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**“If you love to think, talk, play and make games,  
Supercell is the place for you” – Employer Branding  
Through Recruitment Communication**

School of Marketing and Communication  
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**ABSTRACT:**

Työnantajabrändistä on tullut yhä tärkeämpi osa organisaatioiden kilpailukykyä erityisesti aloilla, joilla kilpailu osaavista työntekijöistä on kovaa. Työnantajakuva viittaa mielikuviin ja käsityksiin, joita nykyisillä ja potentiaalisilla työntekijöillä on organisaatiosta työnantajana. Työnantajabrändäys on organisaation strategista toimintaa, jonka tavoitteena on vahvistaa houkuttelevaa työnantajakuvaa ja erottautua kilpailevista organisaatioista. Rekrytointiviestintä on työnantajabrändäyksen keskeinen muoto. Esimerkiksi työpaikkailmoitukset rakentavat organisaation työnantajabrändiä viestimällä arvoista, kulttuurista ja työntekijäkokemuksesta. Vahvan työnantajabrändin on todettu lisäävän organisaation houkuttelevuutta potentiaalisten työnhakijoiden keskuudessa ja tukevan rekrytointia kilpailuilla työmarkkinoilla.

Tutkimuksen tavoitteena on selvittää, miten työnantajabrändi rakentuu rekrytointiviestinnässä. Tutkimus on laadullinen tapaustutkimus, jonka kohteena on suomalainen mobiilipelejä kehittävä yritys Supercell. Aineisto koostuu Supercellin urasivustosta ja työpaikkailmoituksista. Sisällönanalyysi yhdistää induktiivista ja deduktiivista lähestymistapaa. Analyysin tarkoituksena on tunnistaa aineistosta keskeiset elementit, jotka rakentavat yrityksen työnantajabrändiä. Tutkimuksen teoreettinen viitekehys perustuu aiempaan työnantajabränditutkimukseen, jonka keskeisimpiä käsitteitä ovat työnantajan arvolupaus (employer value proposition) sekä työnantajan houkuttelevuus (employer attractiveness). Tutkimuksessa yhdistän näihin myös ihmisen ja työympäristön yhteensopivuuden (person–environment fit) näkökulman.

Analyysin tuloksena selviää, että Supercellin työnantajabrändi rakentuu vahvan organisaatiokulttuurin, yrityksen identiteetin ja arvojen ympärille. Työnantajalupauksen keskiössä ovat symboliset ominaispiirteet (symbolic attributes). Yritys painottaa viestinnässään autonomiaa, vastuuta, kunnianhimoa ja sisäistä motivaatiota pelikehitykseen sekä yhteistyötä. Työntekijöiltä vaaditaan korkean ammatillisen pätevyyden lisäksi myös sopivuutta yrityksen kulttuuriin ja arvoihin. Tutkimus osoittaa myös, että tunnettu yritysbrändi tukee merkittävästi työnantajabrändiä.

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**KEYWORDS:** employer brand, employer value proposition, recruitment communication

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## 1 Introduction

Attracting highly skilled employees has become one of the central challenges for organizations operating in knowledge-intensive industries. This is particularly visible in the Finnish game industry, which continues to grow despite broader economic uncertainty. According to Neogames' Game Industry Report (2025), the Finnish game industry employs over 4,300 people and is one of the largest game industries in Europe and leading developer in mobile games. However, growth has also increased pressure on recruitment. Companies estimate a need for 450 to 1,000 new employees in the next years, especially in specialist roles where local talent is scarce (Neogames, 2025).

As a result, recruitment has become increasingly international. The share of foreign employees in Finnish game companies has increased significantly, reaching approximately 37% by the end of 2024 (Neogames, 2025). Approximately 19% of the employees are from outside the European Union and European Economic Area. These employees are typically highly skilled specialists, recruited from global labor markets. This shift highlights that competition for talent is not limited to national boundaries, instead it takes place on a global scale. For organizations this creates a need to communicate effectively across cultural and geographic contexts.

