantial literature base available. As such, the Big Five as a method of evaluation, as well as its limitations, should be introduced, explored and considered in the next chapter. There are also some other personality dimensions that show some promise, such as the trait of “social boldness” predicting negatively with sales as shown by Sitser et al. (2013). As such, not only the Big Five test itself should be considered, but also other measures that correlate with Big Five personality factors.

From both from the case study and the literature review, there is reason to believe is that ambition and a goal-oriented mind-set is a personality facet with potential. The case study concluded that managers argued that salespeople with a competitive spirit perform better, and some studies examining personality dimensions show that facets such as status strivings act as drivers on sales performance. Some studies link ambition to the Big Five personality dimensions, and it should be considered if these tests are predictors enough or if other types of tests are required. There is also some validity in interest in sales.

Mental ability is a strong predictor for many types of jobs, and there is some evidence showing that the same holds for sales jobs as well. At the very least, the mental ability seems to hold predictive value for performance at work training. Therefore, measurements of mental ability should be considered.

There are various types of biodata, and biodata can be shown to have some predictive value – especially in sales. However, it is unclear from literature what facets of the biodata is relevant, but
interviews suggest that sales experience and extracurricular activities can be of relevance.

Finally, it seems that optimism as a measure is a predictor for success in sales positions. There seems to be two implications in regard to sales jobs. First, there are studies that show that optimistic salespeople tend to have better sales performance through raw productivity measures. Second, optimistic salespeople tend to cope with failure in a healthier way.
6 Part II – evaluating the ideal Brand Ambassador

In this chapter, various methods of evaluating candidates for sales positions will be discussed. This chapter will elaborate on these evaluation methods, and connect how well they evaluate the set of evaluation criteria were identified in the previous chapter.
6.1 Big Five, GFP, and other personality tests – discussion

It is commonly thought that there are five factors of personality that together classify personality attributes (Digman, 1990). Scholars have independently found that a five-factor model describes personality attributes well, as Digman (1990) has summarized; especially in the 80s, vast amounts of literature has emerged that suggests the validity of a 5-factor model (Barrick & Mount, 1991). This view has also converged within research on industrial-organizational psychology (Barrick et al., 2002). One of the most common measures of this is the Big Five Inventory (John, Donahue, & L, 1991; John, Naumann, & Soto, 2008).

While the number of factors (5) is generally agreed on, there exists some divergence in the definitions of the dimensions (Barrick & Mount, 1991). However, most studies used in this paper (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Barrick et al., 1993, 2002; John & Srivastava, 1999; McCrae & John, 1992; Romero, Villar, Gómez-Fraguela, & López-Romero, 2012; Rushton & Irwing, 2008; Vinchur et al., 1998) use the model definitions proposed by Digman (1990): Extraversion, Emotional Stability (sometimes defined as “neuroticism”, which is the inverse), Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness. These dimensions are measured through a series of questions where respondents respond between 1 (Disagree strongly) to 5 (Agree a lot). A score is then calculated by summarizing the score for a series of questions. Some of the questions are inverted – that is, a lower score on that question maps to a higher result of that personality facet. Below is a table of the dimensions describing the personality facets with keywords, as well as providing two example questions for each dimension – a question mapping to the dimension, and an example of an “inverted” question mapping to that dimension. The
facets are adapted from John & Srivastava (1999), where “Neuroticism” is used in place of Emotional Stability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>Energetic, talkative, behaves assertively</td>
<td>Is talkative</td>
<td>Tends to be quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>Appreciative, sympathetic, arouses liking</td>
<td>Is helpful and un-selfish with others</td>
<td>Tends to find fault with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>Efficient, planful, has high aspiration level</td>
<td>Does a thorough job</td>
<td>Tends to be lazy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>Anxious, worrying, thin-skinned</td>
<td>Gets nervous easily</td>
<td>Remains calm in tense situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>Artistic, wide interests, values intellectual matters, unusual thought processes</td>
<td>Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature</td>
<td>Has few artistic interests</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: The Big Five Personality facets.

As found earlier, there is also studies of a highest-order indicator that is referred to as the General Field of Personality (Sitser et al., 2013) or The Big One (Musek, 2007). As described earlier, the GFP model encompasses positive traits of the Big Five dimensions (Emotional Stability – or given the table above – the inverse of Neuroticism, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Extraversion and Openness) (Musek, 2007; Rushton & Irwing, 2008). However, given the magnitude of studies available on the Big Five and its finer granularity in comparison to the GFP, the Big Five is perhaps more applicable in a job setting. To elaborate, the previous chapter showed that only two of the dimensions in the Big Five were of particular interest in regard to sales positions. Therefore, measurements on the GFP might either be superfluous (unnecessary long), or hold less accuracy for the context of sales positions than the more detailed Big Five does.
The previous chapter illustrated that a personality dimension called "social boldness" of The Bridge Personality test has a negative correlation with sales performance (Sitser et al., 2013). The Bridge Personality test is a test often used in recruitment scoring candidate in 34 personality dimensions and preferences of behaviour (TestGroup, 2016). However, perhaps as a consequence of The Bridge Personality test being a proprietary test owned by Testgroup (TestGroup, 2016), this seems to have limited the amount of studies examining it\(^4\). Further, only a single study within the literature scope of this study has found any correlation between a measure in The Bridge Personality Test and sales performance. This issue of commercial tests will be discussed further in chapter 7.

