The Effects of Corporate Rebranding on Employee Engagement: Evidence from the Professional Services Industry of South Africa

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, Wits Business School, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Master of Management in Strategic Marketing

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ABSTRACT

Corporate rebranding has been a topic of study for many years, as exemplified in the work of scholars such as Rosenthal (2003), Simms and Trott (2007), Abratt and Kleyn (2012), and Muzellec and Lambkin (2006). Despite the high level of academic interest in researching corporate rebranding, there has been an overwhelming bias towards its effects on consumers within developed markets. Although the fact that many prior studies have been conducted on corporate rebranding and employee engagement, there is scant research on emerging markets, such as in South Africa. These previous studies did not adopt the Saks (2006) employee engagement model in an emerging market context to investigate the effects corporate rebranding can have on employee engagement in an emerging market context.

The chosen case studies are a talent measurement company that underwent a corporate rebranding process in 2011, as well as an advisory company that also went through rebranding in 2013. The two companies fall within the same industry, thus the choice of a single embedded case study. Since the research aims to explore “the how and why”, a qualitative research method was found most fitting.

The analysis was based on data collected during 26 in-depth interviews with senior managers, consultants, supportive staff, and marketing professionals. Data from the interviews were analysed using an open-code method in which eight key themes were identified. The researcher triangulated the data collected from the primary interviews, as well as secondary sources such as staff internal drafts, eComms, Q&A sheets, brochures, flyers, and media reviews.

The results of Company A (SHL), revealed that not all employees understood the reason for corporate rebranding. Senior levels of management and consultants seemed to understand that the reason for the rebranding was to reposition SHL and combine two companies following a merger with PreVisor. In Company B (EY), the results revealed a similar level of understanding behind the reasons for corporate rebranding. Managers understood the reasons for corporate rebranding as an opportunity to gain new markets and reposition EY.

According to the cross-case analysis compared to the Saks model of engagement, the corporate rebranding exercise had a positive impact on organisational commitment and organisational citizen behaviour. In terms of intention to quit, a corporate rebranding exercise is more likely to reduce intentions to quit. It was also established that there was no direct impact on job satisfaction due to the SHL and EY corporate rebranding.

An unexpected outcome of the research was that during uncertain times of change, such as corporate rebranding, employees with strong loyalty to the brand are more inclined to stay with the brand and see the change through. This loyalty is rooted deeper than the current state of employee job satisfaction and engagement levels and more inclined to the company's brand. The other interesting outcome was that a corporate rebranding exercise can ignite employees' spirits and create a positive organisational culture, which is more likely to increase work efficiency and productivity. Even though the research could not link corporate rebranding to job satisfaction, the other contracts of the Saks model, which includes organisational commitment, intention to quit and organisational citizenship behaviour, could be directly linked.

Therefore, the outcome of the research identified the reasons for the companies to go through corporate rebranding exercises; namely to reposition the companies and gain new markets. In light of the second research question, which referred to the effects of corporate rebranding on employee engagement, the research revealed that in line with the Saks model of engagement, certain aspects of engagement are enhanced by corporate rebranding and others, just as job satisfaction, have no impact at all. At the end of the study, research implications, limitations, and areas for future research are suggested.

Key words

Corporate rebranding, employee engagement, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, intention to quit, organisational citizenship

DECLARATION

I, Thulisile Nosipho Xaba, declare that this research report is my own work, except as indicated in the references and acknowledgements. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management in Strategic Marketing at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at this or any other university.

Thulisile Nosipho Xaba

Signed at ……………………………………………………

On the …………………………….. day of ………………………… 2015

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this research to all marketers with a keen interest in corporate rebranding and employee engagement. I hope this research provides a different view of these two interesting concepts.

Thank you to my company and my manager who allowed me to take the time I needed to gather data.

Lastly, thank you to my family who carried me through this journey as this was clearly the toughest thing I have undertaken in my academic life. Thank you for believing in me and supporting me with your words of encouragement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr Nathalie Chinje, who provided me with guidance, advice, and support. The times I felt like giving up due to work and research pressures, she helped me to push on.

To my husband and life partner, thank you for your patience as I continued to spend time away from our family and at times where I felt stuck, you encouraged me to keep pressing on one day at a time. I would like to acknowledge my parents for their never-ending support in everything I would like to achieve in life.

I would also like to thank EY and its staff for offering their time and beautiful new offices for me to be able to conduct my research. In the same light, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the SHL research participants for their time and support through-out my research.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

In this section, the following topics will be discussed: the purpose and context of the study, the problem statement, research questions, the significance of the study, as well as the relevant delimitations and assumptions.

1.1 Purpose of the study

The study aims to evaluate the effects of corporate rebranding on the engagement levels of employees from an emerging market perspective using Saks' (2006) engagement model. This model will be used in a single embedded case study involving two companies in the professional services industry in South Africa.

The study investigates how corporate rebranding impacts on an employee's engagement in an emerging market context.

1.2 Context of the study

Corporate brands go through a rebranding process for different reasons: 1) repositioning the brand in the market, 2) changing the way the brand is perceived by stakeholders, 3) gaining or entering new markets, and/or 4) revitalising the brand image (Rosenthal, 2003; Goi, 2011). Muzellec (2003) suggested that the term "rebranding" be used to describe changes in brand elements that may have been confusing or misleading. These changes not only affect the external stakeholders of the brand but also its internal employees and their level of engagement with the corporate brand. Consequently, marketers need to be cognisant of the impact changes made to a corporate brand and its positioning have in the minds of consumers.

Corporate rebranding has been a topic of study for many years. This is exemplified in the work of scholars such as Rosenthal (2003), Simms and Trott (2007), Abratt and Kleyn (2012), and Muzellec and Lambkin (2006).

Prior studies have undoubtedly focused on the impact of corporate rebranding on consumers but a limited number of studies have concentrated on how corporate rebranding affects employees. Yakimov and Beverland (1986) pointed out the need for researchers to include internal stakeholders, such as employees, in corporate rebranding studies. Yakimov and Beverland (1986) investigated several cases of rebranding in different industries and discovered that communicating the changes to the brand within the organisation is critical. This entails educating organisational members on the need to change the brand and being transparent about the change. Subsequent to Yakimov and Beverland's study (1986), an increasing number of focused corporate rebranding studies on employees (Simms & Trott, 2007; Abratt & Kleyn, 2012; Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006) were published.

The extant literature provides substantial evidence on corporate rebranding. For example, Simms and Trott (2007); AlShebil's (2007), Juntunen (2009), and Thi Le's (2011) indicated that the symbol of a brand is more important than the functionality of a brand when changing consumer perceptions. Minor changes to a brand might not mean anything to the average person, but in the lives of certain individuals, consumer brands play a symbolic role.

While there are recent studies on rebranding and employee engagement (of which a select few are in the professional services industry), these studies have been conducted in developed markets.

This research aims to use the Saks (2006) employee engagement model to ascertain the effects that corporate rebranding has on employee engagement levels within the emerging market context of South Africa. The study intends to make a contextual contribution to the extant literature by highlighting the peculiarity of employee engagement during the corporate rebranding process within an emerging market context.

1.3 Problem statement

Despite the high level of interest in researching corporate rebranding, there has been an overwhelming bias in studies towards its effects on consumers within developed markets. While one can acknowledge the numerous studies conducted on corporate rebranding and employee engagement, these studies have not been conducted in emerging markets such as the South African market. Previous studies also did not adopt the Saks (2006) employee engagement model in an emerging market context.

Several authors and associations in the industrial psychology space have presented their views on employee engagement but Saks (2006) positions engagement from a business perspective, which can be applied in a management context by describing how engagement can predict employee outcomes, success, and the financial performance of an organisation.

Saks proposed that there are relationships between antecedents, consequences, and employee engagement (Clifford, 2010).

Saks used antecedents such as **1) job characteristics**, **2) perceived supervisor support**, **3) reward and recognition**, and **5) procedural justice**, and addressed consequences such as job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and intention to quit (Saks, 2006). Saks therefore explored engagement not only from an individual perspective, but also from an organisational perspective – which can be applied in an organisational context.

Saks established in his research that there is a relationship between the antecedents of engagement and the consequences thereof. These consequences include: **1) job satisfaction**, **2) organisational commitment**, **3) intention to quit** and **4) organisational citizenship behaviour**.

Job satisfaction relates to the representation of employees and their work environment by comparing what they expect to receive versus what employees actually receive (Clifford, 2010). Saks (2006) defined organisational commitment as the attitude and attachment that people have towards their company, while intention to quit is the degree to which employees are considering leaving their organisation (Clifford, 2010). Lastly, organisational citizenship behaviour relates to the individual; behaviour that is voluntary (out of free will) and not tied directly to any reward or recognition.

The problem which this study aims to address is therefore the limited understanding of the effects corporate rebranding can have on employee engagement in an emerging market context. The context is critical to clarify as developed markets differ from emerging markets and have their own advantages and disadvantages. According to Sheth (2011), developed or advanced economies are aging and therefore their domestic markets are either stagnant or growing very slowly.

Sheth (2011) also identified five dimensions in which emerging markets differ from mature markets, namely:

i. *Market Heterogeneity* – emerging markets tend to have a huge variance relative to the mean across all products and services;
ii. *Socio-political Governance* – emerging markets have a huge influence on socio-political institutions such as religious, business, governmental, and nongovernmental organisations;
iii. *Unbranded Competition* – as much as 60% of consumption in emerging markets are of unbranded products and services. This is largely due to the fact that households in emerging markets are not merely a consumption unit but also a production unit;
iv. *Inadequate Infrastructure* – the lack of infrastructure relates to a shortage of functional roads and other logistical requirements, as well as market transaction enablers such as point-of-sale terminals; and
v. *Chronic Shortages* of resources – this is mostly due to the large size of the population. Emerging markets tend to suffer from a shortage of resources in production, exchange, and consumption.

Despite the apparent disadvantages of emerging markets, there are many advantages. Sheth (2011) cited two of the major advantages as:

i. *Large Growth*, particularly in the middle class; and
ii. *Access to Raw Materials*, ranging from human capital (China and India) and industrial raw materials (Brazil and other central American countries) to energy (Russia and Nigeria) and natural resources (Peru and numerous African nations).

These differences between developed markets and emerging markets need to be acknowledged. A lack of understanding of the emerging market context can become a hindrance to companies embarking on a corporate rebranding process.

1.4 Key research questions

This research seeks to understand the effects of corporate rebranding on employee engagement within the professional services industry of South Africa. Using a single embedded case study, the researcher aims to ascertain how corporate rebranding affects employee engagement in an emerging market context. The researcher will apply the Saks (2006) engagement model and will unpack each of the consequences described in the model.

As part of the study, **two primary research questions** (RQs) will be addressed:

RQ1. Why do companies rebrand?

The researcher will elicit responses on the reasons for corporate rebranding from research respondents from two South African professional services companies. In addition, literature on the reasons behind corporate rebranding in both emerging and developed countries will be discussed in depth.

RQ2. How does corporate rebranding impact employee engagement in an emerging market context?

Using the Saks (2006) model of employee engagement, the researcher will investigate how corporate rebranding impacts employee engagement by focusing on the following key consequences:

- Job satisfaction
- Organisational commitment
- Intention to quit
- Organisational citizen behaviour

Figure 1: Saks' (2006) model of the antecedents and consequences of employee engagement

1.5 Significance of the study

The literature on corporate rebranding and employee engagement is scant. This creates avenues for further investigation on this important topic. This research aims to add empirical evidence on the contextual importance of these two concepts within an emerging market context. Furthermore, this study will use the Saks (2006) model to determine the effects of corporate rebranding on employee engagement in an emerging market context. The choice of the Saks (2006) model supports the notion that engaged employees exhibit attentiveness and mental absorption in their work. Marketers talk about a deep connection that consumers have with their favourite brands; with employee engagement, employees portray a deep emotional connection with their place of work (Wagner & Harter, 2006; Kahn, 1990). Hence the investigation on whether a stimulus of a corporate branding exercise can urge employees to exhibit attentiveness and mental absorption in their work during this particular time. Thus, just as consumers have a deep connection with their favourite brand, so shall this research explore any emotional connection employees have with their place of work during a rebranding exercise.

This study will help decision makers who embark upon a corporate rebranding process in an emerging market to understand the effects rebranding has on employee engagement.

1.6 Delimitations of the study

The research is limited to employees from SHL, a talent measurement company, and EY (also known as Ernst & Young), an assurance, tax, transaction, and advisory services company. Both organisations are in the professional services industry. These companies have been selected as part of the unit of analysis as they have recently undergone corporate rebranding.

1.7 Assumptions

The study assumes that the respondents will reflect on the emotions and experiences of the corporate rebranding process in a chronological manner. It is expected that the respondents will recall their engagement with the brand throughout the different phases of the rebranding process.

In addition, the study makes the assumption that emerging markets are different from developed markets and thus a deeper understanding of the peculiarities of the emerging markets is necessary.

Moreover, it is assumed that although the study is conducted within the professional services industry, its findings can be applied to other sectors as well.

CHAPTER 2. CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

In this section, key terms and definitions will be discussed, followed by a detailed literature review on corporate rebranding and its main drivers. Moreover, this research will explore the literature available on engagement and engagement models, as well as the antecedents and consequences of engagement. Lastly, the conceptual frameworks will be discussed which tie in with the theoretical background of engagement and provide a structure for the research concepts and components.

2.1 Key definitions and terminology

Two key terms included in the study – rebranding and employee engagement – will be explained and contextualised in this section.

One cannot begin to describe corporate rebranding without fully defining corporate branding.

2.1.1 *Definition of the term "brand"*

Chernatony and Riley (1998) helped define the term "brand" under 12 themes after they reviewed hundreds of articles from trade and academic journals in a bid to unpack the definition of a "brand". A brand is described as a:

i. legal instrument,
ii. logo,
iii. company,
iv. shorthand,
v. risk reducer,
vi. identity system,
vii. image in the consumer's minds,
viii. value system,
ix. personality,
x. relationship,
xi. element which adds value, and

xii. an evolving entity.

(Chernatony & Riley, 1998, p. 418).

From Chernatony and Riley’s definition and themes (1998), it can be deduced that a brand symbolises a company’s identity in various ways

2.1.2 *Employee engagement*

Kahn (1990) defined employee engagement as the harnessing of an organisation’s members to their roles in engagement. These individuals express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally when functioning in these roles (Kahn, 1990). The International Survey Research Centre (ISR) added to the definition of employee engagement by defining it as “a process by which an organisation increases commitment and continuation of its employees to the achievement of superior results” (ISR, 2004). Similarly, Sahoo and Mishra (2012) defined employee engagement as a concept for understanding and improving individual and organisational performance.

2.2 Corporate rebranding

Literature on rebranding dates back to 1988 in an academic paper by Berry (1988) and is thus not a new concept. Muzellec (2003) indicated that rebranding is a term used to describe changes in brand elements that may have been confusing or misleading. Therefore, marketers sometimes use rebranding as a means of clarifying the company’s corporate identity. Rebranding and repositioning are often used interchangeably but, according to Rosenthal (2003), there is a clear distinction between brand repositioning and rebranding. Rosenthal (2003) stated that a brand is not changed by repositioning. Rather, it is the perception of the brand that is affected. This means that the brand identity – the brand name, logo and symbol – remain unchanged throughout the repositioning process. The slogan or tagline might change to align with the repositioning strategy.

Corporate rebranding is not a new concept but marketers often focus on corporate rebranding from an external point of view and less from an internal view (Hankinson, 2007). Hankinson (2007) stated that literature on the contribution of staff to the rebranding process is limited, despite its importance. Thomson, Chernatony, Arganbright, and Khan (1999) added to this argument by stating that employees need to internalise the brand purpose and value before they can deliver them to external stakeholders such as customers and the media. Juntunen (2009), Kaikati (2003), and Daffey and Abratt (2002) created groundwork in the study of corporate rebranding as a process through which organisations move from where they are as a brand to where they want to be.

Academics such as Abratt and Kleyn (2012) described corporate branding as having two aspects: corporate expression and stakeholder images of the organisation's identity. Corporate expression relates to the organisation's identification with its corporate brand. This includes corporate expression through visual identity, brand promise, and brand personality (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012).

Aaker (2010) defined brand personality as the set of human characteristics associated with a brand. This includes characteristics such as gender, age, socio-economic class, and human personality traits such as warmth, concern, and sentimentality. Personality plays a key role in adding the human factor to a brand which makes it easy for stakeholders such as employees to connect with the brand (Aaker, 2010). It is therefore no surprise that internal employees are sentimental about their corporate brand and, if it were to change, they may feel a sense of loss and disengagement.

The second aspect of corporate branding, according to Abratt and Kleyn (2012), is stakeholder images or perspectives, which include interactions with aspects of the organisation's identity. Stakeholders experience the brand and develop brand images or perceptions of the brand (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012). Stakeholders begin to identify with the brand by experiencing the brand from a service level, employee level, and supplier level. A true test as to whether a brand delivers on its promise is by examining the brand experience. The brand can be experienced externally by customers and suppliers, or internally by its employees. Employees play a dual role as internal customers of the brand experience, as well as custodians of the brand responsible for delivering on the brand promise. Abratt and Kleyn (2012) further explained that corporate identity entails examining what the organisation is and what it seeks to be. This includes strategic choices made by the organisation such as its vision, mission, intent, values, and corporate culture (See Figure 2).