Employer branding plays a key role in addressing this challenge. It can be understood as the process through which organizations define and communicate their value as employers (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004, p. 502). A key concept in this process is Employer Value Proposition (EVP), which describes the benefits employers promise and employees can expect to gain from working in the specific organization (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). Simultaneously, organizations seek individuals who fit their values and ways of working, which can be explained through Person–Environment (P–E) fit theory (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005, p. 285). Together, these perspectives highlight that recruitment is not only about attracting applicants, but about attracting right applicants.

This study examines these dynamics through a case study of Supercell, a globally successful game company headquartered in Finland. In March 2026, Supercell had over 50 open positions listed on its website and professional networking platform LinkedIn. The company reported strong financial performance, including billion-euro revenues, and has continued to invest in its operations and workforce (Supercell, 2026). In 2025 alone, Supercell hired approximately 260 new employees, bringing its total workforce to around 890 (Lappalainen, 2026). “Our focus is on ensuring potential hires are a great fit” the company highlights on its website (Supercell, 2026). Similarly, the CEO Ilkka Paananen emphasized the importance of investing in recruitment and onboarding processes to attract talent who align with its organizational culture (Lappalainen, 2026). This focus highlights a strategic approach to recruitment which prioritizes cultural fit in addition to competence.

## **1.1 Research Objectives**

The key objective of this study is to understand how employer brand is constructed and conveyed through recruitment communication. The study focuses on the career website and job advertisements, which serve as key touchpoints in influencing potential applicants’ perceptions. Particular attention is given to the international aspect of recruitment and attraction of global talent. In addition, the study examines the construction of an ideal candidate who aligns with the organizational culture.

The research questions are:

- 1) How is the employer value proposition (EVP) constructed?
- 2) How is the profile of an ideal employee constructed?
- 3) How do these elements together construct an attractive employer brand for the target audience?

To answer the first research question, the analysis focuses on identifying the symbolic and instrumental attributes of employer value proposition. These are extensively presented on the Careers section.

To answer the second question, the analysis focuses on the presented qualities and characteristics of an ideal candidate, which are primarily presented in the job advertisements. The analysis of an ideal candidate is considered based on person–job fit (skills, tasks) and person–organization fit (culture, values). I also add an aspect “Finland or Helsinki fit” to examine whether a wider contextual aspect is presented for international audience.

By combining employer branding theories with person–environment fit aspect, this thesis contributes to a deeper understanding of how organization communicates both what they offer as an employer and what they expect from employee. This is especially important in global talent markets, where attracting the right individuals is increasingly complex.

The topic of this thesis was selected based on professional interest in employer branding as a strategic practice, particularly in the context of international recruitment. The subject is closely connected to my previous work experience in communications related to work-based immigration, which increased interest in how organizations position themselves to attract international talent. Employer branding was considered a relevant and timely topic due to the growing competition for highly skilled professionals and the increasing importance of strategic communication in recruitment. The selected case company was chosen for its relevance to the research topic, and I do not have any connections to the company.

## **1.2 Research Data**

This is a single-case qualitative study aiming to analyze how one company constructs its employer brand in the context of global competition for talent. The empirical data for this study consists of Supercell’s Careers section on the official website ([supercell.com](https://supercell.com)) and a sample of job advertisements posted on the website.

### **1.2.1 Case Company**

Supercell is a mobile game developer based in Helsinki, with offices in Shanghai, San Francisco, Seoul, and London. It is founded in 2010. Supercell is known for globally successful games such as Clash of Clans, Clash Royale, Hay Day and Brawl Stars.

Supercell has obtained international recognition not only for its commercial success but also for its unconventional approach to management and organizational culture, which prioritizes employee autonomy and long-term player engagement.