\(^4\) The search term “bridge personality” AND testgroup returns only two results on Google Scholar.
6.2 Big Five and other psychometric tests in a recruitment setting

Psychometric tests have become more common for candidate evaluation (Aiken, 2000). There is some disagreement about personality tests being suitable for the recruitment process. Some scholars argue that personality tests themselves have a low predictive value for a selection context (Morgeson et al., 2007). On the contrary, the previous chapter showcased a few examples of facets holding predictive value; further, Sitser et al. (2013) notes that studies using models such as Big Five consistently show that the results of the Big Five do predict various factors for job positions (such as job performance and satisfaction).

However, one issue with many personality tests is that they often are extensive. In recruitment settings that are very time-critical (which is the case for Universal Avenue, due to the number of candidates), this can be a problem. The Big Five personality test today consists of 44 questions (Zakrisson, 2010). However, there are also various short versions of the Big Five personality test available that show a significant correlation with a full test (Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003; Rammstedt & John, 2007; Romero et al., 2012). Beyond English versions, they also exist localized for German (Rammstedt & John, 2007) and Spanish (Romero et al., 2012), and may be extended to other languages. These shorter tests hold many limitations, such as the individual facets under each personality being unable to be measured (Gosling et al., 2003), but Gosling et al. (2003) argues that it is better to use properly evaluated short surveys where empirical research has been conducted, than build their own – or even worse, not use one at all. When the Big Five was conducted on 26 sales candidates at Universal Avenue at the first testing day, however, no single candidate took more than nine minutes on
completing the Big Five question battery. The median time was five minutes. One limitation in this data is that candidates had a time limit set for the entire set of tests. However, the copyright holder of the Big Five suggests that the test takes roughly 5 minutes to complete (John, n.d.). As such, a test with the same length and complexity as the Big Five may be appropriate when testing candidates at Universal Avenue and should be considered.
6.3 Sales tests as an evaluation tool

The case study at Riddermark Bil shows that the sales managers believe that sales tests are a good method to evaluate candidates by. The sales managers argue that they have had great success with an evaluation battery that encapsulates measurements of the sales ability. Work sample tests are proposed by Schmidt & Hunter (1998) as having a high validity when combined with tests measuring mental ability. Sales ability tests seem to hold predictive value as well in many studies, especially when combined with cognitive tests (Vinchur et al., 1998). This can be related to mental ability being considered a predictor of learning performance (DeGeest & Downes, 2012); better learning performance should naturally allow work sample performance to be better. However, a large and natural limitation of sales tests is that on-site tests cannot be conducted digitally.
6.4 Resumes and resume parsing as an evaluation tool

There are various offerings on the market today that offer to streamline the application process. One particular feature common in recruiting is the ability to parse resumes – software that allows extracting data from digital resume files and inserting it in databases. They have also been a subject of heavy development – while older software primarily counted keywords (Zielinski, 2016), more modern solutions parse natural language with the purpose of identifying job titles, skillsets, and other fields. Textkernel, for example, provides a framework for digitally parsing resumes to pre-set fields (information which was provided from the sales meeting) and inserting these candidates in a searchable database. Burning Glass offers a similar solution for parsing and searching (Burning Glass, n.d.). This demand has occurred from attempting to streamline the application process, as well as to being able to get a picture of a candidate without necessarily having to traverse the resume.

It is a common belief among managers that resumes contain job-relevant attributes (Cole et al., 2003). Looking again at how Vincich et al. (1998) defined the measure, a variety of measures are used for the biodata construct. However, a resume contains several variables of interest. This poses a question if there are different factors inside resumes that show different correlations with various ideal attributes – more precisely, those factors that are shown in the previous chapter to be of relevance. This precisely is explored by Cole et al. (2003), which will be discussed below.

Per definition, resumes often come in the form of a form of condensed biodata. With this in mind, most findings on the validity
of biodata in regard to recruitment can be extended to the resume. The previous chapter concluded that the Extraversion and Conscientiousness personality factors of the Big Five, as well as general mental ability, shows predictive value of sales performance. Some items in a resume map to precisely these functions. Strong academic achievement, for example, is a predictor of Conscientiousness and general mental ability (Cole et al., 2003). Findings in Cole et al. (2003) suggest that for jobs where the attributes of Conscientiousness and general mental ability are of interest (which would be most jobs), recruiters should place focus on evaluating resume items related to academic achievement. Conversely, academic achievements and social/extracurricular abilities predict Extraversion, and therefore emphasis should be placed on these as well when examining resumes.

This should be contrasted to the current method of evaluation of resumes at Universal Avenue. Currently, recruiters at Universal Avenue make broad generalizations of the person based on the resume. This is common among recruiters, who tend to judge a candidate’s personality based on resumes (Burns, Christiansen, Morris, Periard, & Coaster, 2014). However, making broad generalizations based of the resume is something Cole et al. (2003) advises against, in favour of identifying those indicators that are of relevance for the position in question.

The case study also highlights a potential faking issue. A potential issue of resumes is that they do not need to necessarily be written by the person who is applying. While this is not too large of an issue assuming background checks are made on the actual biodata, it affects other aspects of the resume that may be part of it (such as the cover letter often attached to resumes). Also, biodata has some ethical issues attached to it in some cases. Hunter & Hunter (1984) highlights potential legal issues in the case that some biodata measure are considered an invasion of
privacy or indirect measures of some attributes associated with discrimination (like sex or race). Worth noting is that resumes can be anonymized and stripped of details irrelevant for the job in question (such as race and gender) through digital systems. This shows promising impact in avoiding aspects such as recruiter hemophily (female recruiters selecting female applicants and male recruiters selecting male applicants) (Behaghel, Crépon, & Barbranchon, 2011).