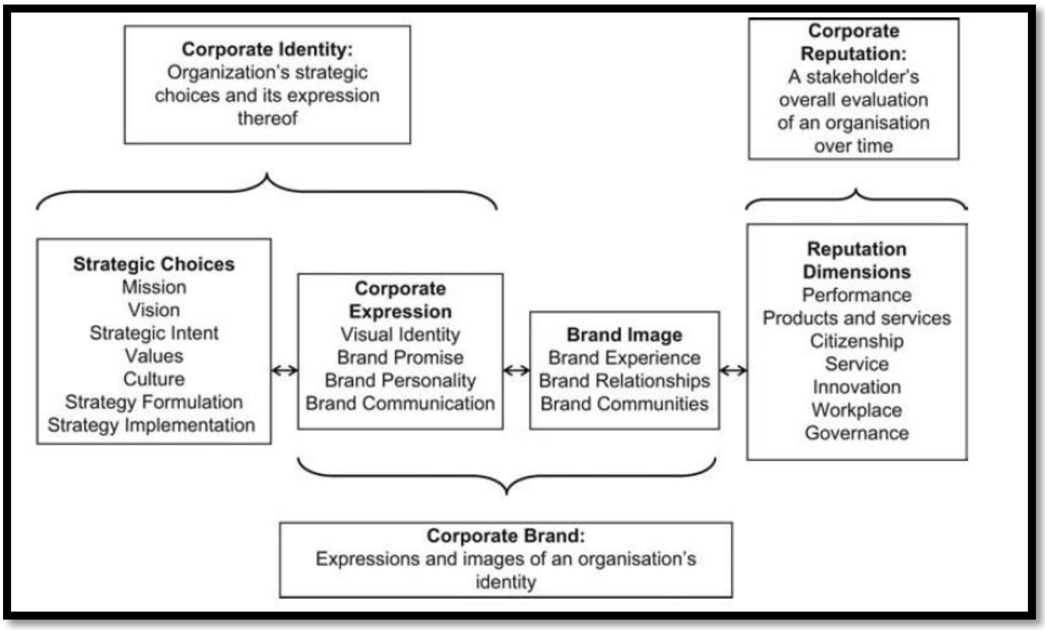

Figure 2: Corporate identity, corporate brand and corporate reputation (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012)

2.2.1 *Main drivers of corporate rebranding*

According to Juntunen (2009), the main drivers of corporate rebranding are decisions or processes that cause a change in a company's structure, strategy or performance to the extent that a redefinition of its identity is required. Other changes also include corporate name, logo, and slogan and/or value changes. Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) stated that there are several explanations found in past literature for the reasons for rebranding and repositioning. These include mergers and acquisitions, gaining new markets, and changes to the way a brand is perceived by its stakeholders. The usual reasons for corporate rebranding are related to a change in ownership structure, corporate strategy, competitive position, and external environmental factors such as legal obligations (Balmer & Greyser, 2003; Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006).

2.2.2 *Corporate rebranding as a process*

There are several models of corporate branding such as the ones by Muzellec and Lambkin, Muzellec and Stuart, and Lomax et al. (in Goi & Goi, 2011) that describe the process of rebranding. Muzellec and Lambkin's model is shown in Figure 3. It is a basic rebranding model with the three key phases:

i. *rebranding factors*,
ii. *rebranding goals,* and
iii. *rebranding process.*

(Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006).

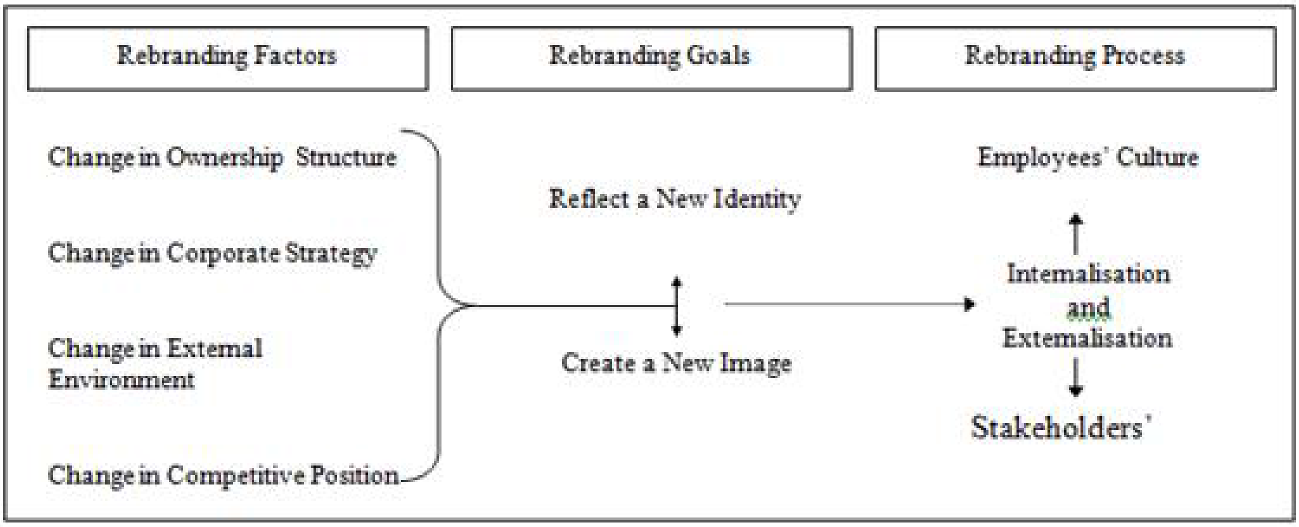

Figure 3: A model of the rebranding process by Muzellec and Lambkin (2006)

This model focuses on the involvement of internal employees in creating the cultural image, and on the external stakeholders in creating the new brand image.

Current literature provides definitions and concepts of corporate branding (Daffey & Abratt, 2002; Abratt & Kleyn, 2012; Balmer & Greyser, 2003) but few sources give such a detailed description of the rebranding process as Juntunen (2009). He created a model explaining the different phases of corporate rebranding as a process. Juntunen (2009) described the process according to seven main phases or steps in the process. These steps are:

i. trigger,
ii. analysing,
iii. planning,
iv. preparing,
v. launching,
vi. evaluating and
vii. continuing.

(Juntunen, 2009).

The first phase in the model is the triggering phase. This consists of the driving forces behind the rebranding (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). As mentioned previously, these reasons could include a merger, acquisition, or increased competition, to name a few (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). Companies respond to the competitive environment in which they operate when they go through a rebranding process. This includes the companies that were researched, the talent measurement company, referred to as Company A, and the assurance, tax, transaction, and advisory service company, referred to as Company B in the research.

The second phase includes analysing and decision making. According to Juntunen (2009), this stage entails analysing antecedents of the current situation before the rebranding occurs. These could include market analysis, competitive analysis, and recognising possibilities.

Planning is the next phase of a corporate brand plan creation and includes elements such as the end goal and the vision for the new corporate brand. It also includes decisions on renaming, restructuring, and repositioning (Kaikati, 2003).

The preparation phase entails planning and pre-testing for launch. According to Juntunen (2009), it requires redesigning the visual identity elements such as the colour palette, font type, logo, slogan, and tagline.

The next phase in Juntunen's model is the launch. This phase includes first communicating the new corporate brand to internal stakeholders, who are key to any successful rebranding process (Hatch & Schultz, 2001). Part of communicating to internal stakeholders involves education and training of internal staff on the new brand (Gotsi & Andriopoulos, 2007). As an additional step at this point, this research seeks to analyse the employees' level of engagement.

Evaluation entails measuring the success or failure of the process (Juntunen, 2009). Employee engagement surveys or staff surveys can give marketing managers and other managers who are part of the rebranding committee a picture of how successful or unsuccessful the initial launch was. The analysis of the success or failure of the rebranding launch can provide insight into where there might still be room to improve or rectify aspects which were not highlighted during the planning phase.

The last phase is the continuing phase. According to Juntunen (2009), this includes the quality of service and fulfilment of the brand promise to clients and continuous orientation and education for internal employees.

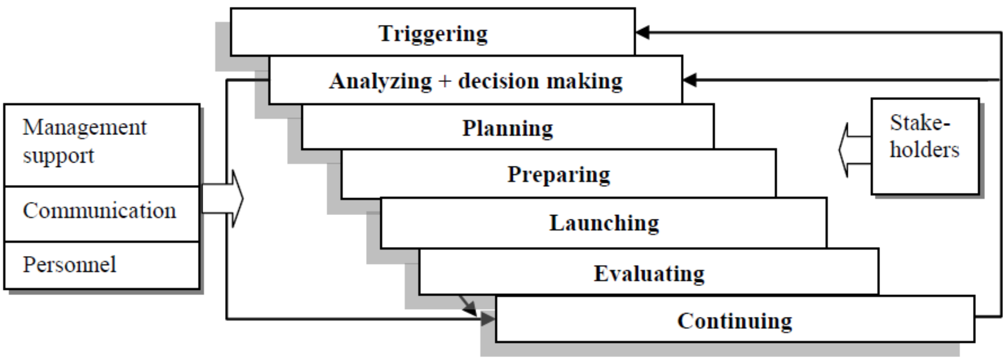

Figure 4: Corporate rebranding process model (Juntunen, 2009)

A widely cited example of a successful rebranding process is the Accenture case. Accenture based their rebranding success on three main concepts: rebranding, restructuring, and repositioning (Kaikati, 2003). Kaikati (2003) noted key lessons from analysing the Accenture rebranding process; particularly that rebranding is about more than merely a “face lift”, glamour, and visual identity. Kaikati (2003) also noted that brands do not exist in isolation, and Accenture knew that in order for the rebranding to be successful, they needed to engage all their key stakeholders in the process right from the beginning. Successful engagement ensured internal buy-in from staff and external buy-in from clients, the media, and business.

Abratt and Kleyn (2012) expressed the importance of maintaining good relationships with all stakeholders as they each have influence and this influence can be used in favour of the organisation. The last and crucial point of Kaikati’s analysis (2003) of the Accenture rebranding process is the restructuring of the firm that allowed the company to reposition its offerings to its internal and external stakeholders. These are crucial learning points from the Accenture case study, especially because considerable analysis of internal stakeholders will be conducted on the two companies under review in this study.

2.3 Employee engagement

Shuck and Wollard (2010, p. 103) defined employee engagement as an individual employee’s cognitive, emotional, and behavioural state directed towards desired organisational outcomes. Saks (2006) stated that engaged employees exhibit attentiveness and mental absorption in their work. Marketers speak about a deep connection that consumers have with their favourite brands; with employee engagement, employees may also portray a deep emotional connection with their place of work and its brand (Wagner & Harter, 2006; Kahn, 1990). An engaged employee is immersed in his/her work and this is sometimes referred to as “flow” – a state that involves intense focus on what one is doing (Csikszentmihalyi, 2003). Employees thus become drawn into their work in both a physical and emotional way that expresses how they experience their work (Shuck & Wollard, 2010). This expression is demonstrated through an employee’s personal voice, non-defensive communication, playfulness, ethical behaviour, and creativity (Kahn, 1990, p. 700). In general, engaged employees are more likely to express their thoughts and ideas, which could lead to greater innovation in an organisation. Toyota, for example, provides a platform for any employee, regardless of where they are based, to question the company's ways of doing things. This gives room for better thinking, which leads to innovation in producing quality cars in a quicker and more efficient manner (Fishman, 2007).

SHL defines engagement as a psychological state that employees can be in when performing their work roles (SHL, n.d.). SHL explains that, in engagement, people employ and express themselves **physically**, **cognitively**, and **emotionally** during work performance and this is not merely displayed behaviour.

SHL further describe engagement as a psychological state which employees can move in and out of when there are changes in the organisation (SHL, n.d.). This means that an employee can be "highly engaged" today but can also feel less engaged tomorrow for a range of personal or organisational reasons.

2.3.1 *Antecedents and consequences of engagement*

SHL's model of engagement includes four critical antecedents of engagement:

i. **Absorption** – the extent to which employees become lost in the pleasantries of their work;
ii. **Alignment** – the association between employee values and beliefs, where the organisation should be heading, what the goals and aspirations of the organisation should be, and the actual direction of the organisation;
iii. **Identification** – the emotional bond an employee experiences with the organisation; and
iv. **Energy** – the physical energy an employee invests into conducting his/her work.

(SHL, n.d.).

The consequences of engagement will, in turn, be job satisfaction from a personal level and increased productivity from an organisational level, as illustrated in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5: SHL model of engagement (SHL, n.d.)

Sahoo and Mishra (2012) described how engagement is a barometer that determines a person's association with the organisation. Each brand should strive for a positive association with employees but this is not always the case.

The importance of employee engagement is at the heart of what makes employees work harder, endorse the brand, be innovative, and serve customers and clients with enthusiasm and vigour.

Perhaps a broader view of engagement is the one by Macey, Schneider, Barbera, and Young (2009), who understood engagement as an overarching umbrella term involving different types of engagement, including an individual's personality traits, work involvement, and organisational citizenship.

As much as an employee can be engaged, an employee can also be disengaged. A model by Shuck and Wollard (2010) described engagement and disengagement in terms of two factors, namely the environment and the person. The environment is the building, climate of the organisation, ergonomics, and so forth (Shuck & Wollard, 2010). The person refers to the physical traits of a person, as well as his/her friends and family (Shuck & Wollard, 2010). These two factors can be displayed as negative or positive and when the environment and the person interact, they produce either engagement and/or disengagement (Shuck & Wollard, 2010). This model is illustrated in Figure 6.

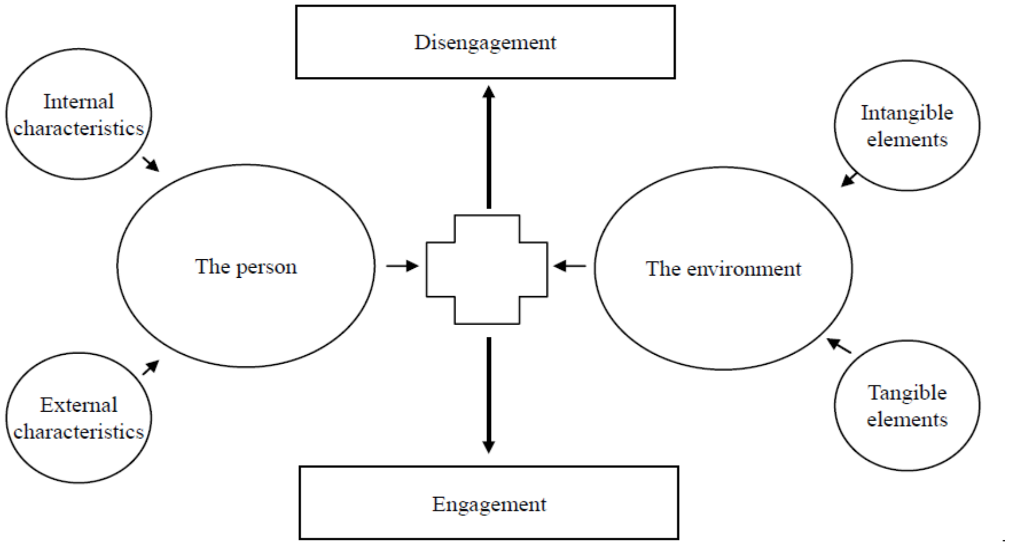

Figure 6: A model of engagement and disengagement (Shuck & Wollard, 2010)

Shuck and Wollard (2010) described disengagement as the withdrawal of oneself and of one's preferred behaviour at work. Individuals may thus become passive and emotionless. Pech and Slade (2005, p. 23) also described the behaviour of a disengaged employee as one who has low morale, a lack of energy and attachment, a lack of job satisfaction, and declining innovation. Pech and Slade (2005) argued that disengaged employees usually make more mistakes, are absent from work more often, and perform poorly. This demonstrates that disengaged employees do not only create a negative environment but they also cost the company money through their lack of efficiency and productivity.

Catalysts of disengagement include restructuring, inadequate conditions, poor leadership, and external factors such as instability and insecurity (Pech & Slade, 2005). During a rebranding process, several changes will take place, causing instability in the organisation and, depending on the reason for the rebranding, this can cause structural changes as well. Pech and Slade (2005) also mentioned that the cause of disengagement might be related to a lack of meaningfulness. As the vision and mission of the organisation change, people begin to question whether they fit in with the new culture that has come with the new values, which the person may or may not relate to.

Similarly, Sahoo and Mishra (2012) defined employee engagement as a concept for understanding and improving individual as well as organisational performance. Sahoo and Mishra (2012) further described how engagement is a barometer which determines a person's association with the organisation. Each company should strive for a positive association with a brand but this does not always happen.

Another aspect of employee engagement is employee dissent. Kassing (1998) defined employee dissent as an expression of disagreement or contradictory opinions about organisational policies and practices. Employees express dissent to different audiences including management, co-workers, and friends and family outside of work (Kassing, 1998). A dissatisfied or disengaged employee can express their dissatisfaction to friends and family outside the organisation, who could be potential customers.

Stakeholder engagement is reinforced by Daffey and Abratt (2002), who described the importance of stakeholder engagement, especially among staff, during a rebranding process. Employees represent the heart of the brand. It is the role of the staff to enhance the brand and to deliver on its promises (Daffey & Abratt, 2002). Hatch and Schultz (2001) described the importance of employees to corporate branding and the need to better understand their behaviour and corporate culture. Wilson (2001) and Balmer (1999) expressed the importance of employees as a key to building relationships with the brand community, as well as society in general.

Disengagement creates an adverse impression of the brand and could lead to a negative brand association. A bad or negative story often spreads faster than a positive one and, with the modern mediums of communication such as social media and instant messaging, reputational damage can be caused quickly. Another potentially damaging effect of disengagement is negative word-of-mouth (WOM) messages. Harrison-Walker (2001, p. 63) defined WOM as the informal communication process that is transmitted from person to person regarding a brand, a product, an organisation or a service. WOM or word of mouse (online communication) can be constructive if it means positive information is shared about the brand from one person to the other, but this can also be negative and damage brand reputations. Marketers have long studied the power of WOM on the promotion of brands but WOM spread by disengaged employees has rarely been investigated. It is in the interest of this study to explore WOM from an internal organisational point of view. Organisational psychologists have argued that WOM can play an important role in seeking potential employees. Opinions expressed by employees are critical as they give an impression of the brand to others. Thus managing what is said is important and this can be achieved through effective change management.

Several definitions and models on engagement were discussed (Shuck & Wollard, 2010; Sahoo & Mishra, 2012; SHL, n.d.), but the Saks (2006) model of engagement breaks engagement into the key antecedents of employee engagement, which include the job characteristics of skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). May, Gilson and Harter (2004) added that job enrichment is positively related to meaningfulness and meaningfulness acts as a mediator in the relationship between job enrichment and engagement.

The next antecedent is perceived organisational and supervisor support. This relates to the amount of care and support employees perceive to be provided by their company and direct supervisors (Saks, 2006). Bates (2004), and Frank, Finnegan and Taylor (2004) discovered that first-line supervisors are believed to be a very critical component in building engagement.

The other antecedent is distributive and procedural justice, which relates to one's perception of the fairness of decision outcomes and the process used to determine the distribution of resources (Saks, 2006). Saks (2006) further explained that several literature studies have shown how engagement mediates the relationship between antecedent variables and consequences such as organisational commitment, intention to quit, organisational citizen behaviour, and job satisfaction.