Supercell was selected as the case organization because it represents a notable exception in the context of Finland's current unemployment situation, as it had dozens of open positions available in March 2026. In February 2026, the company's CEO Ilkka Paananen stated in a media interview that the organization is investing in recruitment efforts to attract and identify talent that aligns with its organizational culture (Lappalainen, 2026).

Furthermore, the Careers section of the company's website offers extensive content, making it particularly suitable for an in-depth content analysis. The company's recruitment communication also clearly includes content targeted at international talent. The website of Supercell and job advertisements are written in English and include statements about international teams, different backgrounds, and relocation support which are indicators of openness to global talent.

### **1.2.2 Careers Website**

The first part of the dataset consists of Careers section of Supercell's website. The Careers section includes of a landing page ([supercell.com/careers](https://supercell.com/careers)) and seven subpages. The landing page summarizes the company's key messages regarding what a potential employee can expect from working for the organization and directs them to subpages that provide more detailed information on specific themes:

- Why You Might Love It Here

- Our Offices
- Joining Supercell
- Living in Helsinki
- Living in Shanghai
- Career Stories
- Spark

The Career Stories page is a blog archive page containing links to ten blog posts related to careers at Supercell and other topics. One of the blog posts is selected for analysis due to its particular relevance to the research topic; the post “Compensation and Benefits” (Feb 20, 2023), published in the Blog – Careers.

This Careers section serves as employer branding platform combining multiple modes of communication. The material encompasses written textual content (e.g. descriptions of organizational values, culture, and work practices), visual imagery (e.g. workplace photos, employee portraits, and game-related graphics), and embedded video content (e.g. “behind the scenes” perspective and storytelling about game development).

### 1.2.3 Job Advertisements

The dataset includes a sample of eight job advertisements published on Supercell’s website. These open positions were collected on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2026. Table 1 contains information about the selected open positions (job titles, categories and locations).

**Table 1.** Data: Job Advertisements (Supercell, 2026)

Job Title	Category	Location
Senior 3D Character Artist, Brawl Stars	Art, animation & design	Helsinki – onsite
Senior Game Designer, Project R.I.S.E	Art, animation & design	Shanghai – onsite
Senior Game Programmer, Clash of Clans	Engineering	London/Helsinki – hybrid
Senior Server Engineer, Central Tech	Engineering	Helsinki – onsite
Tech Lead, Trust & Safety	Engineering	Helsinki/London
Senior Data Analyst	Data, analytics & AI	London/Helsinki

Job Title	Category	Location
Senior 3D Character Artist, Brawl Stars	Art, animation & design	Helsinki – onsite
Senior Game Designer, Project R.I.S.E	Art, animation & design	Shanghai – onsite
Tools & Automation Lead	IT	Helsinki – onsite
Senior Performance Marketing Manager	Marketing and Community	Helsinki/London – onsite
Community Hub Lead, Community Tech	Product, production, business & operations	Helsinki – onsite

These same job advertisements were also published on the professional networking platform LinkedIn, which is widely used particularly for reaching international audiences. The content is originally created for the company’s own website, and certain visual elements are absent on LinkedIn. Therefore, the analysis focuses on the versions published on the website. LinkedIn requires certain structural formats that constrain how content can be presented, while a company’s own website allows for broader and more versatile presentation of content.

All job advertisements follow a consistent structure and include an image, a brief introduction to the game associated with the role and its key responsibilities, a more detailed description of the role presented in list form, a list of requirements, and information regarding location, working arrangements, and any potential travel related with the position. The latter part of the job advertisement describes Supercell as an employer, in the form of a short summaries of key themes with links to more extensive materials on the Careers section of the website.

Taken together, these two data sources form a coherent empirical basis for analyzing employer branding from both a strategic (careers website) and operational (job advertisements) perspective. The combination of multimodal corporate communication and targeted recruitment messaging allows examination of how instrumental and symbolic attributes are constructed and conveyed across different levels of employer branding.

Since the data consists of publicly available job advertisements and website content, no direct contact with company was required.