6.4.1 Conclusions of resume findings

All in all, resumes provide a few items that are relevant for sales positions, but contain a few underlying issues. The findings here should be contrasted to the conclusion of the case study, where sales managers argue that resumes in general are obsolete as a method of evaluating sales ability (although one manager argued that some details in a resume are relevant). While the outlook on resumes themselves is not entirely bleak, answers to the questions of main interest in the resume for sales positions (academic achievements and extracurricular activities) could perhaps be extracted and asked separately. This would also mitigate the faking and ethical issues outlined.
6.5 Video as an evaluation tool

The concept of a video resume is not entirely new. A video interview often comes in the form of a longer monologue where the candidate describes their traits and past experiences (Cullen, 2007). There are also various recruiting firms that offer video introductions as an alternative to the traditional resume.

Little research on the usefulness of video resumes exists in literature, but Kemp, Bobbitt, Beauchamp, & Peyton (2013) provide an exploratory overview of specifically short video resumes for sales positions. The findings of Kemp et al. (2013) suggest that for sales positions, a video resume may be better at conveying oral communication skills, energy levels and potential benefit to the company, than printed resume are. This finding should be contrasted to the previous chapter outlining motivation as a predictor of sales success. Therefore, a video resume appears to be appropriate for applications for sales positions.

Recruiters at Universal Avenue suggest that video interviews might make the candidate feel uncomfortable for various reasons – such as video recordings being an unusual situation for the candidate, or feelings of being “watched” when performing a video interview. This is consistent with other findings – among respondents for a survey that declined to be surveyed through video, the top two reasons were “don’t like to show face on screen” and “privacy / security concerns”. In a study, 50 percent stated that they declined due to not liking showing their face on screen, while 48 percent stated that they had privacy and security concerns with it (Kelly, 2016). Other aspects to keep in mind are that some candidates have a fear of presenting, and therefore choose to opt out from the video interview – although this can have an impact of the actual job performance as well (Kemp et al., 2013).
As a consequence, it is important to establish trust between recruiter and candidate, and for a candidate to trust the recruiting process. This is consistent with the findings of the recruiters at Universal Avenue, who find this issue both with the current video process, and a potential issue with many automated solutions in general.

One recruiter at Universal Avenue highlights issues that aren’t a problem with video with a methodology itself, but more technical issues with the current implementation at Universal Avenue itself. Some applicants are unable to load the video recording software, and the recruiter front-end for evaluating video applications can be lacklustre in parts. Some examples of issues mentioned by recruiters at Universal Avenue are long load-times, the application tool not loading at all, and an automated scoring system on the back-end that currently is not useful in its role of evaluating candidates.

These previously mentioned are concerns that are hard to mitigate – while video as a survey method holds potential, it cannot be the only method of surveying today until technical issues are tackled. Further, as suggested by Kemp et al. (2013), video resumes may bring potential liability issues through bias, such as gender or physical attractiveness. Unlike resumes, they cannot be anonymized by these factors either, as factors such as race and gender are naturally conveyed through video and cannot be stripped. While this has not been studied further in the scope of this study, this should be observed.

**6.5.1 Conclusions of video findings**

The video resume is a strong evaluation tool, and in regard to the amount of information conveyed in a given time-period, can contain much more information than typed text. Further, it is appropriate for presenting personality, impact skills, and motivation.
However, many limitations exist – both technical (for example, low quality videos or software on the recruiting side being slow) and psychological (some applicants have privacy issues or just do not feel comfortable showing their face). As such, it is a viable complement to other tools, but not a replacement.
6.6 A brief comparison of the video and resume evaluations in the Universal Avenue context

Currently, Universal Avenue allows candidates to choose between a video interview or providing a resume.

When asking the recruiters at Universal Avenue to compare how long it takes to evaluate these, the recruiters give diverging answers. One recruiter at Universal Avenue suggests that the video evaluation saves time compared to the resume, while the other suggests that evaluating a resume is quicker than evaluating a video. However, the recruiter who views resumes as quicker to evaluate stated that this is because of the various technical issues of the platform that Universal Avenue currently uses.

As stated in the previous subchapter, there are some initial findings that video resumes may be better at conveying a few key factors than a traditional, written resume. This position is supported by both recruiters, who believe that the video resume holds advantages to the resume when presenting personality aspects and presentation technique.

On the topic of biases, it is entirely possible to build an application process with resumes where data identifying gender, race and similar are stripped from the recruiters (as has been outlined previously in this thesis), while an equivalent solution for video resumes is harder to build. This should be taken into account, especially if Universal Avenue wishes to implement a process where such factors are excluded in view to recruiters early.
6.7 Measuring mental ability of candidates

As outlined in the previous chapter, the mental ability of applicants is a promising predictor for performance and the speed of learning for sales positions. As for the toolsets themselves, there are various commercial tests available. One of the more famous of these are Raven's Matrices, which is often claimed to measure the mental ability or g factor directly (Mackintosh & Bennett, 2005). Many established tests hold consistent results between each other, and are almost completely correlated (Johnson, Bouchard, Krueger, McGue, & Gottesman, 2004). However, there seems to be very few psychometric tests with validity available in the public domain or are free to use. As such, measuring mental ability in a recruitment setting would either require a commercial solution, or identifying one of these psychometric tests – much like the dilemma described for personality tests in the next chapter.