Engagement not only impacts the image of a company but can also cause financial loss. According to a study by Hewitt Associates (2004), engaged employees are the most committed and will deliver a 20% improvement in performance and are 87% less likely to leave. Improved performance leads to efficiency and higher profits.

2.4 Conceptual framework and propositions

2.4.1 *Theoretical background and conceptual framework*

As indicated in an earlier part of this report, this study adopts the Saks model of employee engagement (2006). Certain propositions are made regarding the four constructs of the Saks model of engagement. The Saks model identifies four constructs as outcome variables of employee engagement; namely:

- Job satisfaction
- Organisational commitment
- Intention to quit
- Organisational citizen behaviour

2.4.2 *Job satisfaction*

Job satisfaction relates to the representation of employees and their work environment by comparing what they expect to receive versus what employees actually receive (Clifford, 2010).

P1: Employees who are satisfied with their jobs can positively engage with others during corporate rebranding.

Luthan (1998) explained that there are three key dimensions to job satisfaction:

Job satisfaction is an emotional response to a job situation. As such it cannot be seen, it can only be inferred (Luthan, 1998). Thus it is inferred that during a corporate rebranding process, employees who are satisfied in their jobs can positively engage with others during the process.

Job satisfaction is often determined by how well outcomes meet or exceed expectations (Luthan, 1998). This definition coincides with Saks' definition (2006) that job satisfaction relates to the representation of employees and their work environment by comparing what they expect to receive compared to what they actually receive. If employees feel they are being treated very well and are being paid equitably, they are likely to have positive attitudes towards the job and, in turn, a positive attitude towards others (Luthan, 1998).

Lastly, job satisfaction represents several related attitudes which are the most important characteristics of jobs, such as pay, promotion opportunities, the boss, as well as co-workers (Luthan, 1998).

2.4.3 *Organisational commitment*

Saks (2006) defined organisational commitment as the attitude and attachment that people have towards their company.

P2: Employees who are committed to their organisations can positively engage with others during a corporate rebranding process.

Employees who are engaged may portray a deep emotional connection with their place of work and its brand (Wagner & Harter, 2006; Kahn, 1990). According to Ariani (2013), employee engagement is a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organisation and its values. This positive attitude leads to a deep commitment to the organisation, which leads to employees relating positively to others.

2.4.4 *Intention to quit*

Intention to quit is the degree to which employees are considering leaving their organisation (Clifford, 2010).

P3: Employees who are engaged are less likely to have an intention to quit during a corporate rebranding process.

Companies that enrol in proper internal marketing strategies such as corporate rebranding increase employee satisfaction, employee retention, and attract new employees (Shah, 2014). If a company wants to increase the productivity of its employees and have higher product quality, it needs to make sure that its employees are engaged (Shah, 2014; Hewitt Associates, 2004).

2.4.5 *Organisational citizen behaviour*

Organisational citizenship behaviour relates to the individual; behaviour that is voluntary (out of free will) and not tied directly to any reward or recognition.

P4: Engaged employees are more likely to have organisational citizen behaviour.

Ahmed et al. (2012) concluded in their study that there is a substantial relationship established in literature between organisational citizenship behaviour and employee engagement. The more vigorously employees are engaged in their work, there will be greater chances of displaying citizenship behaviour and ultimately, effective performance. This ties in well with the Saks model of engagement, which affirms that engaged employees portray a high level of organisational commitment (Saks, 2006). When employees are engaged in their work, they increase the occurrence of behaviours that promote efficient and effective functioning of the organisation, which is known as organisational citizen behaviour (Ariani, 2013).

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In this section, the researcher provides motivation for the chosen research method, a description of the target population and sample, as well as detailed background information on the units of analysis (case A and case B). The reasoning behind the choice of research design will be outlined. The importance of data validity and reliability will also be discussed. Solutions to overcome the challenges in case study research will be proposed with reference to the method of data collection and analysis.

3.1 Motivation for qualitative research

Creswell (2013) mentioned that there are several research designs available for any type of research, but the selection of the design depends entirely on the purpose of the research. Possible research designs include quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. Each research method type is discussed below.

3.1.1 *Quantitative research*

Fischler (n.d.) describes the characteristics of quantitative research as emphasising, collecting, and analysing information in the form of numbers, and collecting scores that measure distinct attributes of individuals and organisations. The procedures of comparing groups or relating factors about individuals or groups in experiments, correlational studies, and surveys are also key tasks in quantitative research. Quantitative research generally aims to prove a hypothesis as true or false (Fischler, n.d.).

In this research, no specific hypothesis is being tested and the data collected are not numerical. A quantitative approach is thus unsuitable.

3.1.2 *Qualitative research*

When it comes to qualitative research, there are several qualitative designs available to researchers such as narrative research, ethnography, and case study research

(Creswell, 2013). Qualitative research seeks to understand why a phenomenon occurs.

Because all these qualitative approaches seek a deeper meaning and explanation for events and experiences, as opposed to quantitative research (which is usually based on numbers and objective data) (Creswell, 2013), a qualitative approach to research is more suitable for collecting opinion-based information on the topic of employee engagement.

3.1.3 *Mixed methods*

The other option available to a researcher is a combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches, which is known as the mixed method. According to Creswell (2013), a mixed methods research design is a procedure for collecting and analysing data using both quantitative and qualitative research methods in a single research study. Mixed method designs are usually used when both quantitative and qualitative data will provide a better understanding of the research problem than one method (Creswell, 2013).

3.1.4 *Chosen research design: Qualitative single-embedded case study design*

It was established that there are many methods of research available to the researcher since the problem set forth in this study seeks to explain the "how" and "why" by examining a past event (in this case a rebranding process); therefore an ethnography or case study is deemed suitable for the research design (Creswell, 2013). The researcher can explore the real-life situation in a contemporary bounded system (a case) using multiple sources of information (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2009). According to Schramm (cited in Yin, 2009), the essence of a case study and the central tendency among all types of case studies is that it tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions; that is, why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result. Yin (2009) broke down the definition even further by describing three types of case studies used for research purposes:

i. explanatory or causal case studies,
ii. descriptive case studies, and
iii. exploratory case studies.

Case studies can also be classified as a single-case (holistic) design, single-case (embedded) design, multiple-case (holistic) design or multiple-case (embedded) design (Yin, 2009).

This research examines two companies within the same industry and the choice of a single embedded case study as a research design is therefore suitable.

In this case study, the rebranding has already taken place. The researcher has no control over these past events and will therefore investigate “how” and “why” the rebranding process took place and what the consequences were. The focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context, which distinguishes case study research from the other available methods (Yin, 2009).

3.2 Target population and sample

Marshall (1996) described choosing a study sample as the most critical step in any research project, and the aim of sampling as drawing a representative group from a population in order to generalise the study results back to the population. Devers and Frankel (2000) explained that in qualitative research, purposive sampling is used rather than random sampling. Purposive sampling strategies are created to enhance the understanding of a selected group of individuals and their experiences and for developing theories and concepts (Devers & Frankel, 2000). A purposive sampling technique shall be applied as the research intends to understand and capture the experiences of specific employees who work for companies that underwent rebranding processes.

In order to understand the effects of corporate rebranding in greater detail, particularly on employee engagement, two companies in the professional services industry will be examined. The first company (Company A) is a talent measurement consulting firm which capitalised on a merger to rebrand as a strategy to move from a psychometric assessment product house to a talent measurement consulting company.

In general, when research is performed in the professional industry, the focus is typically on tax and advisory services; for example Exeter (2005), Kaikati (2003), and Sokun (2004), and rarely on talent measurement consulting; hence the choice of a talent measurement company (Sokun, 2004).

The research population is given below in Table 1. The research resulted in 14 interviews with SHL employees from three different branches in Pretoria, Cape Town, and Durban. From Company B, 12 employees took part in the research from the Johannesburg office. The primary objective was to select participants from all the hierarchical levels within each company as demonstrated in Table 1.

Table 1: Research respondents

Region	Location	No. sampled	Respondents
Company A	Pretoria	10	• 3 managers • 2 consultants • 3 support staff • 1 South African business unit head
Company A	Cape Town	3	• 1 regional business unit head (CT) • 1 consultant • 1 support staff
Company A	KwaZulu-Natal	2	• 1 regional head • 1 consultant
Company B	Johannesburg	12	• 2 senior managers (advisory) • 5 managers • 5 support staff

The research participants from Company A had been with the company since 2009 or before. They therefore had extensive knowledge of the brand before the rebranding process occurred. They were familiar with the previous vision, mission, and value proposition of the “old” brand. They experienced the rebranding process that began to take place towards the end of 2010 and had to adapt to the “new” brand since then.

The same applies to Company B. The respondents have been with the company from before the change in 2013 and had experienced the full rebranding process.

The respondents had also been selected from different levels as certain employees had more insight into the rebranding changes and the different phases and processes involved than others.

The interviews from Company A lasted 30 – 40 minutes. They were a combination of males and females from different levels within the company. In Company B, the interviews were longer and more in-depth, lasting 40 – 55 minutes.

3.2.1 *Background of Company A: SHL*

The talent management industry is vastly populated by several psychometric assessment providers. These assessment providers supply psychometric tests, which are used to assess individuals for work purposes. According to Psychometric Success (2013), the personality testing industry alone is worth $500 million and there are over 2 500 personality questionnaires on the market. The talent assessment market is highly fragmented with hundreds of small companies, each one offering its own products.

The largest players in the US market at the time of the SHL merger and rebranding in 2011 included PreVisor, SHL, Kenexa, Hogan Assessments, DDI, PDI, Profiles International, Vangent, and many others (Bersin, 2011). One of the largest local competitors of SHL is JvR. JvR is one of the largest players in the psychometric space in South Africa, providing local and international psychological assessment solutions, training, and research since 1993 (JvR Psychometrics, 2014).

SHL was founded in 1977 by two psychologists who identified the need for corporate businesses to understand and measure the probability of an employee fitting with an organisation. SHL is known to provide science-based assessments (psychometric tests), which included behavioural, skills-based, personality-based, technical-based, adaptive, and high-value face-to-face assessments (Bersin, 2011).

The SHL Rebranding Committee was led by the Chief Marketing Officer who served as the Project Owner, and the Central Marketing Manager who served as the Project Manager. Members of the Rebranding Committee also included the marketing communications and business solutions managers, the chief human resources officer, marketing operations manager, senior marketing manager, vice president for SHL Alliances and director of operations, and vice president for marketing in the Americas.

3.2.2 *Background of Company B: EY*

According to the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS, 2012), the accountancy and professional services industry offers:

- assurance and auditing – inspecting accounting records and procedures of businesses and verifying the accuracy and completeness of the records;
- business recovery and insolvency – assisting businesses to recover from and overcome financial difficulties;
- corporate finance – working with mergers and acquisitions of organisations, fundraising, and public/private partnerships; and
- taxation – including tax compliance, advisory, and planning.

AGCAS (2012) further stated that there have always been four key players in this industry: Deloitte, Ernst & Young, KPMG, and PwC.

EY is a global leader in assurance, tax, transaction, and advisory services, and was first founded in England in 1849 by Harding and Pullein. In 1903, Alwin and Theodore Ernst formed Ernst & Ernst in Cleveland, US. In 1906, Arthur and Stanley formed Arthur Young & Company in Chicago (EY, n.d.). The two organisations joined to create one company that became a leader in the professional services industry.

They serve clients all around the world, including 33 countries across Africa (EY, 2013a).

3.3 Interview types

In qualitative research, the collection of data is often the most challenging aspect. Creswell (2013) explained how data collection involves gaining permission to conduct the research and gather information, devising a sampling strategy, developing a means for recording information both digitally and on paper, and anticipating ethical issues that might arise. He further wrote that the most common forms of data collection are observations and interviews (Creswell, 2013). As challenging as data collection can be in a qualitative study, it allows researchers to go deeper into the detail of what affects the employees' level of engagement as a company goes through the different stages of rebranding.

The different styles of interviews vary from structured to semi-structured and unstructured. According to Banner (2010, p. 28), structured interviewing approaches include questionnaires or a set of questions with a range of predetermined categories or responses. If the intention of the research is to generalise, a structured approached can be considered (Banner, 2010, p. 28).

However, the researcher wanted to gain a better understanding of the employees' feelings, emotions, and connections with the brand; therefore structured questions were likely to be too restrictive.

Unstructured approaches to interviewing, on the other hand, have no predetermined questions and can allow for more depth in the information collected (Banner, 2010, p. 28). The semi-structured interview is the middle ground; it includes a combination of structured and unstructured approaches. This method involves the identification of broad themes or questions used to guide the interview process, while preserving flexibility to pursue interesting leads (Charmaz, 2006; Streubert & Carpenter, 2007). This process gives more room to guide the direction of the discussion, especially in focus groups or face-to-face interviews – which will be used in this study.

Polkinghorne (2005) explained how, even though the interview is partly unstructured, the researcher knows in advance the nature of the experience he or she wants the participants to describe. The conversation consists of a give-and-take dialectic in which the interviewer follows the conversational threads which have been opened by the interviewee, according to Polkinghorne (2005). Through open-ended questions, the interviewee is asked to reflect on the experiences under investigation. The data collected from face-to-face interviews will therefore be more open, giving the researcher more in-depth information regarding their experience of the rebranding process (Polkinghorne, 2005).

The type of research instrument selected was the semi-structured interview and the interview guide was tested (see Appendix A) before it was used for all the research participants. This was done to determine the suitability of the instrument and to increase the validity of the research method. It should be noted that the researcher tested the research instrument on respondents who were not from the targeted sample in Table 1.

In order for the participants to establish trust with the researcher, interactions with participants took place over time and included more than one encounter (Polkinghorne, 2005). Participants are encouraged to relay information in greater detail if a level of trust is established and thus more knowledge can be gained from the session.

The research sought to gain a clearer understanding of the effects of corporate rebranding on employees. A semi-structured interviewing approach was used. The respondents were selected based on time with the company and their availability to take part in the research. Participants received an e-mail requesting permission to interview them for 30 minutes each and more time was granted if necessary. Formal consent was received prior to the interview and permission was sought to conduct 14 face-to-face interviews with SHL staff, seven face-to-face EY interviews, and five recorded telephonic interviews (Yin, 2009).

3.4 Data collection

When collecting data in case study research, the researcher should keep in mind that the more information that is collected as evidence, the better (Yin, 2009). These sources of information include documentation, archived records, and interviews, as well as direct observations and events. The secondary material used included internal SHL draft plans, minutes from launch meetings, scripts from internal HUB posts, video scripts, corporate brochures, artist posters, the staff pocket guide, EY 2020 vision, EY website, and EY internal communication.

The researcher triangulated the data collected from primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected using semi-structured interviews, as suggested by Parker (2003). The semi-structured interviews helped unpack the "why" part of the research problem statement. Yin (2009) also recommended piloting the research instrument in order to test its robustness. Thus, the research instrument was tested on one staff member from Company A and was found to be too short as the questions provided no opportunity for further dialogue. It is critical to note that the respondent from the pilot was removed from the targeted research sample. The instrument was adapted to allow for a 30 – 40 minute interview.

The semi-structured interview participants consisted of managers, support staff, directors, and regional heads. Respondents were asked to provide their views and recollection of the rebranding process throughout the interviews.

In the research interviews, the questions were structured around three themes – understanding the reason for the rebranding, the level of satisfaction at the time of the rebranding, and organisational commitment.

3.4.1 *Presentation of results*

In the case of SHL, 15 employees were selected at different levels: three managers, four consultants, four support staff, the managing director of SHL South Africa, and the regional heads of the Cape Town and KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) branches.

One of the originally selected support staff members was unable to answer the questions with complete comprehension and was thus not used in the selected sample. Another available consultant was interviewed instead. However, after interviewing this consultant, it became apparent that the saturation point in the data collection had already been reached. Simon (2011) defined data saturation as the point at which the researcher is no longer collecting new information. The information from the additional consultant was already covered in previous interviews and no new information was emerging. The researcher thus focused on the 14 other interviews as these provided sufficient data.

The purpose of the different and multiple sources of evidence was to add rigour to the research through triangulation (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2009; Patton, 2002). According to Yin (2009), triangulation searches for convergent findings from different sources in order to ensure construct validity. Yin (2009) recommended that a researcher should have a proper plan and protocol for the collection of interviews and observations. Yin's case study method (2009) is illustrated in Figure 7.

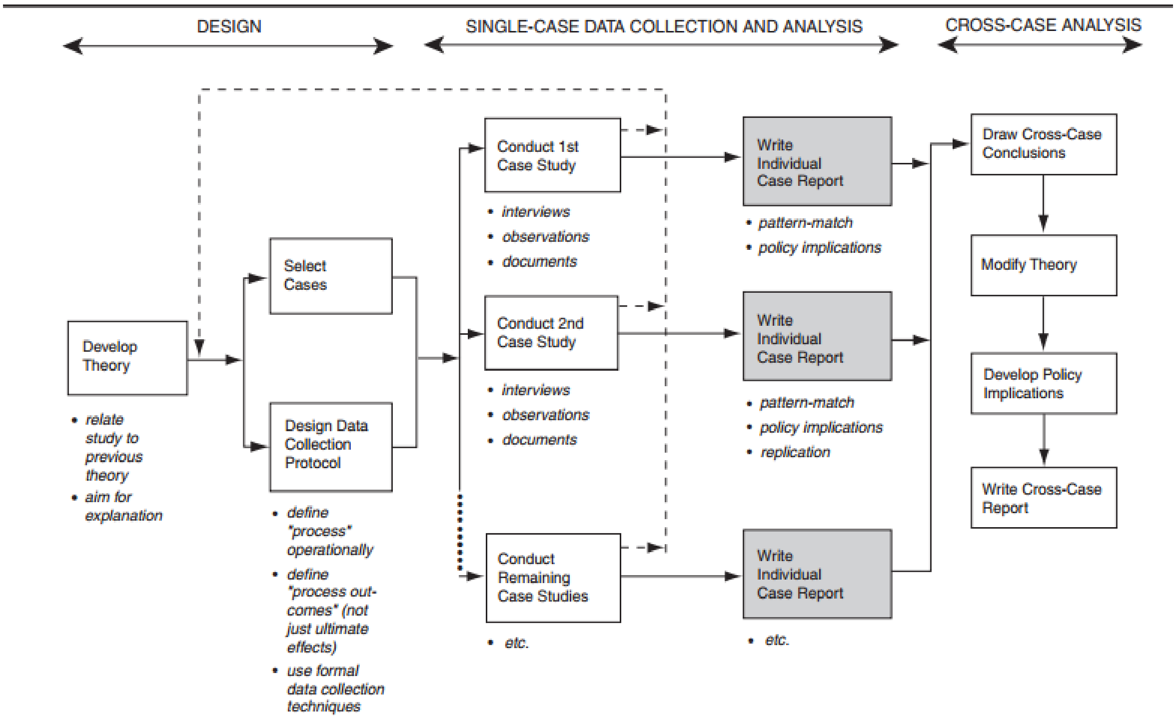

Figure 7: Case study method (Yin, 2009)

3.5 Data processing and analysis

After all the data sources from the case study were collected, the next step in the research process was to analyse the data and write a detailed description of the results (Morales, 2007). Data analysis or processing is the most critical stage of the research, as this determines the final results and recommendations stemming from the research (Yin, 2009). Data analysis in qualitative research includes three important aspects: data storage, transcribing audio sources, and data cleaning (Boeije, 2010). An important part of data analysis is extracting common themes and patterns, and this requires a systematic method of identifying any differences that may occur (Boeije, 2010).