### **1.3 Methodology**

The method of this study is a qualitative content analysis, combining both inductive and deductive approaches. A qualitative research approach is appropriate for examining meanings, representations, and strategies in the textual and visual data. The aim is to investigate how employer brand is communicated through recruitment materials targeted at potential applicants.

Content analysis is a methodologically precise choice for analyzing communication in various forms, including textual and visual materials (Krippendorff, 2018). It is applied to systematically code, categorize, and interpret the underlying meanings, themes, and patterns present in the data. Qualitative content analysis seeks to interpret the concealed meanings and contextual nuances of the material, aiming to uncover themes and constructs that are not quantifiable.

Inductive and deductive content analysis are two complementary strategies that can be used to systematically interpret qualitative data (Elo et al., 2014, p. 2–3). Deductive content analysis is guided by an existing theoretical framework or prior knowledge, where categories are predefined and applied to the data. In contrast, inductive content analysis is data-driven, allowing categories and themes to emerge directly from the material without predetermined structures. These approaches are often integrated in a flexible analytical process, where initial coding may be informed by theory while remaining open to new insights arising from the data. This combined approach strengthens the trustworthiness of the analysis by integrating structured interpretation with sensitivity to the empirical context (Elo et al., 2014, p. 2–3).

In this study, the analysis of Careers section and job advertisements follows a hybrid process that combines inductive detection and identification of themes that are strongly

emphasized and/or repeated, with deductive categorization following the theoretical background if applicable. The categorization of the content on Careers section is based on the instrumental–symbolic framework of employer value proposition (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). Person–Environment (P–E) fit theory is used to understand construction of ideal employee on the job advertisements.

Themes are recognized through systematic observation and coding of the textual and visual content, attention given to recurring words, repeated messages, and strong expressions that appear consistently across the data. In qualitative content analysis, themes emerge through identifying patterns of meaning that are repeatedly emphasized or framed as important within the communication material (Elo et al., 2014). This approach enables both data-driven insights and theoretically informed interpretation of the employer branding content.

## 2 Employer Brand

This chapter introduces theoretical frameworks and earlier empirical findings related to employer image and employer brand, which are the key concepts of this study. Employer image and employer brand are closely related but distinct concepts within recruitment and organizational communication research. Employer image refers to the set of perceptions and associations that potential and current employees hold about an organization as an employer (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016, p. 407–410). Employer brand is a strategic and long-term construct, defined as the organization's effort to create and maintain a distinctive and attractive identity as an employer (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Lievens & Highhouse, 2003).

Employer brand is built on internal organizational identity and experiences (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004, p. 503–504). Organizational identity refers to the self-perceived core characteristics of an organization that define "who we are" as an organization and employer (Lievens et al., 2007, p. 47). Employer branding can be understood as a strategic process through which organizations actively construct, manage, and communicate this identity to attract, engage, and retain talent.

From communication perspective, employer branding is about creating coherent and credible narratives that shape how current and potential employees interpret the organization as an employer, thereby influencing organizational attractiveness and applicant behavior (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016, p. 408–410). Employer brand is communicated externally on multiple channels, such as job advertisements, company websites and social media. In this chapter, particular attention is given to the role of external communication as a tool for shaping employer brand perceptions and enhancing employer attractiveness. The aim is to understand how employer branding is constructed and conveyed through recruitment communication, including job advertisements and company websites, which serve as key touchpoints in influencing potential applicants' perceptions.

## **2.1 Foundation: Marketing-based Concept of Brand**

The concept of employer brand originates from marketing and applies marketing principles to human resource management and recruitment (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004, p. 502–503). In marketing research and practice, the concept of a brand is central to understanding how organizations differentiate themselves. Brand is defined as any element, such as a name, design, symbol, or term, that identifies one provider's offering as distinct from those of competitors (The American Marketing Association, 2017). This definition emphasizes the brand's essential role as a marker of identity and a means of establishing distinctiveness in competitive markets.