One potential candidate for evaluation through psychometric tests is the open source software system known as The Psychology Experiment Building Language (PEBL) (Mueller & Piper, 2014). It offers a toolbox of free versions of various otherwise proprietary psychometric tests. It also allows for the creation of more psychometric tests through its programming syntax. However, one issue with the provided tests is that norms are not available for any of the provided tests. This hurts the external validity of the tests, if they were to be used.
7 Part III – limitations of evaluation methods and the evaluation funnel

7.1 Limitations of commercial personality tests

From a business perspective, investing in a proprietary test where only a small subset of the questions can be shown ex ante to be of relevance cannot be advised. Looking at commercial solutions in general, there are various issues with these. Goldberg et al. (2006) outline four limitations imposed by commercial test publishers. First, publishers rarely allow researchers to make any form of modifications to the test in a test setting, and see these as threats to the integrity of the tests. Secondly, tests are rarely allowed to be conducted online (although it should be noted that some commercial actors allow for these tests to be performed through the test publishers’ own platform). Third, there is little transparency in the scoring keys of the tests, and these are often not available at all (which allows the test publisher to collect a fee for each test). Finally, the commercial actors discourage further test development and validity studies of the commercial tests and seek to build a following through market measures instead.

Very little literature documents the validity of other personality tests than five-factor models and the General Field of Personality. While I have previously speculated that part of the reason is that some tests are commercial (and therefore have not undergone the scrutiny of peer review that studies generally are subject to), part of the reason seems to be that the five-factor model is considered a commonly shared conceptual framework (McCrae & Costa Jr., 1989).
7.2 Limitations of the Big Five test

An important aspect to note for recruitment purposes is that the Big Five Inventory currently may not be used commercially. This is challenging, as the reliability of the test is high, with clear norms available for subject comparison (for example, norms are available in English for a US population (Srivastava, John, Gosling, & Potter, 2003) and in Swedish for a variety of contexts (Zakrisson, 2010)). However, there are five-factor surveys that also are in the public domain (such as Goldberg (1999)). I strongly advise against using the copyrighted Big Five inventory in a commercial setting.
7.3 Faking in self-evaluation surveys

Corrections for faking in surveys (that is, manipulating answers toward what the respondent believes that the firm conducting the survey prefers) do not seem to improve the validity of the survey (Morgeson, 2007). However, one potential method to identify faking respondents is to use obviously bogus questions in a test (Morgeson, 2007). Further, there is no clear consensus that the ability to fake self-evaluation forms may be bad. Morgeson (2007) provides some argument that it may be a form of job-related or socially related adaption of sorts. Part of social interaction is faking and hiding some sides.
7.4 Referrals as a potential target segment

One advantage of having an entry channel for candidates that are referred from other that already are within the system is that referred candidates do not incur the same cost when it comes to advertising the positions. Further, based on the interviews and the case study, it seems that the people that are referred tend in metrics to be a statistically better segment than the average applicant. As observed in the interview with Universal Avenue’s Head of Growth in the US, the cost of acquisition is also lower for these candidates, as these candidates do not go through the traditional advertisement system. However, some interviewees at Universal Avenue highlight risks with a referral system that need to be taken into account. The primary aspect is an incentive problem if the referrals provide any monetary opportunity, where there lies a potential of cartels creating fake sales. However, this can be mitigated by a strong QA team, which Universal Avenue already has. Another aspect as highlighted by a recruiter is the potential image impact it can have on the firm if the firm gets associated with multi-level marketing schemes or similar due to its referral model.
7.5 Discussing the points of entry for the Universal Avenue evaluation funnel

As previously outlined, Universal Avenue advertises through Arbetsförmedlingen and Blocket for the Swedish market. These jobs are advertised as full-time positions of indeterminate length, and are advertised either as the Brand Ambassador position or as a salesperson for a specific Brand that Universal Avenue offers.

![Job advertisement through Blocket Jobb](image)

**Figure 7: Job advertisement through Blocket Jobb**

![Job advertisement through Arbetsförmedlingen Platsbanken](image)

**Figure 8: Part of job advertisement through Arbetsförmedlingen Platsbanken**

While the application text itself describes the working concept of the Brand Ambassadors, the positions are marked as full-time positions of indeterminate length. This is contradictory to the view of the Brand Ambassador position internally, as several recruiters at Universal Avenue, as well as Universal Avenue’s Head of Growth in the US, suggest that applicants that understand the
business model of Universal Avenue tend to be more successful and not as likely to drop out early in the recruitment process. More specifically, the Head of Growth in the US believes that believing in the business model of the firm predicts performance, and a recruiter stating that one purpose of the post-resume phone call being to determine if the candidate understands that being a Brand Ambassador involves being “alone on the field” and not working in a fixed office. Additionally, it could be speculated that those looking for a permanent full-time position might in lower extend hold the traits of ambition and drive that were outlined in the earlier findings. One hypothesis is that applicants from these channels on average tend to not understand the business model as well, and that recruiters therefore go through more candidates that are not applicable for the position. This has not been explored at Universal Avenue through data, and should be further investigated.
8 Conclusion

To recapitulate the discussion, the first part (Chapter 6) began by defining predictors. The second part (Chapter 7) discussed various evaluation methods and potential limitations of these in an evaluation context. The third part (Chapter 8) discussed potential limitations in a broader perspective, recruitment segments and potential issues, as well as touched on topics of issue with the recruitment process itself.