LeCompte and Schensul (1999) defined analysis as a process of reducing large amounts of data to an interpretive narrative. Patton (2002) noted that during data analysis, data are reduced through summarisation, categorisation, and identifying patterns and themes. This categorisation is further simplified by assigning codes which, according to Merriam (1998), should:

- reflect the purpose of the research;
- be exhaustive;
- be mutually exclusive;
- be sensitive to category content; and
- be conceptually congruent.

Lincoln and Guba (1981) recommend that the number of categories used be guided by the number of times they are mentioned by participants. There are several tools to assist a researcher to code and categorise large amounts of narrative text (Yin, 2009). By using a research guide, certain patterns, frequency of codes, and code combinations will be detected (Yin, 2009). This form of identifying common themes is also known as coding or labelling. Labelling entails open coding which dismantles texts and establishes different themes and concepts (Boeije, 2010).

Miles and Huberman (1994) recommended the following process as a starting point for analysing data:

i. Putting information into different categories;
ii. Creating a matrix of categories and placing evidence within the categories;
iii. Creating data displays, such as flow charts and graphics;
iv. Tabulating the frequency of different events;
v. Calculating second-order numbers such as means and variances; and
vi. Putting information in chronological order.

This process by Miles and Huberman (1994) is also described by Yin (2009) as data reduction.

Once data reduction has been conducted, categories of specific themes are created. This aids in identifying a coding process and establishing systematic, logical, and scientific rules for data analysis (Hsieh, 2005).

The primary data that were collected and categorised into eight key themes, were supported by secondary data which were collected. In order to display the first-order data collected, such as e-mails, webinars, presentations, launch events, templates, brochures, drafts, adverts, to create a second-order theme such as communication.

Figure 8 is a visual representation of how the information from the interviews was categorised into eight themes. As the first research question was posed to respondents, three key elements emerged:

1) *Second-order theme: Understanding of the reason to rebrand*

This was supported by the responses on the reason why they thought their companies went through a rebranding process with comments such as “it was a marketing exercise, to move with the times, stay ahead of the game, iron out confusion, launch a new vision”.

2) *Second-order theme: Attitude towards the old brand*

This theme was supported by the observed attitude to the old brand. Most respondents either portrayed a positive or a negative attitude to the old brand.

3) *Second-order theme: Attitude towards the new brand*

This theme was supported by the observed attitude to the new brand. Most respondents either portrayed a positive or a negative attitude to the new brand.

4) *Second-order theme: Intention to stay*

The theme resulted from indicating if they were willing to stay with the organisation and for how long.

5) *Second-order theme: Job satisfaction*

This theme was based on Saks' definition of job satisfaction, which explored whether employees expected more from their roles.

6) *Second-order theme: Line manager support*

The theme resulted from the numerous times employees expected line manager support during the process of change.

7) *Second-order theme: Communication*

This theme was a result of all the different types and forms of communication which employees could remember from the rebranding process.

8) *Second-order theme: Change management*

The theme was an outcome of a combination of communication and line manager support. Employees expressed how these two constructs assisted in enabling a smooth change process dispelling uncertainty.

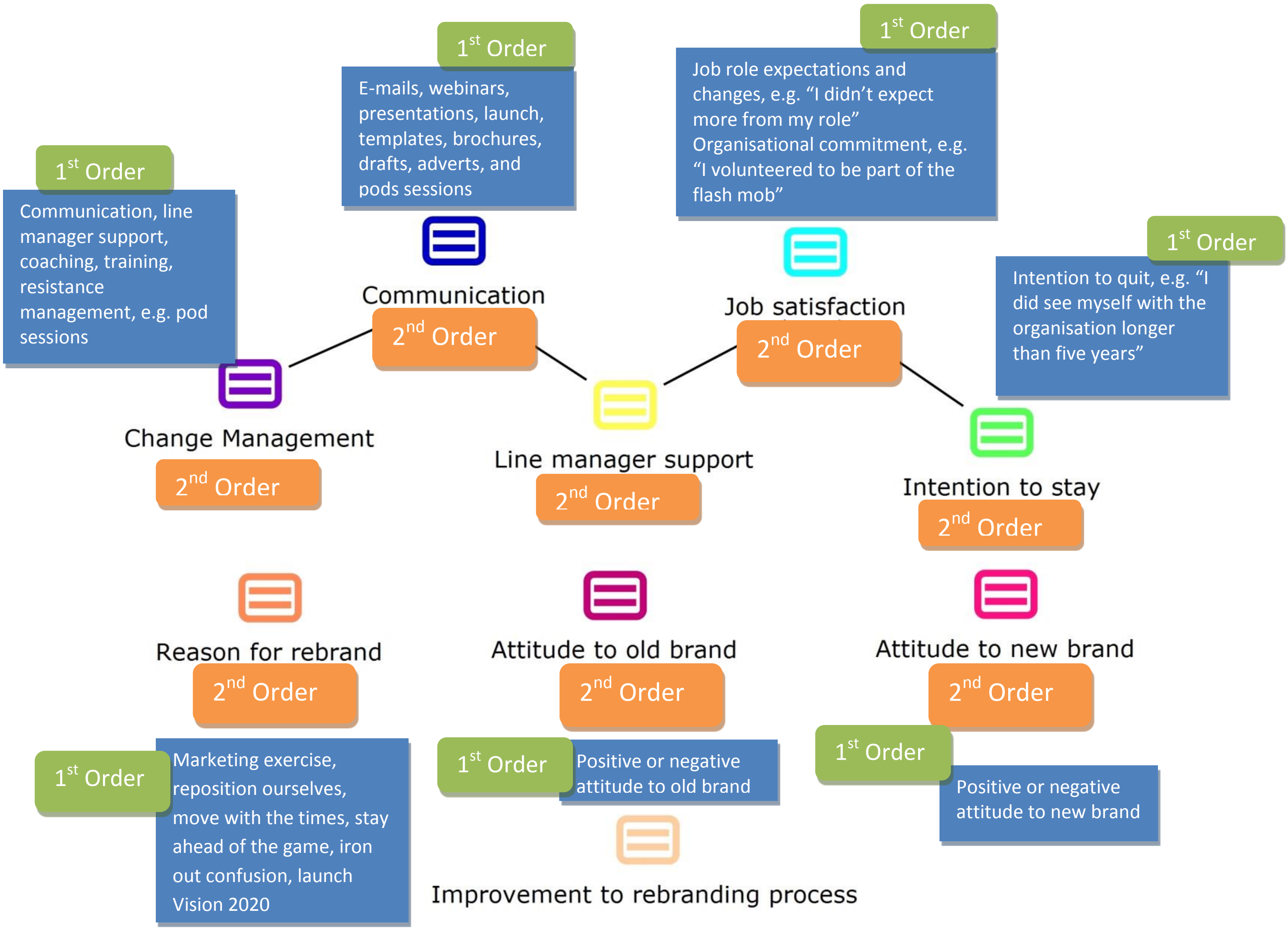

Figure 8: SHL Corporate rebranding coded themes according to first and second order

3.6 Data validity, reliability, and credibility

In order to establish credibility and internal validity, the researcher reviewed the individual transcripts, looking for similarities across case study respondents (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). In this research, all individual transcripts were reviewed as the primary source of information along with the secondary data, with the purpose of establishing the casual relationship between corporate rebranding and employee engagement.

External validity speaks to transferability, which is the ability to transfer the research findings gathered from this study to other studies on corporate brand repositioning, corporate rebranding, and employee engagement (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). Establishing external validity was critical to this research. Thomas and Magilvy (2011) described how an audit trail can be conducted to strengthen reliability and dependability by describing how and why the participants were chosen for the study, the interpretation and presentation of the research findings, and communicating the specific techniques used to determine the credibility of the data.

Earlier in the research methodology and design chapter, an explanation of how the participants were chosen on the basis of how long they were with the company, as well as a variety of job levels, was provided. In the analysis of the primary and secondary data, information was categorised into eight themes. Post-analysis of the data gathered, and a relationship between the two variables under study (corporate rebranding and engagement according to the Saks model), were explored. Through a cross-case analysis of engagement, the elements of the Saks model were presented, leading to an integration of results with the Saks model.

The other aspect of external validity is conformability. This is similar to objectivity in quantitative research and occurs when credibility, transferability, and dependability have been established. From the literature (Creswell, 2013; LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290), it can be deduced that reliability and validity are two critical factors to take into account when designing a study and analysing the results. This is more vital in qualitative research than quantitative research as many academics tend to view qualitative research as subjective. Thus, the research used multiple methods such as observation, interviewing, and recordings to add more rigour, validity, and reliability to the research.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

4.1 Introduction to SHL and EY

In this chapter, the results from both cases will be presented according to the themes that emerged. Eight themes were identified; these eight themes will be presented in a format that addresses the research questions.

After importing the transcribed primary data from the 26 interviews, eight key themes were identified through an open coding system, and are presented below:

1. Understanding the reason to rebrand;
2. Communication;
3. Change management;
4. Line manager support;
5. Attitude to the old brand;
6. Attitude to the new brand;
7. Job satisfaction and intention to stay as a sub code; and
8. Improvements to the rebranding process.

Table 2: Variables used in the content analysis of the SHL interviews

Code	Description	Summary from SHL & EY research findings	SHL respondent examples
1. *Understanding the reason to rebrand*	This is defined as what prompted the organisation to rebrand. The responses are based on the views of the participants and may not be the intended reasons for rebranding according to the leadership team.	The understanding of the reason behind the rebranding was less understood by support staff and better understood by senior levels of staff. More than 80% of the participants agreed that the rebranding was necessary and was a positive exercise.	"I don't know why, but I think it was good to change. Change is good since it was a long time with the old logo and it was time for something new. Change is positive." (Support staff) "The branding served another purpose of clarifying the offering that SHL could put on the table. It served a good purpose to up-skill the staff and the market on our offering." (Managing Director)

2. Communication	The type of communication used and available to employees throughout the process, which included verbal and non-verbal. In this code the effectiveness of the mediums of communication were also explored.	Most employees conceded that there was ample communication about the rebranding process. The most effective means of communication were the regional efforts that were face-to-face, as opposed to the e-mail communication from head office marketing. Brochures, corporate gifts, and pocket guides were not as effective as the majority of the employees could not recall using them.	"We received e-mails, brochures, mouse pads." (Senior consultant) "The message from the CEB was most effective for me because it showed the importance of this exercise." (Managing consultant)
3. *Change management*	This theme is defined as the management of the change in the organisation. It entailed managing uncertainty in times of change. Moving from the known to the unknown.	As mentioned, there was a constant overlap between communication and change management.	"There should have been better communication from our local management team explaining the reason for the change instead of an impression of you better ship in or ship out." (Senior consultant) "Yes, of course there were e-mails but also other things like office material, e.g. company letterheads, signatures, and PowerPoint presentations. It was only when we started receiving those things that the change became real to me." (Managing consultant)
4. *Line manager support*	Line manager support was a theme that resulted from the interviews and not directly posed to the interviews.	In the case of SHL, most employees felt they did not receive sufficient line manager support, which led to a slower adoption of the change. In the case of EY, employees did not feel the need for line manager support but it was available through one-to-one meetings and pod sessions.	"Local management team didn't deal with the change very well; it could have been done much better. The role of a direct manager is very important when the company is going through extreme change." (Senior consultant) "If staff senses that a manager is not comfortable with change, it will cause chaos." (Managing consultant)
5. *Attitude to old brand*	This theme resulted from the respondents describing how they felt about the new brand in comparison to the old.	In some cases, such as SHL, most employees could not remember what it was like under the old brand. In the case of EY, there was a strong loyalty to the old brand; thus the attitude to the old brand was also positive.	"I can't even remember what the old brand was. I mean, if I can't remember, then there is nothing to miss." (Managing director)

6. *Attitude to new brand*	This theme resulted from the respondents describing how they felt about the new brand in comparison to the old.	SHL employees were sceptical at first but as more of the new brand imagery was presented, the more excited they became. They found the new look and feel was bold as was as bright. EY employees automatically committed to the new brand that came with a bright yellow colour that enabled them to stand out. Overall they found the new brand was engaging as well as exciting.	"The new brand had more energy, the company was finally doing something different and exciting and engaging." (Senior consultant) "At the beginning I was sceptical, middle resolved, in the end excited, funky and happy." (Managing consultant) "It was more funky, colourful for visible easy to recognise with the heads. Brand, specifically the logo the brand was fresh." (Managing consultant)
7. *Job satisfaction and intention to stay*	With the Saks model in mind, this theme breaks job satisfaction down to the participants' intention to stay and whether they expected more from their job post-rebrand. Their contribution as an organisational citizen was also discussed.	Almost all employees did not expect more from their job due to the rebranding process. It was established that job satisfaction is affected by several other factors than corporate branding, such as the relationship with the line manager, benefits, and growth opportunities.	"I didn't have a lot of expectations, I just did my job." (Senior consultant) "I had no intention to leave. I was motivated to stay as it was an exciting time." (Support staff)
8. Improvement to rebranding process	This theme covers the recommendations or suggestions on how the rebranding process could have been managed better according to the respondents.	Overall, participants from both cases felt the rebranding process went well. Recommendations were suggested in the communication process, as well as the ownership of the communication process. Some participants felt communication should have involved employees from all levels from the early stages.	"Each territory should have been involved in the initial decisions to rebrand at a strategic level. Locally, the management team wasn't really involved. More thought should have been done on the local implications of their global decisions." (Senior consultant) "Communication could have been better in the beginning of the change. Maybe if there was a platform to voice your opinion, but there is a fine line between too much opinion and consulting everyone and enough opinion to get input." (Senior consultant)

4.2 The SHL Case

The respondents from SHL had been with the old brand for numerous years and were still with the company. The sample ranged from administrative support, consultants, to managing consultants.

The responses to each of the research questions will be addressed in the sections that follow. The eight themes mentioned in Table 2 are dealt with here in the presentation of results from the SHL case study.

4.2.1 *RQ 1: Why do companies rebrand?*

According to secondary data collected, SHL formally announced in January 2011 its merger with talent measurement company, PreVisor. PreVisor was known as the leading provider of employment assessments and talent measurement solutions in the US. PreVisor's assessment instruments accurately predict on-the-job performance and support fair hiring practices (Assessment Analytics, 2011). Together they formed one of the largest talent assessment companies in the world, able to deliver over 15 million assessments annually in more than 150 countries and 30 languages, despite the highly fragmented market (Clomedia, 2011).

The merger of the two companies, SHL and PreVisor, gave SHL an opportunity to re-innovate and reposition itself in the market. The merger meant that SHL would need to redefine itself as one brand with PreVisor and this would need to be communicated in a simple yet effective manner that would be understood by its stakeholders. A corporate rebranding process soon followed the announcement of the merger as SHL began to create a new identity.

In the case of SHL, SHL had acquired PreVisor with the aim of being recognised as the world's leading provider of personnel intelligence (see Appendix A: FAQs on the new SHL). In order to showcase the new company as one entity that sets itself apart from traditional assessment businesses, the leadership team made the decision to rebrand SHL.

The rebranding gave SHL an opportunity to move:

- from test publisher to people experts;
- from operationally efficient to business-transforming;
- from talent administration to talent management; and
- from market leader to global innovator.

(See Appendix C, "The New Us" Guide).

SHL had to rebrand to change its identity and also had to reposition in order to realign itself with the repositioning strategy. The repositioning fulfilled its purpose in making SHL more appealing for sale because SHL was bought by Corporate Executive Board (CEB), a leading advisory company in 2012 (Bersin, 2012).

4.2.1.1 Understanding the reason to rebrand

When the respondents were asked if they knew the reason why their company went through a rebranding exercise at that particular time, three out of 14 employees had no understanding whatsoever. Those who clearly did not understand assumed it was to move with the times and be more relevant. This view is identified in the following comments by four different support staff members at SHL:

> *"I think in the beginning we didn't really see a need for a rebrand because we were used to the brand we were accustomed to. But as the news broke about the rebranding, then the excitement started to build about the rebranding".* (Support staff)
>
> *"I don't know why, but I think it was good to change. Change is good since it was a long time with the old logo and it was time for something new. Change is positive."* (Support staff)
>
> *"I'm not sure, maybe to keep up with the times."* (Support staff)
>
> *"I don't understand why they did, but maybe because you need to keep up with the market space. Keep up with the change."* (Support staff)

This view *wa*s very different from that of the consultants and managing director, who stated:

> *"Obviously when companies rebrand, it's for a reason. Because a brand represents your products and services, so if a company moves into a new product line and all those type of things, you need to rebrand."* (Managing consultant)

"HG Capital appointed a new CEO, David Leigh. David realised doing the same in the US is not going to work. David Leigh thus convinced HG Capital to acquire another business but that meant giving more money, which HG Capital was willing to do. They ended up buying a huge company in the US called PreVisor. This happened around 2010/11. At the back of acquiring PreVisor, which was more well known in the US than the rest of the world, they decided to rebrand SHL to make it more fresh and user friendly for the client, that is the old SHL and PreVisor coming together. PreVisor had skills and Solutions SHL didn't have, so to launch some of the solutions globally, they decided to rebrand. They also rebranded to unite SHL and PreVisor staff as they used to be enemies and they would often pitch to clients against each other. So the rebrand was a two-fold objective, if my memory serves me right." (Managing director)

The managing consultants and consultants had a deeper understanding of the rebranding process which followed the acquisition of another company. The rebranding exercise seemed to make business and logical sense for them. This is demonstrated in the responses below:

"The why? Because two companies came together in the form of PreVisor and SHL. We came to the end of the merger and needed the two companies to be one. So the main driver, as I can recall, it was we are now one company." (Managing consultant)

"Because two companies came together. Well, if we hadn't merged with PreVisor, the current brand would have been more than five years, so it was pretty dated. Thus, there was need for the change. The strapline 'people performance' didn't really explain what we did very well." (Managing consultant)

Clearly, within certain levels of management and job roles the reason behind the rebranding was better understood. This is also attributed to the fact that more senior staff were privy to more information about the reason behind the acquisition and the rebranding than support staff.

Following the questioning of the reason(s) behind the rebranding, respondents were asked about the modes of communication which were available to assist them to understand the reasoning behind the rebranding.

4.2.1.2 Communication

Even though SHL had created several communication materials such as the SHL FAQs, which provided staff with answers to questions regarding rebranding, there was an inconsistent understanding of the process.

The questions covered in the FAQs were: the reasons for the change, what it means for employees, what it means for clients, and what is and is not changing. "The New Us" pocket guide (see Appendix B) served as a quick reference guide for employees with a personalised message from the SHL CEO in 2011:

> *"Following the successful merger of SHL and PreVisor, our brand has been re-invigorated to communicate who we are and why our customers should care. Consistent with our pedigree, yet highly distinctive and bold, it offers a promise that we can live up to every day, making a real difference to our customers. Our new strapline speaks to the heart of our promise to customers: our ability to provide insight into how people behave in the workplace.*
>
> *Our new visual identity takes our strapline and brings it to life, placing people, intelligence and results at the heart of everything we do. Successful businesses depend on talented people, but how many have a clear insight into their ability and potential? We have been delivering innovative people assessment solutions for more than 30 years. This year we*

> *will complete 25 million industry standard online pre- and post-hire assessments.*
>
> *Today, the challenge of attracting, recruiting and engaging the best is probably greater than any of us have faced in our lifetimes. We can make a real difference, helping our clients realise the true value and potential of their people. This is "People intelligence, Business results".* (CEO, 2011)

Despite the new artist brochure provided, which explained the rebranding through imagery and a launch pack with explanatory notes, some respondents still failed to understand the reasoning behind the rebranding. Some staff members also felt there was too much communication and this became confusing. A respondent even recommended the following:

> *"In terms of communication, don't spam people. Good communication is one that explains the reasons why through presentations and staff briefings. Give people bits of information, not too much at once. Management must be transparent. In general, all meant well and the local management team managed the change well. It was nice to have new marketing material, new brochures from the global office, but local implementation was more important."* (Support staff)

For others, the communication and materials cemented the change. An example of this is from a managing consultant, who said:

> *"Yes, of course there were e-mails but also other things like office material, e.g. company letterheads, signatures, and PowerPoint presentations. It was only when we started receiving those things that the change became real to me."* (Managing consultant)

When asked which the most effective means of communication were, some mentioned the local launch events, which made the communication from head of office more relevant. Others mentioned that the address by the CEO signified the importance of the rebranding exercise.

> *"Event launch with the canvases was nice. It changed the culture of the business; we aren't used to a culture of spending money at a restaurant just for staff. The culture of the office and management style of the MD created a difficult environment."* (Senior consultant)

> *"The launch event at Rhapsody's with all the heads in an art exhibition, explaining the symbolism of the heads was most effective for me. Better communication might be an e-mail with a summary of what has just happened and why from the CEO or even a clip with him wrapping up the change."* (Managing consultant)

> *"The staff meeting with a video clip with David Leigh, the CEO, explaining the rebranding and change was most effective for me."* (Managing consultant)

4.2.1.3 Change management

As mentioned, there was a constant overlap between communication and change management. A consultant recommended, "There should have been better communication from our local management team explaining the reason for the change, instead of an impression of you better ship in or ship out." Thus, improved change management was needed in explaining the reason for the rebranding. This respondent also recommended that there should have been change management surveys to enable the local management to get a feel for any insecurities or doubts regarding the changes.

Another consultant explained that for most Industrial Psychologists, working for SHL was an honour and any change to the brand might threaten their association with the brand. A consultant from Kwa-Zulu stated:

> *"Local management team didn't deal with the change very well, it could have been done much better. The role of a direct manager is very important when the company is going through extreme change. For most psychologists who work for SHL, it is an honour, thus any change to that might threaten what they know about the brand if the change is bad, but since the change was positive, it worked in their favour."* (Consultant)

4.2.1.4 Line manager support

One of the managing consultants mentioned that the responsibility of management in any change is important because "if staff senses that a manager is not comfortable with change, it will cause chaos". Even though he made this point, he later mentioned that the rebranding process seemed to be a minor cosmetic change which did not warrant a change management process. Any change which might affect and/or threaten a positive brand association needs to be managed carefully by line managers even if they feel the change is minor.

A MAXmaps analysis revealed even more clearly that line manager support is central to job satisfaction in the same way change management and communication are critical to a successful change process. A senior consultant stated, "The direct manager should have sat each of us down in a one-on-one discussion to discuss the change that is about to happen and how we feel about it."

Upon exploring the respondents' understanding of the rebranding exercise, the researcher was able to uncover their attitudes towards the old and new brands. This enabled the researcher to obtain a better understanding of whether they approved of this change in the brand at that particular time. It was also critical to obtain their view post-rebranding, as they were not the decision makers but rather the recipients of decisions made by their superiors.

4.2.1.5 Attitude to the old brand

It was discovered that some employees from SHL South Africa were tired of the old brand and felt that the change could not have come at a better time. When asked what they missed about the old brand, many of the respondents could not really remember the old brand.

Some respondents said that the old brand was highly product-focused to the extent that the market knew more about their product, Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ), than about SHL, the company that supplied it. One managing consultant mentioned that this was revealed during market research in 2008. Two respondents commented:

> *"I think the old brand was well established and recognisable and there were concerns since this new brand was so different ... would [it] be recognisable."* (Support staff)
>
> *"The old brand was more about the OPQ and based on one person – the person who brought SHL to SA."* (Consultant)

4.2.1.6 Attitude to the new brand

The attitude towards the new brand was sceptical at first but, overall, the respondents felt the rebranding process was an exciting and positive experience. The new SHL identity was totally different from what the staff were used to but, as explanations for the choice of the new heads and imagery came, they warmed up to the changes. Some respondents described the new brand as "funky, fresh, positive, and fun. The strapline was challenging for some to understand. A managing consultant said that the phrase "People Intelligence" made it easier and, at the same time, more difficult to explain what the company did. Two managing consultants said the following:

> *"Easier because it was more descriptive – we provide intelligence about people. I also liked that it connected the science piece of what we do a lot better. But in practice it also*

> *made people think we are in IQ testing and people [were] wondering if we are still providing the OPQ. We had to give people a long explanation about what 'People Intelligence' means. I like the concept, but not how it was practically applied."* (Managing consultant)

> *"The idea of going into intelligence was more what do you do once you have information from the OPQ [and] thus more around the solution."* (Managing consultant)

In summary, the reason why SHL went through a rebranding process was as a result of an acquisition. Acquiring PreVisor gave SHL an opportunity to reposition itself as a brand and find one common vision and meaning of the brand after the merger. This enabled SHL to gain new markets and iron out any misunderstandings in the market in terms of what the brand stands for.

RQ2. How does corporate rebranding impact employee engagement in an emerging market context?

The second research question entails examining employee engagement using Saks' model of engagement. This included exploring four key constructs of engagement: job satisfaction, organisational commitment, intention to quit, and organisational citizen behaviour. The respondents were probed based on these four key constructs, and the results are presented in the next section.

4.2.1.7 Job satisfaction and intention to stay

In the interviews, two critical aspects of engagement were explored – the intention to stay, and job satisfaction. Overall, the respondents did not expect more from their jobs as a result of the rebranding. This is because their day-to-day deliverables and roles did not change. Respondents' comments included the following:

> *"Work was normal and the rebranding didn't really change what I do. Yes, the slides changed, but I was still doing what I do."* (Consultant)

> *"My role stayed the same; I didn't expect anything to change from my role."* (Consultant)

> *"I was pretty satisfied in my role. No matter what changes came for the better, I would still be loyal to the company."* (Consultant)

A support staff member benefited from the changes, despite not expecting more from the rebranding. Although their role did not change, they said:

> *"I did receive more guidelines from the UK because of creating consistency, which was good because it improved my performance. It also gave me access to the international world of work. If I was struggling with something, there was more support from head office. We were no longer working independently on our own in SA."* (Support staff)

In the case of two managing consultants who were given an opportunity to gain new skills and knowledge through the PreVisor acquisition, the scope of their work and roles increased. One of these individuals said:

> *"For me, the merger and rebranding gave me access to more information … as custodian to the people intelligence and science, it gave me access to explain the science better in a language that was understood by business."* (Managing consultant)

In terms of the intention to stay, most respondents felt that as long as the change was for the better, they were willing to stay with the company:

> *"No, I don't regret staying as the change was a step in the right direction and the company keeps making decisions that are a step in the right direction."* (Senior consultant)

> *"SHL was well known in our industry and IO Psychology profession, so I had no intention to leave."* (Senior Consultant)

> *"No, I had no intention to leave because of the change. It didn't make me leave. I enjoyed my job and what I did. The change didn't threaten my role."* (Support staff)

More than five respondents mentioned that the professionalism and science of the company is central and they would remain with SHL so long as these were not compromised. It is interesting to note that even though all 14 respondents did not regret staying with the company during the rebranding, only three respondents saw themselves remaining for the next five years and beyond.

A new element that was uncovered was the effect of the rebranding process in the current work environment:

> *"Because the change of brand came at a good time and the overall change was for the better, SHL employees were energised. I felt pride in finally being part of something bigger. At the regional office, we always get the back end of everything, so for once we were aligned to the head office in South Africa (Pretoria office). It felt like we were one team … having access to the UK office through the rebranding."* (Support staff)

> *"In the beginning, I didn't really have a personal interest in the rebranding. Towards the middle, it enabled us to share with clients the changes which made one proud of working for the company. The rebranding positioned us much better. At the end, there was enough change to the SA business to change the culture."* (Senior consultant)

Thus, the working environment improved and South African SHL employees felt part of a bigger global company. Many respondents felt that even though their day-to-day role did not change, there was a sense of renewed energy in the office. A support staff member said, "The change in rebrand changed our local culture to be more fun and warm."

4.2.1.8 Improvements to the rebranding process

In a recommendation for future rebranding processes (theme eight), one of the consultants mentioned that the marketing department should have done a better job of communicating the reasons behind the rebranding. A lack of understanding of the purpose of the rebranding led to a few SHL staff members feeling uncertain and not as accepting of the process as others. Upon exploring this point further, it emerged that certain employees would have been more accepting of the change in the beginning if they had line manager support. There was a consistent overlap between communication and change management as communication is the heart of any change management process. An SHL managing consultant explained:

> *"I don't think the communication was clear at the beginning. Everyone was a bit scattered. People didn't know what the new vision will be and what the focus will be and all those type of things. Maybe they should have delayed the rebranding and clarified the direction of the business first. "*

In the next section, results from the EY interviews will be presented according to the interview guide.

4.3 The EY case

In the case of EY, 15 employees were identified and asked to participate in the research; 12 individuals agreed, consisting of seven managers and five support staff members. The research reached a point of saturation when no additional informational was learned from support staff and additional senior managers were reluctant to take part. Since the researcher was less familiar with the EY respondents, the interviews took a slightly different structure. At the beginning of the interviews, respondents were asked to clarify their roles and describe what they do within the company. After a clarification of their roles, the same questions were asked as in the case of SHL employees.

4.3.1 ***Presentation of results***

RQ 1: Why do companies rebrand?

In early 2013 EY launched Vision 2020, which sets out EY's purpose, ambition, and strategy (EY, 2013b). This comprehensive document describes EY's main goals and objectives and positions the company for the next seven years to come.

The slogan "Building a Better Working World" was developed from EY's consultations with internal and external stakeholders (EY, 2013b). These consultations showed the importance of the belief that everything EY does, including audit, tax return, advisory services, and client interaction, should be built on trust, confidence, and making the working world better than it was before (EY, 2013b).

The CEO of EY, Mark A. Weinberger, explained the slogan as follows: "By uniting the power of government, non-profits and corporates with high-potential women entrepreneurs, we can use the power of collaboration to create positive social change. That's what building a better working world is all about" (EY, 2013b).

4.3.1.1 Understanding the reason to rebrand

The interview with the head of marketing (HOM) provided deep insights as the respondent offered a detailed recollection of the EY rebranding process. In the interview, she explained how she was privy to a lot of information from the global team before she was able to share it with the local South African team.

> *"I used to have meetings with the CEO and the head of markets, who are both senior partners in the firm, and nobody else knew about it. It even had a code name so I couldn't talk to anyone about it. So it was even hard to engage my colleagues in the marketing department and get them to feel something, you know."* (HOM)

It was only from 1 July 2013 at the announcement of the rebranding of EY that the HOM was able to engage with other staff members. This meant that the HOM had to persuade senior executives and partners all around Africa to buy into the process and those who report directly to them, to take responsibility for the rebranding. The HOM received this buy-in by reassuring the executives that this would not be another sugar-coating from marketing by merely changing stationery and handing out corporate gifts. The HOM expressed how the rebranding gave EY Africa an opportunity to tell its story:

> *“We decided that we would utilise the brand refresh as part of our Africa story and use it in a way that we could really connect with our people around the growth story that we’ve been on for a couple of years and demonstrate that many of the promises that have been made, can be achieved through this change that would be brought about by the brand refresh.”* (HOM)

The rebranding process was thought out thoroughly by the local marketing department, headed by the HOM. They had nine working streams and involved the human resource (HR) department to facilitate stakeholder engagement and assist with the change management process.

Now that a foundation has been created for the responses, the next sections will examine the research questions, beginning with: Why do companies rebrand?

When the EY respondents were asked about their understanding of the rebranding, almost all the respondents begin their answers with “Vision 2020”.

EY launched Vision 2020 in early 2013. It is a comprehensive document (see Appendix C for excerpts of the document) which sets out EY’s purpose, ambition, and strategy. The report starts with the most critical part of any business, its internal stakeholders. In a chapter entitled “Supporting our people”, EY describes how creating high-performing teams and attracting, developing, and inspiring the best people, is central to EY’s strategy (EY, 2013b).

The slogan “Building a better working world” replaced the old slogan, “Quality in everything we do” (The Branding Source, 2013). This gave internal staff a slogan they could relate to. EY employees commented on this as follows:

"I felt that, in terms of that slogan, we were working towards it and by the time that I joined EY, I could feel the energy and the brand, I could feel people focus into like making EY a better working place for everyone, for staff in particular and maybe for the people who work out at clients who could feel that they did try to make their best to make the world a bigger place for EY and for the work that we do and stuff like that." (Support staff)

"The launch came with what we call Vision 2020 and Vision 2020 is around, it's a completely new different framework. It focuses on teaming, high performing teams, it focuses on exceptional client service and it has focus also on strengthening global and empowering local." (Manager)

"Actually, a lot of changes came with rebranding the logo, it was a couple of months of communications saying we are expecting to change our team, our logo, vision statement, and those kind of things from quality to making a better working world, those kind of things. So these communications came in trickles, expect this in two weeks, you will see this flash, you understand it. There was even a kind of a test, I wouldn't call it assessment. 'Do you recognise the new logo, you understand the three pillars, you know objectives of Vision 2020?' So a whole lot of stuff came into preparing, so by the time it was 1 July, we were already brainwashed sufficiently to know we are expecting this." (Senior manager)

"Creating a better working world, which literally we have in the green building and all those kind of things being in place, giving them an enabling environment, everything we will need, or you think you will need, from coffee machines to a wellness centre to having arrangements for crèche and all those kind of things. There is a gym." (Manager)

It seemed that managers and senior staff understood the reason behind the rebranding better than other employees. For example, two EY senior managers stated:

> *"The former Chairman was moving and the new one coming in and I think the branding happened to be part of his own discourse, so it came at the right time. It was a global drive, I'm sure they mentioned that, and which in the market, kind of, some would say Ernst & Young, some would say we know EY, that kind of thing."* (Senior manager)

> *"At the time of the launch, it wasn't just the launch of the new brand. They had effectively launched the new strategy of the global CEO; it was a new purpose, a vision that had been launched so it was a whole package deal. It wasn't just we are changing our brand and our logo and the new one is going to be EY... So it was all incorporated into one package, new logo with the new vision, strategy which went with the new CEO, which went with the new purpose and vision and so all in all, there was the impression of kind of a fresh start and a fresh vision of how we are going to go forward and the brand was just one of those things of tuning this grand thing with ourselves."* (Senior manager)

It was less clear among support staff who were less exposed to high-level information. Two individuals responded:

> *"I don't know. I guess maybe the old brand was a bit out-dated and people maybe felt that the vision and like where we were going was maybe changed a bit. So the rebranding was maybe to focus more on where we want to go and where we're going the market, rather than the strategy that the old vision had. That's the only logical explanation I could come up with in my mind." (Support staff)*

> *"I think my understanding is that it was to unite our employees across Africa. So, because we are an integrated firm and like, I mean, out of the big four, we are the most integrated into Africa. So it was just to be like, EY that's who we were. So, it was to identify ourselves as EY and then to take that out into the marketplace. ."*

Even before the rebranding, which gave EY an opportunity to reposition itself, EY Africa had already been repositioning itself, according to this response from an EY manager:

> *"What is our common purpose? In Africa, we've been ahead because we had this motion of unlocking EY values across Africa. It wasn't our official tagline, but it was some we used in our communication internally."* (Manager)

4.3.1.2 Change management

EY had managed their changes well with communication from the Corporate Brand Committee, HR, and Marketing, although some individuals did not know what was going on. An EY manager explained:

> *"It was a bit of like a walking through mud process and that didn't help with change management where people weren't in the know. So I was in the know, so I was okay with it and I managed my expectations and everything, but people who weren't in the know and they just executed things, they didn't have any say, it was harder for them because they were like rebranding, but nobody is ready for it. So that took time, but it wasn't that long, it was two, three months and I think what helped was moving to the new building in Johannesburg."* (Manager)

An effective exercise facilitated by HR was the pod sessions. The pod sessions were a perfect opportunity to un-train and retrain staff in a process of change and resistance management. The marketing department worked with the HR department to assist in entrenching the new vision and building a better world. The sessions were organised and scripted by the HR department.