The first research question is defined as "What defines an ideal salesperson in the Universal Avenue case – e.g. an ideal Brand Ambassador?”, which corresponds to the first part of the discussion. In this chapter, various predictors of sales performance were outlined, which concluded that there are several dimensions of interest that correspond to an ideal Brand Ambassador. These include personality facets that are defined in the scope of some personality tests, other personality facets accounting for motivation and ambition, mental ability, biodata, and optimism. As such, the research question has been successfully answered.

The second research question is defined as "How can candidates for sales jobs be evaluated by the findings in RQ1, on a scalable basis?". In other words, by what methods can the traits corresponding to the first research question be evaluated? Of particular interest are personality-based predictors and mental ability. These are especially relevant, as personality dimensions in the form of evaluation tests and tests measuring mental ability are not subjectively evaluated on a candidate by candidate basis, but are instead score-based evaluations that may be batch processed. As such, they are fully scalable, in the sense that the processing does not depend on the number of incoming candidates. While this study cannot draw any conclusions if personality and logic tests alone are sufficient for evaluating salespeople,
or which tests should be used, they are the evaluation methods with the highest potential in the context of Universal Avenue. While traditional resumes contain information that predicts sales ability, they come with a few underlying issues. Currently, recruiters at Universal Avenue draw broad conclusions of the personality of candidates, which might not be optimal. Extracting the items of relevance from the resume would separate the issues associated with the resume itself from the relevant information it provides, while providing potential scalability. Video resumes show a few preliminary strengths in comparison to the traditional resume when evaluating candidates for sales positions, but literature is sparse on its suitability. However, in its current form at Universal Avenue, there are some technical limitations in the evaluation process reducing the utility. Further, while there are algorithms on the commercial market attempting to evaluate video resumes automatically, Universal Avenue has little utility of the one it currently uses. This study, however, cannot verify if it is due to the limitations of the algorithm itself, or the way Universal Avenue has set it up.

Finally, the third research question is "What are potential limitations of some of the evaluation methods found in RQ2 and from where candidates are funneled into the evaluation system?". In this chapter, limitations of various tests are discussed, such as problems with commercial personality tests, the copyright limitations of a common Five Factor-model test, and faking in surveys. Some aspects that are not intrinsic to the actual evaluation process, but instead regard the entry point of the “evaluation funnel” are also discussed. While no robust conclusions can be drawn from the discussion in this thesis, the entry points of the evaluation funnel should be evaluated and benchmarked.
9 Reflections

In the form of future research in academia, I see several potential topics emerging from my findings and limitations.

- How does culture affect the evaluation approach needed? There might be cultural differences in what constitutes a good salesperson. While “local” culture differences (such as recruitment of minorities) are heavily explored in literature, culture factors relating to geography are seemingly not very explored – and especially not when it comes to scalable recruitment solutions.

- Do the themes provided here generalize to all firms needing scalable recruitment? While evaluation of sales candidates has been the central theme in this thesis, there are interesting conclusions available showing that other factors map to overall job performance.

- Can video evaluation methods be useful in mass evaluation settings? The mass evaluation constraint entails some form of evaluation that allows part of the evaluation process to be replaced with some form of automated or batch system. I have not found any such studies covering this topic during my literature review.

For Universal Avenue, I advise the following, beyond the conclusions I provided in the previous chapter:

- Assuming that my recommendation of exploring video interviews (with this report as part of the background) is followed, I suggest interviewing Brand Ambassadors choosing the resume path in the recruitment process, exploring why they chose to not choose the video interview. While some method-specific answers regarding video may surely appear, such as what I have outlined earlier (privacy
concerns or not feeling comfortable speaking to the camera), potential inadequacies in the recruitment flowchart may be surfaced. I was suggested this idea by a person at Universal Avenue.
10 Citations


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11 Appendix

11.1 Application form as of 2016-10-31

1. Page 1
   a. Full name
   b. E-mail address
   c. Mobile phone number

2. Page 2
   a. Date of birth
   b. Location (Country and city)
   c. How many hours a week can be dedicated to Universal Avenue.
      i. Less than 12 hours
      ii. 12-24 hours
      iii. 25-39 hours
      iv. 40+ hours
   d. Education level
      i. Highschool diploma
      ii. Bachelor degree
      iii. Masters degree
      iv. Professional school degree
      v. Doctorate degree
      vi. Other
   e. Sales experience
      i. Complete beginner
      ii. I know the basics
      iii. I’m quite experienced
      iv. I’m a fulltime pro
11.2 Interview questions with Head of Growth, North America, at Universal Avenue

- What is the overall distribution of sales positions in the US market? (Examples: Freelance, internal sales within organizations, external sales firms...)
- Could you describe the application process for sales positions in the US?
- Culture-wise, do you believe UA’s current recruitment process (with CV or video applications) is suitable for the US market?
- Are resumes useful at all for evaluating salespeople?
- Sub-question to above: For more than screening purposes?
- In the US, are referrals used as a tool for recruiting for sales positions at all?
- Do referrals hold any benefits?
- Can referrals be a bad idea in a Universal Avenue context?
- Do you believe there can be problems from a segmenting perspective when it comes to referrals? (Incentive problems etc.)