EY managers stated:

> *"The pod session is essentially something that rolled out and we rolled it out using partners, like the partners of the firm rolled it out to about twenty people within their department. So it takes a lot, just the cost of that, of having every partner take the time out across Africa, so that's like 250 pod sessions across Africa, for them to take the time out and to deliver only to twenty people. So it's a huge time commitment and the pod session was about what is a high-performing team? What are your behaviours as a leader? What are your behaviours as a team member? How do you operate? So it was, you know, that was the biggest communication from the talent agenda, by talent I mean people in HR agenda."* (Manager)

> *"Those pod sessions really worked for me. I think it was a great opportunity to have feedback and input."* (Manager)

a) Change in culture

With the rebranding came a change in culture at EY, which created more interaction across divisions and levels. An EY Senior manager said:

> *"I saw a lot of, what do you say, in the old brand you still have that mind-set of you know where you have the hierarchy and those stuff, but there was a blend among colleagues."*

b) Change in environment

The move from the Wanders' building to Sandton was an opportunistic move which created a physical change in the environment, which in turn assisted in shaping the new culture at EY.

An EY senior manager explained:

> *"It was also an open plan in the old building, but you can't compare this, not even in the strategy or whatever … So the mix here is totally different as well because we sit and eat whether this person is junior staff or whatever, it doesn't really matter, we all see him, which is alright. On the other side, seniors have lunch with other seniors but here it's more mixed. Because I can sit with you here, somebody else can sit here and then there is more mix. More space, more room, if you look at it that way. It is something to be proud of and for me, I think the best part of it is with my travelling, because I just park my car across to the train, airport, I go. So coming back, I don't need to stress my wife with coming to pick me up early morning, just come straight, pick up my car and I drive. Even if I need to attend meetings, we have showers and bathrooms here all over. So a staff member can just change and continue work for the day."* (Senior manager)

In the case of EY, the reason for the rebranding was a combination of factors, which are fairly common in rebranding cases. The reasons for rebranding were new market gains and the need to change the way the brand is perceived in the market. Under the guidance of a new EY CEO, Vision 2020 was launched internally and externally, followed by the launch of the new brand.

RQ2: How does corporate rebranding impact employee engagement in an emerging market context?

4.3.1.3 Job satisfaction

The second research question is addressed in this section: How does corporate rebranding impact employee engagement in an emerging market context?

According to the Saks model of engagement, engagement consists of job satisfaction, organisational commitment, intention to quit and organisational citizen behaviour. In the interviews with EY employees, two critical aspects of engagement were explored; namely the intention to stay, and job satisfaction. Overall, the respondents did not expect more from their jobs because of the rebranding.

When asked whether the rebranding process made respondents feel more energised and motivated, two managers stated:

> *"I didn't see it, but it made me more confident; not that I wasn't confident of my brand. It's more psychological, like more adjustments and moving to this place, it makes me proud to say I am working for EY."* (Manager)

> *"That hasn't been the result. The result at the end of the day, our engagement has stayed the same as it was two years ago. But that said, rebranding is just a part of it. There have been many things that have impacted the way people feel and the market is difficult right now. So I think it is really amazing that we have kept that engagement level in difficult times."* (Manager)

Other respondents' comments indicated that a rebranding process does not inevitably lead to more engaged employees. For example: if a line manager is the reason behind an employee's engagement levels being low, a rebranding process may only improve their attitude to work temporarily. However, if the poor relationship between the line manager and employee continues, improved engagement will not be a long-term result of the rebranding. An EY support staff member explained that it was only after the rebranding period that their manager left and their engagement and morale improved:

> *"So my engagement took a dip and then, the rebranding came and I think it sort of revitalised me and just like my spirit towards the organisation and towards my work. Obviously then my manager left and my engagement level went through the roof."* (Support staff)

> *"It's not about the rebranding; it's just about the value that you are extracting from your work every day."* (Support staff)

It is interesting how EY meticulously managed all the changes to the organisation. They started with Vision 2020, which enabled it to gain new markets and be perceived as different from its competitors. Thereafter, a corporate culture of high-performing teams was instilled. By the time the rebranding took place, most employees understood how it came about and the reasons behind it. EY created platforms of communication through pod sessions to allow employees the opportunity to digest all the changes and ensure they personalise the changes and own them. Employees felt a sense of pride in the new brand, which came with a lovely eco-friendly building at the heart of Johannesburg's business hub, Sandton.

Everything that came with the rebranding – new image, new building, new client material, and new customs – did little to improve employees' level of job satisfaction and intention to stay for some employees. According to one manager, an employee engagement survey was performed after the rebranding, with the following outcome:

> *Our back office staff's job satisfaction went up nearly 20% this year, from 70% to 90%. So I'm not sure how they are so engaged in what they do. I'm not sure if they've had other managers in there who were helping them stay motivated or what it is in that section, but that to me that was a crazy one, because in all other sectors we went down between 4% and 8%, somewhere around there."* (Manager)

4.3.1.4 Intention to stay

It is interesting to note that even though EY's rebranding process came with many environmental changes that brought new energy to the company, EY employees were less forthcoming about their intentions to stay with the company:

> *"I don't think I'm going to be building my career here, like in the long-term. I think it's provided me with a great*

foundation." (Support staff)

Another employee deviated from the question altogether and preferred to describe the reason why she stays:

> *"It's just that image and it's like the strangest thing. I mean, even when you speak to people and tell them that you work at EY, they know exactly what it is. There are, like, aspirations of like 'I would love to work for a company like that'."* (Manager)

Another employee was considering moving jobs:

> *"Because at that point in time, I know last year around this time, I was sitting there saying, 'I'm leaving, I'm looking for another job' and at that point in time I was looking for another job."* (Support staff)

When another employee was asked whether they would stay with the company for five years or more, they responded:

> *"I still don't see myself in the company like that. I still really struggle to see people that are going to progress through their entire life cycle in this business. This is not a business where you come in as an associate, you work for ten years and you end up as a partner; it's not like that. It's you put in your time when you're young, you leave and you get your money and you come back in here with the understanding of a much more senior role where you can actually make ends meet."* (Manager)

4.4 Integration of results with the Saks model

With the Saks model of employee engagement (2006) in mind, certain presuppositions were made on how corporate rebranding impacts employee engagement by focusing on key consequences of engagement, namely job satisfaction, organisational commitment, intention to quit, and organisational citizen behaviour.

4.4.1 *Job satisfaction*

Job satisfaction relates to the representation of employees and their work environment by comparing what they expect to receive versus what employees actually receive (Clifford, 2010).

P1: Employees who are satisfied with their jobs can positively engage with others during corporate rebranding.

In both cases, the employees did not expect more from their roles because of the rebranding process. In fact, their jobs did not change from their daily job requirements. Because their roles did not change much, they did not expect more from their current roles because of the rebranding. In the case of EY, some employees were dissatisfied with their roles and their managers before the rebranding process. EY employees, especially support staff, were less inclined to speak about the details of their dissatisfaction with their roles, but they did make it clear that there is more to job satisfaction than feeling energised by your role. Thus, unless there are changes with the employees' roles, including scope of work, a salary increase or developmental opportunities, a rebranding process does not impact job satisfaction.

4.4.2 *Organisational commitment*

Saks (2006) defined organisational commitment as the attitude and attachment that people have towards their company.

P2: Employees who are committed to their organisations can positively engage with others during a corporate rebranding process.

Both SHL and EY employees felt it was a privilege to work for the brands. In a highly competitive and fragmented industry, employees from both cases were proud to work for their respective companies. When the rebranding went full steam ahead, in the heart of the rebranding process, employees felt even more committed to their organisations.

An EY employee even mentioned that he would wear his EY pin everywhere he travelled for work and would meet other fellow EY colleagues at the airport and he could sense the pride they have. Furthermore, when he would travel to other EY branches across Africa, he would see the consistency of the brand from building signage, brochures, PowerPoint slides, etc. At the launch of the rebranding, both SHL and EY employees were extremely excited.

EY had a fun-filled launch, painting their offices with their brand colours. SHL had an art exhibition during work hours, showcasing the new identity and the team behind the new face of SHL. This excitement created a change in the work environment and started to form a new corporate culture.

4.4.3 *Intention to quit*

Intention to quit is the degree to which employees are considering leaving their organisation (Clifford, 2010).

P3: Employees who are engaged are less likely to have an intention to quit during a corporate rebranding process.

A fascinating result from the analysis arose as employees revealed that their intention to quit would be more related to job satisfaction; for instance, if there was a change in their job role which was not beneficial to them or if they felt there was less room to grow.

The intention to quit was less related to the brand, but more related to the employees' direct managers and scope of work. The results also revealed that because of loyalty to the brand and a belief that the changes were for the better, most respondents had been inclined to stay with the company at the time of the rebranding. However, not all respondents saw themselves staying with the company for more than another five years.

4.4.4 *Organisational citizen behaviour*

Organisational citizenship behaviour relates to the individual; behaviour that is voluntary (out of free will) and not tied directly to any reward or recognition.

P4: Engaged employees are more likely to have organisational citizen behaviour.

In terms of organisational commitment, most SHL respondents were dedicated to their roles and loyal to the company. This loyalty encourages them to participate in organisational activities even if the activities are outside their scope. A support staff member stated:

> *"At the beginning, I didn't really think anything about the rebranding, but at the middle, as we got more involved with social activities, I liked it. It brought us together and all teams were now part of one organisation."*

In the middle of the rebranding stage – the heart of the rebranding – employees were more excited as they felt the excitement all around and in most cases were willing to volunteer their services. The internal culture at SHL at the time was strict and employees were too scared to openly volunteer and waited to be instructed on what their involvement should be. On the contrary, EY had a less formal and more open culture at the time, and employees volunteered for launch activities such as participating in a flash mob. Involvement in the flash mob showed dedication and commitment to the brand with long practice sessions and meticulous choreography.

4.5 Cross-case analysis

Table 3: A cross-case analysis on employee engagement at SHL and EY

Saks Model Dimensions	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Job satisfaction			No direct impact on job satisfaction due to SHL's and EY's corporate rebranding as there were other factors such as line manager, opportunities for growth, salary, etc. E.g.: *"Obviously then my manager left and my engagement level went through the roof."*
Organisational commitment	In both cases, employees were more likely to have positive organisational commitment. E.g.: *"I was involved in a lot of the rebranding activities, values, championing regional Durban launch event, which was outside my role. I was positive at that time."*		
Intention to quit		A corporate rebranding exercise is more likely to reduce the intention to quit. E.g.: *"I was even more willing to stay longer because of the change."*	
Organisational citizen behaviour	In both cases, the corporate rebranding exercise influenced employees' organisational citizenship, making them advocates of the brand. E.g.: *"The move from product to solution gave a fresh story, and if you have a good story to tell about your company, you would want to share it over a braaivleis."*		

The cross-case analysis is a summary of the outcomes of the integration of results with the Saks model of engagement.

4.5.1 *Job satisfaction*

In both cases, there was no direct correlation between levels of job satisfaction and corporate rebranding. If the employees' direct roles and responsibilities do not change, the rebranding impact is less likely to influence engagement. However, if the roles changed with more opportunities and scope, job satisfaction was more likely to improve. Luthans (1998) corroborated that there is more to job satisfaction by noting that job satisfaction represents several related attitudes which are important components of a job. According to Luthans (1998), these include the work itself, remuneration, promotion opportunities, supervision, and co-workers.

In the case of SHL and EY, employees did not expect more from their roles due to the rebranding but instead felt more energised in their current roles.

4.5.2 *Organisational commitment*

Participants from both EY and SHL demonstrated positive organisational commitment during the rebranding process. This commitment energised fellow employees and positively influenced the work environment.

EY had a flash mob exercise where employees could volunteer their time to practise and demonstrate to the press what the new brand is all about. Those who participated felt even more energised and proud of the new brand.

SHL also rolled out a brand activity in which employees had to submit their "People Intelligence" head and personalise it through an abstract image of a head. In South Africa, one of the employees won a prize as one of the best heads globally. Yet again, this put the South African business on the map and made fellow staff members proud to be part of the new SHL.

Thus, a corporate rebranding process is more likely to increase or improve organisational commitment which, according to Saks (2006), is also the attachment that people have with their company.

4.5.3 *Intention to quit*

A corporate rebranding exercise builds a new brand, and when there is brand loyalty among employees, this exercise is more likely to reduce intentions to quit. On the other hand, if an employee's job satisfaction levels are low due to his/her role and/or direct manager, a rebranding exercise is less likely to have an impact on the individual's intention to quit.

4.5.4 *Organisational citizen behaviour*

In terms of organisational citizenship, most SHL and EY respondents spoke positively about how they felt toward the brand during the rebranding process, and mentioned that they felt proud to be part of a professional company. A corporate rebranding exercise therefore influences employees' organisation citizenship – making them advocates and ambassadors of the brand.

Overall, all these dimensions, except job satisfaction, indicated positive consequences for EY and SHL's employee engagement during and after the rebranding, even though the initial change management process for SHL was criticised by some employees.

In Chapter 5, the research questions are addressed based on the information presented in this chapter. Certain presuppositions were made based on Saks' model of engagement, and they will also be addressed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The outcomes of the two cases provided an interesting look at corporate branding and employee engagement. In this section, the research questions are discussed in relation to the results from the two case studies.

5.1 RQ1: Why do companies rebrand?

After the analysis of the results presented by the two cases, two key reasons for rebranding came forward: 1) companies rebrand as a result of mergers and acquisitions, and 2) as a result of gaining new market positioning, as well as change how it was perceived in the market.

Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) concurred with these reasons by mentioning that there are several reasons for companies to rebrand and reposition, such as mergers and acquisitions, and to gain new markets.

What stood out in the case of SHL was that despite the overwhelming material created to explain the reasons behind the rebranding, there was a lack of understanding amongst the majority of the support staff. This material was evident in the secondary data, which provided a clear reason for the rebranding: SHL had just acquired a new company which enabled them to gain access to new markets and present better product offerings. The rebranding was an opportunity to combine the two companies – SHL and PreVisor – to go into the market as one powerful brand.

The research results also revealed that senior levels of staff at SHL were well informed about the reasons behind the rebranding process. On the other hand, the lack of understanding of the reasons for the rebranding led to unnecessary uncertainty and unrest among other SHL employees.

Dale (2001) defined a lack of uncertainty as a period in which making decisions, planning events, and interacting with others, tend to make people experience uncertainty. Dale (2001) further explained uncertainty as follows: “Uncertainty exists when details of situations are ambiguous, complex, unpredictable, or probabilistic;

when information is unavailable or inconsistent; and when people feel insecure in their own state of knowledge or the state of knowledge in general."

In the case of EY, on the other hand, EY started strategically with the launch of its new vision and mission, which made sense at the time with the appointment of a new CEO. There was a clear understanding of where the company was going and how each individual employee could contribute to their "high-performing team". After the launch of "Vision 2020", EY embarked on a rebranding process which was strongly supported by the CEO and EY partners. The senior staff understood the reasons for the rebranding as a medium to reposition the company, gain new markets, and create a competitive edge in a highly competitive industry. The support staff, on the other hand, did not have the strategic understanding of the reasons why the rebranding took place. It was also unclear to them why the rebranding took place at that particular time. Their guesses varied from "maybe the old brand was out-dated" to "maybe because the company needed a new vision".

EY invested a lot of time and money in entrenching the reasons behind the rebranding and communicating to staff what was about to happen with the rebranding process. It became less about the perfect rebranding and more about increasing the understanding of whom employees work for and why they should associate themselves with this important brand. Rebranding also gave EY an opportunity to progress in its offerings as a big player in the professional services industry. With a new vision, mission, and revitalised brand, EY repositioned itself ahead of its competitors, who were still recovering from slow economic growth around the world.

After a thorough examination of both cases, it became clear that explaining and communicating the reasons behind rebranding is very important. As Dale (2001) mentioned, uncertainty is created by a lack of information to stakeholders. Thus, in communicating the reasons for the rebranding, all internal stakeholders should be informed of what is about to happen from the beginning of the rebranding process.

In uncovering the reason(s) behind a company going through a rebranding process, two important variables stood out: communication and change management.

5.1.1 *Communication and change management*

Communication plays an integral role in change management. Hiatt (2006) explained that the root cause of change management failure is not only lack of communication, but also poor training. Hiatt (2006) described how the five elements of the ADKAR model (as illustrated in Figure 9) are the building blocks of effective change management:

A	Awareness of the need for change
D	Desire to support and participate in the change
K	Knowledge of how to change
A	Ability to implement required skills and behaviours
R	Reinforcement to sustain the change

Figure 9: The ADKAR Model (Hiatt, 2006, p. 2)

EY understood this model and applied it throughout its corporate rebranding process. There are a number of factors that indicate this.

Firstly, in terms of understanding the need for change, EY respondents knew that the company had a new vision, Vision 2020, and with this, a new brand. In the case of SHL, there was a lack of understanding of the need for change, which made it difficult for some respondents to adjust to the change.

Secondly, regarding the desire to support and participate in the change, yet again, EY was a step ahead and knew that partners and senior managers would play a key role in supporting the change by becoming ambassadors of change. In the case of SHL, this was implied but not communicated and there were no templates or support material encouraging managing consultants to support the change. This meant that if the managers did not feel positive about the brand, it took longer for subordinates to accept the change.

Thirdly, in terms of the knowledge of how to change, SHL only had launch templates to work with from its central global marketing, unlike EY, which had pod sessions to train staff on the change, as well as to manage any resistance.

The fourth factor is the ability to turn knowledge into action. In both cases, SHL and EY used several exercises such as games and surveys to test whether knowledge of the new brand was put being into action.

Lastly, EY created reinforcement to sustain the change through a dedicated EY Day to remind employees of the change, along with biannual people surveys to monitor the change. SHL's change was short-lived and there was little opportunity to reinforce the change because in the following year, SHL was acquired by CEB (Corporate Executive Board).

Reinforcement of the rebranding objective is also vital to remind all internal stakeholders how the process will benefit the business and community at large. EY did an exceptional job in communicating the reason for rebranding and managing the change.

It has also been established by the research that communication is key to any corporate rebranding strategy, as well as to change management. These two elements are the heart of any successful corporate rebranding strategy.

In the communication planning phase, marketers and managers who take into consideration the need to include all stakeholders along the journey from a known identity to unknown identity, are more likely to be successful. Therefore, involving all stakeholders in corporate rebranding decreases the chances of leaving anyone behind. Part of this communication is ensuring that the reasons behind embarking on a corporate rebranding exercise are well understood. Marketers should test their communication effectiveness on the reasons behind a corporate rebranding strategy. This will ensure that all stakeholders are in line with and understand the reason(s) behind the change. This will help create direct ambassadors for the new brand and assist in the change management process.

Launching a new identity appears easy and marketers have mastered the art of creating hype around launching new brands. Evaluating whether most people in the organisation have accepted and welcomed the new brand, on the other hand, is an exercise marketers are less known for. Thus, it is critical that marketers work along with their HR colleagues to assess the state of employee engagement and commitment to the brand before, during, and after the process. Speak (2009) noted the importance of marketing and HR working together, collaborating to build stronger internal brands. Bansal et al. (2001) also emphasised that among the major functional areas of business, marketing and HR are the two main areas that bring employees to a state of internal customer loyalty and trust in management. The inclusion of HR in the case of EY led to innovative ways of motivating employees to adopt the change in brand and the new vision through pod sessions that were held across the entire African region.

In the next section, the second research question is examined and new variables that were discovered as an outcome of the research, are discussed.

5.2 RQ2: How does corporate rebranding impact employee engagement in an emerging market context?

Two new variables emerged from the research, namely brand loyalty and organisational culture.

The outcome of establishing the respondents' understanding of the intention to quit resulted in respondents expressing a certain level of brand loyalty to the company:

> *"No, I don't regret staying as the change was a step in the right direction and the company keeps making decisions that are a step in the right direction."* (Senior consultant)

> *"SHL was well known in our industry and IO Psychology profession, so I had no intention to leave."* (Senior consultant)

> *"After graduating, I had many choices in terms of places to work, but EY had a good reputation in the market and I liked*

> *how they recruited graduates. They made you feel important and privileged."* (Manager)

5.2.1 *Brand loyalty*

According to Aaker (2002), brand loyalty is at the heart of any brand's value. He further explained that a brand with a small but incredibly loyal customer base can have significant equity. This equity is built on four key pillars: brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and, most importantly, brand loyalty (Aaker, 2002). Building internal brand equity in companies could be the crucial step to achieving employee loyalty (Azizi et al., 2012).

Companies rise and fall with brand loyalty. When Toyota had to pull an entire product line worldwide after it was established that the range had faulty brakes, Toyota moved very quickly from a trusted, high-quality brand to an untrustworthy brand (Nelson, 2014). However, because it had built its brand over the years through consistent brand awareness, dedication to quality, and positive brand association, its brand loyalty pulled it through this crisis. Companies that invest time and money in brand loyalty afford themselves the opportunity to experiment and try out ventures that might fail without compromising their brands. In the occasion of a crisis, brands with stronger equity can buy time and devise solutions to remedy negative situations. In the case of brands with a weak brand equity, chances of overcoming a crisis decline significantly.

What was fascinating in both the EY and SHL cases was that loyalty to the brand was what drove employees' intention to stay. This is mirrored by Azizi et al. (2012) who suggested that brand loyalty, which is a building block to brand equity, could contribute to existing employees staying. Just as brands with a strong heritage and credibility have more room for error and to be forgiven by their external consumers, it also seems to be the case with internal employees. In the case of SHL, it was the view of the industrial psychologists that the company was the best place to work if one wanted to specialise in psychometry and industrial psychology.

In the case of EY, the company is still seen today as part of the top five firms in the professional services industry and there are many graduates who would love the opportunity to start their career there. EY might not have managed to engage all employees, but for some employees the rebranding came with a welcome change of environment. The reluctance of the employees to discuss their future with the company was concerning, considering that they did not express or display perceptible disengagement and did not speak ill of the brand.

Because of brand loyalty and pride in a company, employees are more inclined to display positive organisational citizen behaviour, have an intention to stay, and display organisational commitment and contentment with their jobs. Therefore, a brand has an impact on employee engagement. Furthermore, if a company fails to rebrand itself to remain relevant, it might not only lose brand loyalty among its customers, but also its employee engagement.

It can also be said that during uncertain times of change such as a corporate rebranding, employees with strong loyalty to the brand are more inclined to stay with the brand and see the change through. This loyalty is rooted deeper than the current state of the employees' job satisfaction levels and rather associated with the companies' brand equity (Bansal et al., 2001; Azizi et al., 2012). Employees have several reasons to leave any company, for example more money, career development, exposure, and the opportunity to study, but there are only a few reasons why they stay, among others brand loyalty. The failure of companies to acknowledge the power of their brand loyalty and employee value proposition will not only affect employee retention, but also impact employee engagement.

5.2.2 ***Organisational culture***

Another new variable which was an outcome of respondents describing the impact of a corporate rebranding process on the work environment, was organisational culture. Organisational culture is not a new term or concept. It has been studied by several academics in the past and in more recent times. Academics such as Schein (2004) defined organisational culture as the climate and practices that organisations develop around their handling of people. Furthermore, academics such as Donnell and Boyle (2008) suggested that the concept of culture should consider the way organisations do business, as well as the way they handle people. Donnell and Boyle (2008) further stated that culture gives organisations a sense of identity and determines, through an organisation's legends, rituals, beliefs, meanings, values, norms, and language, the way in which "things are done around here".

A rebranding exercise provides the perfect opportunity to change an old identity and helps sculpt a new identity which employees can positively relate to. Before the rebranding, SHL employees were used to a formal, autocratic culture; respondents described this culture as "operating in silos". When the rebranding was in full swing, a new culture started to develop: one of cohesiveness and openness. The silos were broken down and departments were encouraged to work as one with a new direction and vision. This created the culture of a shared understanding of the organisation's mission, as well as creating the opportunity to work in cohesiveness while achieving the company's goals (Desson, 2010).

At the time of EY's rebranding, it had the fortunate opportunity of moving buildings, which gave the employee a fresh new start to their organisation culture. The physical environment plays a key role in employee engagement. Shuck and Wollard (2010) described engagement and/or disengagement in terms of two factors, namely the environment and the person. The environment is the building, climate of the organisation, ergonomics, and so forth (Shuck & Wollard, 2010). In the case of EY, the building changed and with that their ergonomics as well as the outward appearance of where the employees work.

One of the senior managers relayed his experience of the new culture, which was nourished by the new, modern, stylish building in the business hub of South Africa, Sandton, by stating: "Employees could now grab a train to the office and miss traffic." Employees mentioned that the new building was something to be proud of, with a business café, gym, and more open space. The new building plays on the notion that glass creates transparency in the organisation with several meeting rooms on each floor – all in glass. The lunch area is open, which promotes intercompany interaction at any level of the business. One respondent mentioned how great it was to have lunch with partners and other fellow colleagues, unlike before when people stuck to their own spaces during lunch and tea breaks.

Academics emphasise the impact of the environment on organisational culture (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Kotter & Heskett, 1992). Open space creates an environment of openness and transparency, which encourages employees to collaborate and work together in achieving organisational goals (Desson, 2010).

The new work environment, embodied by a new building, reinforced the change in the manner EY was communicating and engaging with staff. This change spoke to a change in organisational culture, which was fuelled by the rebranding process and intensified by a physical change in the work environment. The participants mentioned how proud they were to express to friends and family as well as competitors where they worked.

As companies become global an interconnected, this encourages a new work environment that promotes employees working together in groups and teams to achieve individual and organisational goals. Companies that invest time and money in creating such environments see an exceptionally positive change in the organisation, which enables a more efficient and productive work environment (Shakil, 2012; Schein, 2004).

Thus, not only does a corporate rebranding exercise impact brand loyalty, but also impacts organisation culture – which has an incremental effect on the organisation's productivity levels (Shakil, 2012; Desson, 2010; Clouthier, 2010; Schein, 2004).

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND LIMITATIONS

6.1 Conclusion

In response to the initial research question, “Why do companies rebrand?”, it was established in the research that the two key reasons for rebranding was as a result of mergers and acquisitions, as well as to gain new market positioning (Muzellec and Lambkin, 2006). The decision to rebrand in the two cases was taken from newly appointed CEOs who wanted to change the manner in which the companies were viewed and to gain new markets.

Upon gathering information from an emerging market perspective, a few common elements came forward; these being templates for rebranding were provided by the central teams, whether based in the UK or the US; and locally, marketing heads and managing directors had little room to influence the plans and the content of the rebranding elements. By the time the broader senior leadership team received more details about the rebranding process, the rebranding exercise was in full swing and the regions had to fall in line. The offices based in South Africa were given full autonomy over the implementation of the rebranding plan and could plan their own launch events. This provided the South African marketing heads as well as the leadership teams the opportunity to localise the new identity and identify methods that would resonate with employees.

In terms of the second research question, “How does corporate rebranding impact employee engagement in an emerging market context?”, certain propositions were made regarding the impact of employee engagement as measured according to the four constructs of Saks’ model of engagement (job satisfaction, organisational commitment, intention to quit and organisational citizen behaviour).

P1: Employees who are satisfied with their jobs can positively engage with others during corporate rebranding.

The outcome of the research partially agreed with this proposition. Respondents from both cases were positive about the company during the rebranding, but as Luthan (1998) explained, there is more to job satisfaction, for example remuneration, promotion opportunities, management, and relation to co-workers.

P2: Employees who are committed to their organisations can positively engage with others during a corporate rebranding process.

During the rebranding process, employees from both cases were positively drawn to the corporate brand and were willing to socialise more with others. Saks (2006) agreed with this notion by stating that engaged employees exhibit attentiveness and mental absorption in their work. The launch activities, among which a flash mob, created a spirit of togetherness and gave a sense of pride of belonging to the organisation.

P3: Employees who are engaged are less likely to have an intention to quit during a corporate rebranding process.

The intention to quit was routed in deep loyalty to the brand. This led to a new variable in the research that not only are engaged employees less likely to quit but they are also loyal to the corporate brand.

P4: Engaged employees are more likely to have organisational citizen behaviour.

Proposition two and four relate to each other as committed employees portrayed positive organisation citizen behaviour, and engaged employees portray a high level of organisational commitment (Saks, 2012). This commitment is displayed in behaviours that promote efficient and effective functioning of the organisation, which is known as organisational citizen behaviour (Ariani, 2013; Csikszentmihalyi, 2003; Saks, 2006).

This research established that corporate rebranding alone does not have a direct effect on the engagement levels of employees, unless it is coupled with a change in work environment and a change in management process. It was seen in both cases that the companies used the rebranding exercise as an opportunity to change their environment. In the case of SHL, it became more professional and consistent with new collateral and marketing material. The change also came with a new product range and go-to-market strategy, which gave employees something to be proud of.

In the case of EY, in the previous year they launched a new vision, Vision 2020, which enabled the company to create a high-performing work environment. The new vision came with a new identity, which allowed EY to reposition and distinguish itself from its competitors.

The overall job satisfactions levels of employees did not change due to the fact that for the majority of employees their job roles did not change with the rebranding. Despite this fact, the other elements of the Saks model of engagement; organisation commitment, intention to quit, and organisational citizen behaviour; were affected by the rebranding exercise. Employees felt more pride and loyalty, which led to organisational commitment as well as citizenship. The intention to stay seemed positive as long as employees felt the company was heading in the right direction.

Lastly, if corporate rebranding is done in isolation, without providing a new vision, new repositioning, and/or new direction, it is like placing icing on a stale cake. From this research, one can deduce that a corporate rebranding exercise needs support from all levels and all divisions. If a line manager continues to create unbearable working conditions, a rebranding exercise will not make a difference to his/her subordinates. Therefore, it takes “all hands on deck” to make a rebranding exercise a success, and the more stakeholders marketing heads include, the more engaged employees will be as they will also take ownership of the new identity.

6.2 Recommendations

Taking lessons from Juntunen’s model of corporate rebranding (2009), the following recommendations can be made:

When considering what improvements or learning these cases have provided for future corporate rebranding exercises, one would have to go back to Juntunen’s model of rebranding and take a lesson from each step (starting with the second step).

In the second phase, analysing and decision making are undertaken. According to Juntunen (2009), this stage entails analysing antecedents of the current situation before the rebranding occurs. These could include market analysis, competitive analysis, and recognising possibilities. When analysing the decision-making process, one might discover that, as Griffin (2002) noted, the decision to rebrand is often made by a handful of top managers, and the implementation of that decision is left to the marketing department. Therefore, the reasoning behind the rebranding might be poorly understood at the different levels of management and in different departments.

In order to change this effect so that the reasoning for the rebranding can be better understood, a recommendation of widening the net of decision makers earlier in the rebranding process, has been suggested by Juntunen (2009). This is demonstrated in Figure 10. These decision makers or representatives will in turn become the change agents when the process of communicating to the rest of the staff begins.

Planning is the next phase of a corporate brand plan creation, and includes elements such as the end goal and vision for the new corporate brand. It also includes decisions on renaming, restructuring, and repositioning (Kaikati, 2003).

The preparation phase entails planning and pre-testing for the launch. According to Juntunen (2009), it requires redesigning the visual identity elements such as the colour palette, font type, logo, slogan, and tagline.

Marketers should consider testing some of the rebranding assets on different staff members to see how this might be relieved by the entire business.

The next phase in the model is launching (Juntunen, 2009). This phase includes communicating the new corporate brand to the internal stakeholders first, who are key to any successful rebranding process (Hatch & Schultz, 2001). Part of communicating to internal stakeholders involves education and training internal staff on the new brand (Gotsi & Andriopoulos, 2007). Great lessons on communication and change management can be taken from the EY case. EY managed to communicate information and created pod sessions, which gave employees a platform to voice their opinions. Marketers should ensure they create and encourage two-way communication with internal staff. During a rebranding process, employees might feel inundated with communications from marketing and marketers must therefore give employees an opportunity to digest the information and create a platform for feedback.

Evaluation entails measuring the success or failure of the process. Employee engagement surveys or staff surveys can give marketing managers and other managers who are part of the rebranding committee a picture on how successful or unsuccessful the initial launch was. The analysis of the success or failure of the rebranding launch can provide some insight into where there might still be room to improve or rectify aspects which were not highlighted during the planning phase.

The last phase is the continuing phase. According to Juntunen (2009), this includes the quality of service and fulfilment of the brand promise to clients and continuous orientation and education for internal employees. After conducting an employee survey, marketing and HR managers will have an opportunity to continuously educate employees on the new identity and what it means to the organisation, as well as the brand promise to its clients. Through constant communication and re-educating, marketers can move from buy-in to awareness to employee engagement, and finally, to ownership of the new brand. If marketing departments tap into the existing brand loyalty among internal staff, they can create advocates for the new brand to encourage those less engaged to buy into the new identity.

A proposal for a new model of corporate rebranding that takes into consideration the engagement levels of internal employees, is demonstrated in Figure 10:

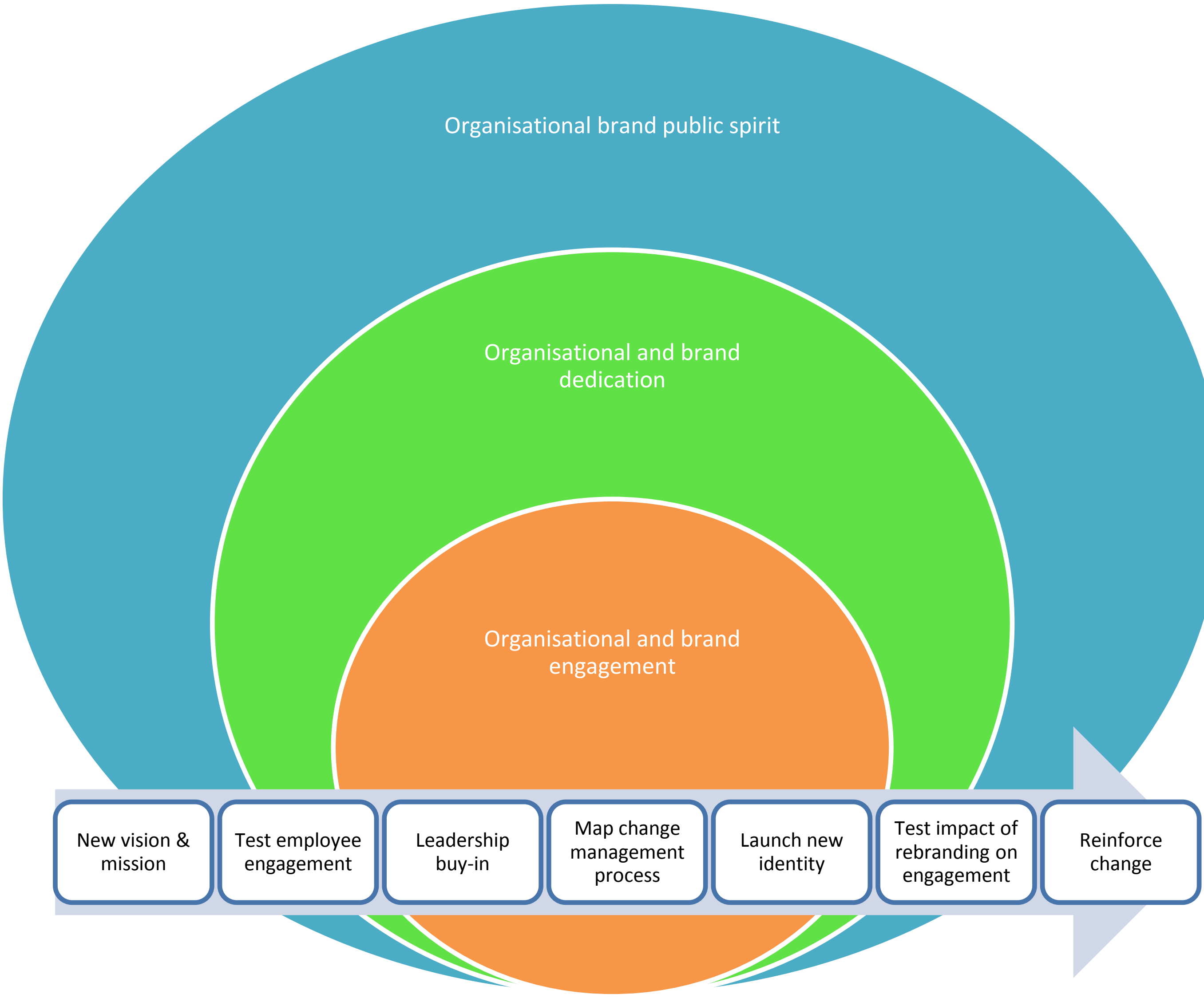

Figure 10: The corporate rebranding and engagement ecosystem

6.2.1 *Breakdown of the model*

A corporate rebranding process impacts the organisational culture and work environment, thus the entire rebranding process is in embodied by these factors.