11.3 Interview questions with recruiters

- What is important in a sales person, seen from an UA context?
- When looking at CVs, what do you look for?
- Are CVs appropriate or not for this context?
- Is video as a recruitment tool in general useful?
- Is video as a recruitment tool currently useful at Universal Avenue?
- Why do fewer people choose to use videos?
- Do you believe that your views are generalizable to all recruiters at Universal Avenue?
• The phone phase of the interview – what is asked?
• Are there any differences in the application segments depending on where candidates are referred from? (Job sites, etc.)
• Referrals as a segment – is it a relevant segment?
• Are personality tests realistic to use in an application process?
• Is the drop-off from personality tests necessarily negative?
• What aspects lie with the current recruitment process?
• Are there some cultural differences (in what is considered a good salesperson)?

11.4 Interview questions with sales managers at Riddermark Bil

• Vad är din titel på bolaget?
• Vad är en bra säljare, enligt dig?
• För varje svar: Varför det?
• Har rekryteringsfasen någon annan roll än utvärdering? (”Motivation” exempelvis)
• Viktiga aspekter av en rekryteringsprocess? (Är det viktigt att träffa kandidaten, exempelvis?)
• Vilka drivkrafter ser du hos säljare?
• Ser du dessa drivkrafter hos dina säljare nu?
• Är tidigare säljerfarenhet relevant?
• Om ja: Varför?
• Kan personlighetstest vara till nytta i en rekryteringsprocess?
• Har ett CV någon fördel alls?
• ”Vänner till säljare” – referral systems – är det ett relevant rekryteringssegment att titta på?
• Vad är unikt med att sälja bilar?
• Skillnader mellan att sälja B2B och B2C?
- Känner du till några andra företag med en bra rekryteringsprocess?
- Vilken roll har säljarna haft i att bolaget vuxit så snabbt?
- [Beskrivning av Universal Avenues affärsmodell]. Ser du några potentiella egenskaper en säljare bör ha i denna typ av säljkontext?
Flowchart of Universal Avenue recruitment and on-boarding process.

**Universal Avenue onboarding process**

**Application Pipe**
- Visit the application page
- Provides basic information
- Choose a scholarship
- Provides relevant information
- Application rejected
- Email with rejection message
- Application accepted
- Follow-up phone call with candidate
- Application approved by UA teams

**Brand Ambassador Pipe**
- Notification of selection
- Onboarding phone call or office visit
- Onboarding conference with Q&A

**UA Academy**
- Ambassador Coaching
- Surveys
- Sales coaching
- Brand Certification
- Introduction to coaches
11.6 Appendix 3 – Study material

11.6.1 Method

The Big Five Inventory test was conducted through Google Forms. The Coin Flip part was a self-built application.

11.6.2 Big Five Inventory test (Swedish)

BFI questions from (John & Srivastava, 1999).

Here are a number of characteristics that may or may not apply to you. For example, do you agree that you are someone who likes to spend time with others?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disagree strongly</th>
<th>Disagree a little</th>
<th>Neither agree or disagree</th>
<th>Agree a little</th>
<th>Agree a lot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questions

1. Is talkative
2. Tends to find fault with others
3. Does a thorough job
4. Is depressed, blue
5. Is original, comes up with new ideas
6. Is reserved
7. Is helpful and unselfish with others
8. Can be somewhat careless
9. Is relaxed, handles stress well
10. Is curious about many different things
11. Is full of energy
12. Starts quarrels with others
13. Is a reliable worker
14. Can be tense
15. Is ingenious, a deep thinker
16. Generates a lot of enthusiasm
17. Has a forgiving nature
18. Tends to be disorganized
19. Worries a lot
20. Has an active imagination
21. Tends to be quiet
22. Is generally trusting
23. Tends to be lazy
24. Is emotionally stable, not easily upset
25. Is inventive
26. Has an assertive personality
27. Can be cold and aloof
28. Perseveres until the task is finished
29. Can be moody
30. Values artistic, aesthetic experiences
31. Is sometimes shy, inhibited
32. Is considerate and kind to almost everyone
33. Does things efficiently
34. Remains calm in tense situations
35. Prefers work that is routine
36. Is outgoing, sociable
37. Is sometimes rude to others
38. Makes plans and follows through with them
39. Gets nervous easily
40. Likes to reflect, play with ideas
41. Has few artistic interests
42. Likes to cooperate with others
43. Is easily distracted
44. Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature

11.6.3 Big Five Inventory Test (Swedish)

BFI questions translated to Swedish by (Zakrisson, 2010).

Also included: “Informationen kommer enbart att användas i ramen för denna rekryteringsdag, och i en forskningsstudie. För forskningsstudien kommer datan att vara anonymiserad.”