The process includes:

1) A new vision and mission: A new vision and mission is set by the CEO or board of directors.
2) Test employee engagement: Before a new vision or mission is launched to the rest of the employees, mangers should test the engagement levels of employees, examining organisational and brand dedication, and organisational and brand public spirit.
3) Leadership buy-in entails buy-in from local leaders, managers, and supervisors.
4) Map the change management process: This process of preparation involves HR and marketing mapping out a change management process that will be adopted by local managers and leaders. The change management process should have a clear communication channel which marketing and HR will take ownership of.
5) Launch the new identity: Includes launch build-up activities and events to present the new identity and what it means to ordinary employees.
6) Test impact of rebranding on engagement: Another assessment of the levels of engagement among staff, assessing organisational and brand dedication, and organisational and brand public spirit (after the launch).
7) Reinforce change: After engagement levels are assessed, a clear indication of which areas still need reinforcement will be addressed.

6.3 Contextual Implications

In 2008, most companies were hugely impacted by the global economic crisis. Even though South Africa's banking system shielded the country from adverse impacts, companies found themselves having to look for new ways to market themselves. Business was tough not only for local companies but international companies such as SHL and EY as well. When the economic world sneezes, emerging nations like South Africa catches a cold. As was established earlier, emerging countries have more challenges, for example a lack of infrastructure, which relates to a shortage of functional roads and other logistical requirements, as well as market transaction enablers such as point-of-sale terminals. Other challenges include chronic shortages of resources, which result due to the large size of the population. Emerging markets tend to suffer from a shortage of resources in production, exchange, and consumption. These challenges make emerging markets like South Africa more fragile to economic crises than developed nations. Thus, the application of the Saks model would result in different outcomes than in developed markets. In the case of this research, exploring the Saks model from an emerging markets perspective resulted in the rejection of the idea of corporate rebranding impacting on job satisfaction but corroborated other elements. The HOM expressed how the rebranding gave EY Africa an opportunity to tell its story:

> *"We decided that we would utilise the brand refresh as part of our Africa story and use it in a way that we could really connect with our people around the growth story that we've been on for a couple of years and demonstrate that many of the promises that have been made can be achieved through this change that would be brought about by the brand refresh."*

6.4 Managerial implications

A lack of employee engagement can affect a company's bottom-line as its implications have a ripple effect which will eventually impacts customers or clients. Kassing (1998) explained that employees express dissent to different audiences, including management and co-workers. A dissatisfied or disengaged employee can also express their dissatisfaction to friends and family outside the organisation, who could be potential customers. Thus, a lack of engagement and commitment to the brand affects productivity and employee performance.

It was also established that a collaborative work environment with HR and marketing can create a cohesive environment and build an organisational culture of strong brand loyalty. In addition to this, a collaboration of HR and marketing could impact existing hires positively, as well as influence new hires, as the brand will attract the desired calibre of candidates.

Brand initiatives such as corporate rebranding give companies an opportunity to re-align, re-motivate, and integrate employees towards the effective implementation of corporate strategies (Shah, 2014). It also affords an organisation the opportunity to communicate corporate values and ignite brand pride and loyalty so that employees are motivated to serve their customers or clients better. This will lead to more customers or clients being satisfied with the quality of the service provided by the company, which in turn leads to repeat purchases and increased revenue. Another impact of corporate rebranding is on organisational culture. A study by Shakil (2012) concluded that there is a direct link between organisational culture and increased organisational performance. Increased performance entails increased productivity, which also impacts the bottom-line. A study by Hewitt Associates (2004) confirmed this by expressing that engaged employees are the most committed and will deliver 20% improvement in performance and are 87% less likely to leave. Improved performance means higher profits.

6.5 Limitations to the study

They study's chosen method of research was qualitative in nature as the researcher aimed to obtain a better understanding of how the respondents felt during a rebranding process. The data were collected from a sample which was limited to the geographical spread of respondents, thus further research could possibly widen that spread. The information gathered was limited to respondents from two companies in the professional services industry; thus it is difficult to generalise the results to a larger population. The study is also limited to employees from South Africa, and thus has an emerging market view, which may not be able to be generalised to other markets.

The information gathered from employees was based on their recollection of events from the time of the rebranding of their companies. In the case of SHL, the participants' memory recall was not as good as the EY participants' was. This was due to the fact that the rebranding at SHL took place in 2011, whereas the EY rebranding was still fresh in the employees' minds due to the fact that the EY rebranding process took place in 2013. This implies that the EY respondents had more information to reveal as opposed to the SHL respondents, whose responses were brief, revealing fewer details.

6.6 Areas for future research

There is room for future research on a larger scale through a quantitative research study which will explore the outcomes of the research in a wider sample and determine if similar outcomes would be the result.

Another consideration for further research would be to apply the research to other industries, as this study was limited to the professional services industry.

Even though the purpose of the research was to explore the effects of corporate branding on employee engagement, an outcome of the research was brand loyalty and organisational culture. Further research could be considered to explore the impact of brand loyalty and organisational culture on employee engagement.

Even though corporate rebranding alone does not impact employee engagement, failure to capitalise on a corporate rebranding project to cement a company’s vision, mission, and positioning, is a lost opportunity. Companies should realise that corporate rebranding exercises are the perfect opportunity to increase their employee value proposition, which in turn could also increase brand loyalty and create a positive change in the work environment.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Guide

The purpose of this research is to gain an in-depth understanding of the impact of corporate rebranding on employees within a South African context. The questions below will assist in unpacking the levels of engagement through the use of the Saks model of employee engagement which assesses the antecedents and consequences of employee engagement.

Please note that the responses will be kept anonymous and the research will be held to the highest ethical boundaries.

Rebranding is a term used to describe changes in brand elements that have always been confusing and misleading. Thus, marketers sometimes use rebranding as a means of clarifying their corporate identity.

I. Introduction

Q1. How long have you been with the company? And what is your role here?

II. Reasons for rebranding

Q1. To your knowledge, why did the company go through a rebranding process?

Follow-up question: If you don't know, why do you think you went through a rebranding process?

Q2. Do you feel there was a need to rebrand at that particular time, and why?

Q3. Did you have a particular role (e.g. ambassador of change) to play during the rebranding process?

Q4. Did you feel you received enough communication from your Head Office about the rebranding process?

Follow-up question: What type of communication did you find most valuable? Local and Head Office?

Q5. Talk me through what you can recall about the rebranding process from start to finish (including launch, corporate gifts, etc.)

Q6. Once the rebranding came, what did you think about the new identity?

Follow-up question: How did the new brand make you feel? What did the rebranding do for the local work environment?

Q7. What do you miss about the old brand?

III. Job satisfaction

Now I would like to assess the effect of corporate rebranding on your job satisfaction levels.

Saks (2006) defined job satisfaction as the representation of employees and their work environment by comparing what they expect to receive versus what employees actually receive.

Q1. What were the key factors that determined your job satisfaction at that time?

Q2. What role did your manager play at the time of the rebranding?

Q3. What energised you about the work at the time of the rebranding?

Q4. How satisfied were you with your job at the beginning, middle, and end of the rebranding process?

IV. Intention to quit

Saks defines intention to quit as the degree to which employees are considering leaving their organisation.

Q1. At any time during the rebranding process did you have any intention to leave the organisation and why.

Q2. Do you regret your decision to stay with the company? If so, why?

Q3. At the time of the rebranding did you see yourself in, say, five years' time still with the organisation?

V. Organisational citizenship

Organisational citizenship behaviour relates to individual behaviour that is voluntary (out of free will) and not tied directly to any reward or recognition (Saks, 2006).

Q1. How did you feel about volunteering for any additional organisational activities outside your job role?

Q2. How did you feel about taking part in any social activities at the beginning, middle, and end of the rebranding process?

VI. Organisational commitment

Saks (2006) defined organisational commitment as the attitude and attachment that people have towards their company.

Q1. What was your attitude towards the company at the beginning, middle, and end of the rebranding process?

Q2. How would you express your feelings about your company on social networks such as social media and friendly gatherings?

If there was anything you could change about the rebranding process, what would it be?

In closing; any other comments you would like to add?

APPENDIX B:

Consistency Matrix

Research Questions	**Literature Review**	**Propositions**	**Source of Data**	**Type of data**	**Analysis**
Why do companies rebrand?	(Rosenthal, 2003; Simms & Trott, 2007; Rosenthal, 2003; Abratt & Kleyn, 2011; Abratt & Nicola, 2011)		Research participants in semi-structured interviews. Company documents.	Qualitative data.	Open coding Triangulation MAXQDA 11
How does corporate rebranding impact employee engagement in an emerging market context?	(Shuck & Wollard 2010, p.103; Saks 2006, Csikszentmihalyi, 2003; Shucks & Wollard, 2010)	P1: Employees who are satisfied with their jobs can positively engage with others during corporate rebranding. P2: Employees who are committed to their organisations can positively engage with others during a corporate rebranding process. P3: Employees who are engaged are less likely to have an intention to quit during a corporate rebranding process. P4: Engaged employees are more likely to have organisational citizen behaviour.	Full interview data.	Qualitative data.	Open coding Triangulation MAXQDA 11

APPENDIX C:

Excerpts from "The New Us" SHL Pocket Guide

Introduction

Following the successful merger of SHL and PreVisor, our brand has been re-invigorated to communicate who we are and why our customers should care. Consistent with our pedigree, yet highly distinctive and bold, it offers a promise that we can live up to every day, making a real difference to our customers.

Our new strapline speaks to the heart of our promise to customers: our ability to provide insight into how people behave in the workplace.

Our new visual identity takes our strapline and brings it to life, placing people, intelligence and results at the heart of everything we do.

Successful businesses depend on talented people, but how many have clear insight into their ability and potential? We have been delivering innovative people assessment solutions for more than 30 years. This year we will complete 25 million industry standard online pre- and post-hire assessments.

Today, the challenge of attracting, recruiting and engaging the best is probably greater than any of us have faced in our lifetimes. We can make a real difference, helping our clients realise the true value and potential of their people.

This is People intelligence, Business results.

Routes to a new SHL

To change how the market perceives us, first we must change the way we think and talk about ourselves.

Test publishers	→	People experts
Operationally efficient	→	Business-transforming
Talent administration	→	Talent management
Market leader	→	Global innovator

Our vision: To be recognised as the world's leading provider of people intelligence.
Our shared goal, driving us to succeed together.

Our strapline: People intelligence, Business results.
Our brand promise, making clear the link between our unique offering and our customers' success.

Our mission: To enable better people decisions, creating high performing organisations.
Everything we do must be guided by these two ideals.

Our values: Customer first, bold, passionate, quick and agile, solution focused and succeeding together.
These define how we behave.

Our visual identity: Bringing 'People intelligence, Business results' to life.
Across all forms of communication, bold, intelligent and people-focused.

APPENDIX D

Excerpts from the EY “Vision 2020” Launch Document

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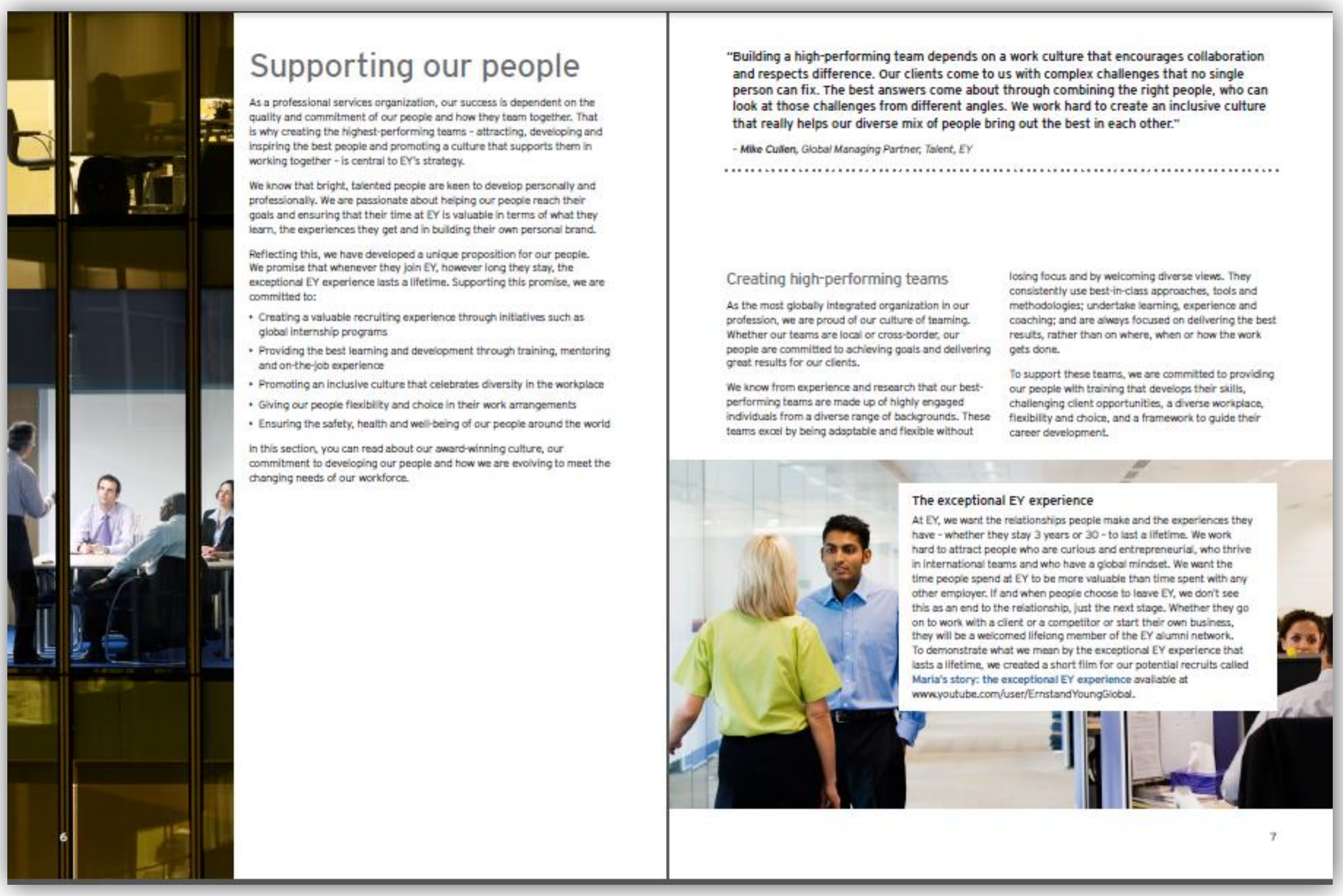
About EY

EY is a global leader in assurance, tax, transaction and advisory services. The insights and quality services we deliver help build trust and confidence in the capital markets and in economies the world over. We develop outstanding leaders who team to deliver on our promises to all of our stakeholders. In so doing, we play a critical role in building a better working world for our people, for our clients and for our communities.

Our combined global revenues for the financial year ending 30 June 2013 were US$25.8 billion. With a total headcount of 175,000 people (as at 30 June 2013), EY operates in more than 150 countries around the world. Read our Global Review 2013, which can be found at www.ey.com/globalreview, to learn more about our financial performance and for further information about EY.



Supporting our people

As a professional services organization, our success is dependent on the quality and commitment of our people and how they team together. That is why creating the highest-performing teams - attracting, developing and inspiring the best people and promoting a culture that supports them in working together - is central to EY's strategy.

We know that bright, talented people are keen to develop personally and professionally. We are passionate about helping our people reach their goals and ensuring that their time at EY is valuable in terms of what they learn, the experiences they get and in building their own personal brand.

Reflecting this, we have developed a unique proposition for our people. We promise that whenever they join EY, however long they stay, the exceptional EY experience lasts a lifetime. Supporting this promise, we are committed to:

- Creating a valuable recruiting experience through initiatives such as global internship programs
- Providing the best learning and development through training, mentoring and on-the-job experience
- Promoting an inclusive culture that celebrates diversity in the workplace
- Giving our people flexibility and choice in their work arrangements
- Ensuring the safety, health and well-being of our people around the world

In this section, you can read about our award-winning culture, our commitment to developing our people and how we are evolving to meet the changing needs of our workforce.

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"Building a high-performing team depends on a work culture that encourages collaboration and respects difference. Our clients come to us with complex challenges that no single person can fix. The best answers come about through combining the right people, who can look at those challenges from different angles. We work hard to create an inclusive culture that really helps our diverse mix of people bring out the best in each other."

*- **Mike Cullen**, Global Managing Partner, Talent, EY*

Creating high-performing teams

As the most globally integrated organization in our profession, we are proud of our culture of teaming. Whether our teams are local or cross-border, our people are committed to achieving goals and delivering great results for our clients.

We know from experience and research that our best-performing teams are made up of highly engaged individuals from a diverse range of backgrounds. These teams excel by being adaptable and flexible without losing focus and by welcoming diverse views. They consistently use best-in-class approaches, tools and methodologies; undertake learning, experience and coaching; and are always focused on delivering the best results, rather than on where, when or how the work gets done.

To support these teams, we are committed to providing our people with training that develops their skills, challenging client opportunities, a diverse workplace, flexibility and choice, and a framework to guide their career development.

The exceptional EY experience

At EY, we want the relationships people make and the experiences they have - whether they stay 3 years or 30 - to last a lifetime. We work hard to attract people who are curious and entrepreneurial, who thrive in international teams and who have a global mindset. We want the time people spend at EY to be more valuable than time spent with any other employer. If and when people choose to leave EY, we don't see this as an end to the relationship, just the next stage. Whether they go on to work with a client or a competitor or start their own business, they will be a welcomed lifelong member of the EY alumni network.
To demonstrate what we mean by the exceptional EY experience that lasts a lifetime, we created a short film for our potential recruits called Maria's story: the exceptional EY experience available at www.youtube.com/user/ErnstandYoungGlobal.

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