Google Form link: https://goo.gl/forms/Lm8nr40IXa9Exfqt2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stämmer absolut inte</th>
<th>Stämmer ganska dåligt</th>
<th>Stämmer varken bra eller dåligt</th>
<th>Stämmer ganska bra</th>
<th>Stämmer absolut</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questions

1. Är pratsam
2. Tenderar att hitta fel hos andra
3. Gör ett grundligt jobb
4. Är deprimerad, nere
5. Är originell, kommer med nya idéer
6. Är reserverad
7. Är hjälpsam och osjälvisk mot andra
8. Kan vara något vårdslös
9. Är avspänd, hanterar stress väl
10. Är nyfiken på många olika saker
11. Är full av energi
12. Startar gräl med andra
13. Är pålitlig i arbetet
14. Kan vara spänd
15. Är sinnrik, en djup tänkare
16. Sprider mycket entusiasm
17. Har en förlåtande läggning
18. Tenderar att vara oorganiserad
19. Oroar mig mycket
20. Har livlig fantasi
21. Tenderar att vara tystlåten
22. Är i allmänhet tillitsfull
23. Tenderar att vara lat
24. Är känslomässigt stabil, blir inte upprörd så lätt
25. Är uppfinningsrik
26. Har en självhävdande personlighet
27. Kan vara kall och distanserad
28. Framhärdar tills uppgiften är slutförd
29. Kan vara lynnig
30. Värdesätter konstnärliga, estetiska upplevelser
31. Är ibland blyg, hämmad
32. Är omtänksam och vänlig mot nästan alla
33. Gör saker effektivt
34. Förblir lugn i spända situationer
35. Föredrar rutinarbete
36. Är utåtriktad, sällskaplig
37. Är ibland ohövlig mot andra
38. Gör upp planer och fullföljer dem
39. Blir lätt nervös
40. Tycker om att reflektera, leka med idéer
41. Har få konstnärliga intressen
42. Tycker om att samarbeta med andra
43. Blir lätt distraherad
44. Har en utvecklad smak för konst, musik eller litteratur

**BFI Scale Scoring (same for both English and Swedish)**

Extraversion: 1, 6R, 11, 16, 21R, 26, 31R, 36
Agreeableness: 2R, 7, 12R, 17, 22, 27R, 32, 37R, 42
Conscientiousness: 3, 8R, 13, 18R, 23R, 28, 33, 38, 43R
Neuroticism: 4, 9R, 14, 19, 24R, 29, 34R, 39
Openness: 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35R, 40, 41R, 44

11.6.4 Weighted coin flip


(Haghani & Dewey, 2016)

**General idea:** Subjects get to flip a coin in a computer simulation. They are informed that the coin is weighted to favor heads (60%) over tails (40%).

**Goal:** Observe betting strategies in accordance to (Haghani & Dewey, 2016). Outcome (in money) is not as interesting as the patterns that are used.
11.6.5 Coin flip application

The following is the Python 3 source code used for the coin flip application that candidates were evaluated by. For deployment, pyinstaller was used to compile the code to Mac and Windows binaries.

```
"""This software is under the MIT License (MIT). Copyright © 2016 Stephen Kirk.
Permission is hereby granted, free of charge, to any person obtaining a copy of this software and associated documentation files (the "Software"), to deal in the Software without restriction, including without limitation the rights to use, copy, modify, merge, publish, distribute, sublicense, and/or sell copies of the Software, and to permit persons to whom the Software is furnished to do so, subject to the following conditions:
The above copyright notice and this permission notice shall be included in all copies or substantial portions of the Software.
The Software is provided "AS IS", WITHOUT WARRANTY OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY, FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE AND NONINFRINGEMENT. IN NO EVENT SHALL THE AUTHORS OR COPYRIGHT HOLDERS BE LIABLE FOR ANY CLAIM, DAMAGES OR OTHER LIABILITY, WHETHER IN AN ACTION OF CONTRACT, TORT OR OTHERWISE, ARISING FROM, OUT OF OR IN CONNECTION WITH THE SOFTWARE OR THE USE OR OTHER DEALINGS IN THE SOFTWARE."""

import random
from time import sleep
import csv

# Starting variables
moneysuffix = "kr"

# Dict
heads = True;
tails = False;
coinlookup = {True: "Heads", False: "Tails"};

# Set default money
startingmoney = 100
currentmoney = startingmoney

# Counter - which bet are you on?
counter = 1

errormessage = "";
name = "";

# Prepare output matrix
Output = ["Turn","Balance","Bet","Coin Side Choice","Coin Side Outcome","Won/Lost","New Balance"];

class ResultClass:
    def __init__(self,coinSideChoice,coinSideOutcome,bet,new-money):
        self.coinSideChoice = coinSideChoice;
        self.coinSideOutcome = coinSideOutcome;
        self.bet = bet;
        self.result = (coinSideChoice==coinSideOutcome);
        self.newmoney = newmoney;

class UserBet:
    """ Container for user bet """
    def __init__(self,bet,coinSideChoice):
        self.bet = bet;
        self.coinSideChoice = coinSideChoice;

class BetStatus:
    """Outputs the status of the bet (was it accepted or not?); and any messages."""
    def __init__(self):
        self.betAccepted = False;
        self.message = "NOT INITIALIZED";
    def setdata(self,status,message):
        self.betAccepted = status;
        self.message = message;

# No input.
# Output: Throws coin, returns heads (True); tails
def throw():
    # Heads is true
    distribution = [True] * 6 + [False] * 4;
    return random.choice(distribution);

# Validates bet to see if it is accepted.
# Output: True (bet is okay); False (bet is faulty); message side-cart
def checkbet(bet,currentmoney):
## New Bet Status object

```python
betStatus = BetStatus();
# Check if bet is valid integer
try:
    bet = int(bet)
    # If the bet exceeds the current money of the user
    if bet > currentmoney:
        betStatus.message = "You bet " + str(bet) + ", but you only have " + str(currentmoney) + ". You cannot bet more currentmoney than you have."
        betStatus.betAccepted = False;
    # If bet is negative
    elif bet < 1:
        betStatus.message = "You cannot bet zero or negative.";
        betStatus.betAccepted = False;
    else:
        # Valid bet:
        betStatus.message = "Valid bet: " + str(bet);
        betStatus.betAccepted = True;
except (TypeError, ValueError) as e:
    betStatus.message = "Bet needs to be a number.";
    betStatus.betAccepted = False;
# Pass betStatus object back to input
return betStatus;
```

def addToOutput(game, counter, currentmoney):
    # ["Turn","Bank","Bet","Coin Side Choice","Coin Side Outcome","Won/Lost","New bank"]
    Output.append([str(counter), str(currentmoney), str(game.bet), coinlookup[game.coinSideChoice], coinlookup[game.coinSideOutcome], game.result, str(game.newmoney)]);

def outOfMoney_Check():
    if currentmoney <= 0:
        lostgame = True;
        return True;

# Convert arbitrary text to Heads or Tails
def parseCoin(coinFlip):
    # Validate that it is a string:
    if isinstance(coinFlip, str):
        coinFlip = str.lower(coinFlip);
if coinFlip == "heads" or coinFlip == "h":
    return heads;
elif coinFlip == "tails" or coinFlip == "t":
    return tails;
elif coinFlip == "output":
    print(Output);
else:
    print ("Invalid input - please type Heads or H for heads; Tails or T for tails.");
    return "Invalid";
# Try again (invalid input)
else:
    print("Invalid input - please type Heads or H for heads; Tails or T for tails.");
    return "Invalid";

# Make the bet and output a line as an array
def play(bet,coinSideChoice,currentmoney):
    # Reduce bet from money.
    currentmoney = currentmoney - bet;
    # Flip coin; save value to coinFlip
    coinFlip = throw();

    ## If the player coin side choice matches the result of the flip
    if coinSideChoice == coinFlip:
        # Award money
        currentmoney = currentmoney + 2*bet;
        # Return true
        return ResultClass(coinSideChoice,coinFlip,bet,currentmoney);
    else:
        # Player loses bet.
        # We already reduced the money.
        return ResultClass(coinSideChoice,coinFlip,bet,currentmoney);

def statusPrint():
    print((" THROW " +str(counter)+" ").center(80, '*'))
    print("* Current money:",str(currentmoney),str(moneysuffix));

# Initial setup
firstname = input('Enter your first name: ');
lastname = input('Enter your last name: ');

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print('').center(80, '*');
print('INSTRUCTIONS'.center(80, '*'));
print('').center(80, '*');
print("Your objective is to flip a coin, and bet on the outcome.");
print("However, you know that the coin is MANIPULATED -");
print("Every throw has a 0.6 probability of returning HEADS. That implicates that about 6 000 out of 10 000 throws will be HEADS.");
print("We are more curious in HOW you play, rather than the outcome - please treat the game as if it was your own money.")
print("You start with", startingmoney, moneysuffix);

lostgame = False;

# Main game loop
while lostgame == False and counter <= 30:
    # print("Every throw has a 0.6 probability of returning HEADS.")
    print("You can bet until you make a maximum of 30 bets, or you run out of money.")
    print("You can only bet whole numbers.")
    
    # Call status panel
    statusPrint();

    # New userbet container for the user bet
    userbet = UserBet;

    # Input heads/tails loop
    while True:
        coinSideChoice = input("Heads or tails? Type Heads or H for heads, Tails or T for tails. \n")
        coinSideChoiceParsed = parseCoin(coinSideChoice);
        if coinSideChoiceParsed == "Invalid":
            continue;
        elif coinSideChoiceParsed == heads or coinSideChoiceParsed == tails:
            break;
        else:
            print("Heads/tails function broke!")
    
    # Input user bet and check it
while True:
    bet = input("Input your bet. \n")
    betStatus = checkbet(bet, currentmoney);
    if betStatus.betAccepted == True:
        userBet = UserBet(int(bet), coin-SideChoiceParsed);
        break
    else:
        print(betStatus.message); # Print error

    # Check user bet
    game = play(userBet.bet, userBet.coinSideChoice, current-
    money);

    print("Throwing coin...")
    for x in range(0, 30):
        print(".", end="", flush=True);
        sleep(0.05);
    print("\n");

    print("You bet on: ", coinlookup[game.coinSideChoice]);
    print("Coin outcome: ", coinlookup[game.coinSideOutcome]);

    if game.result:
        print("You win", game.bet, moneysuffix);
    else:
        print("You lose", game.bet, moneysuffix);

    # Print output of game
    addToOutput(game, counter, currentmoney);

    # Update current money
    currentmoney = game.newmoney;
    counter+=1;

    # Check if out of money
    if outOfMoney_Check():
        break

    print("You lasted for "+ str(counter-1) + " throws.");
    with open(firstname+lastname+".csv", "w") as f:
        writer = csv.writer(f)
        writer.writerows(Output)

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input("Please await further instructions from your instructor.")

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11.7 Appendix 4 – search words

recruitment AND sales
"big five" AND sales
"resumes for sales positions"
recruiting AND challenge
e recruitment
e-recruiting
"Digital recruiting"
"online resume submission"
startups AND costs
growth AND startups AND costs
growth AND startups
optimism AND (sales OR salesperson)