Brands also represent a collection of associations that enhance the value of products or services, (Kotler & Keller, 2016, p. 323). From this perspective, a brand communicates both tangible benefits and symbolic meanings, creating an emotional and cognitive connection that extends beyond the physical offering.

The strategic importance of brands has also been emphasized in terms of long-term value creation. Strong brands reduce uncertainty, improve loyalty, and produce sustainable competitive advantage (Aaker, 1996, p. 8). Brands are intangible assets that express the promises, values, and identity of an organization. This broader marketing-based conceptualization provides a foundation for employer branding. Like product or corporate brands influence customer decision-making, employer brands shape how potential and current employees perceive an organization as an employer. The same principles (differentiation, meaning creation, and value communication), are directly applicable in the employment context, where organizations compete for skilled talent by positioning themselves as attractive employers.

Brand equity perspective can be applied to employer branding. Employer brands, like consumer brands, can be conceptualized in terms of awareness, associations, loyalty, and perceived quality, and effective employer branding produces employer brand equity, which enhances recruitment outcomes, fosters employee retention, and contributes to

organizational performance (Theurer et al., 2018, p. 162–166). Digital platforms and social media play a central role in developing this brand equity, as they provide scalable tools for reaching, engaging, and shaping the perceptions of potential employees (Theurer et al., 2018, p. 170).

From the perspective of these traditional branding theories, Supercell's globally recognized corporate brand significantly strengthens its employer brand. The company is widely known for producing high-quality and commercially successful games, which likely increases its attractiveness among highly skilled professionals in the gaming industry. A strong product brand creates prestige and reliability that extend into employer brand perceptions as well.

## **2.2 Concept of Employer Brand**

Employer brand (EB) is defined as “the package of functional, economic, and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company” (Ambler & Barrow, 1996, p. 187). The economic benefits of employment include financial or material rewards, functional benefits relate to developmental activities, and psychological benefits comprise feelings such as belonging, purpose and direction.

The Employer Brand Mix by Barrow and Mosley (2005, p. 150) provides a comprehensive framework to examine employer brand dimensions. The model comprises twelve key dimensions that define organization's employer brand and contribute to constructing an attractive employer brand proposition (EVP). The model highlights alignment between organizational strategy and practical employee experience. Organizations may prioritize certain factors depending on their strategic objectives, but Barrow and Mosley suggest that all dimensions should be considered and presented to maintain a balanced employer brand.



**Figure 1.** Employer Brand Mix (Barrow & Mosley, 2005, p. 150)

As shown in Figure 1, the Employer Brand Mix framework consists of twelve dimensions, which are divided into two categories: organizational context and policies, and local context and practices (Barrow & Mosley, 2005, p. 150). The broader organizational context and policies represent strategic organization-level aspects:

- 1) **External reputation:** An organization's reputation in the broader market affects its attractiveness as an employer. Positive public perception, reinforced by corporate social responsibility initiatives and ethical practices, can enhance employer brand appeal.

- 2) **Internal communication:** Effective internal communication ensures employees are informed and engaged. Transparent communication practices build trust and align employees with organizational goals.
- 3) **Leadership:** A clear organizational vision and effective leadership are foundational to employer branding. Leaders who articulate a compelling vision and demonstrate commitment to organizational values foster trust and engagement among employees.
- 4) **Values and corporate social responsibility (CSR):** Organizational core values shape the internal culture and influence employee experience and behavior. Consistent and fair policies that align with identified values enhance credibility and employee satisfaction. A culture that promotes social responsibility, fairness and encourages cooperation among employees contributes to a positive work environment. Such an environment supports collaboration and mutual respect.
- 5) **Internal measurement systems:** Measurement tools and processes are applied to assess employee-related performance and results of employer branding (e.g. employee satisfaction surveys, feedback systems, HR metrics). Measurement systems enable organizations to recognize differences between intended and perceived employer branding outcomes.
- 6) **Service support:** Organizational infrastructure, processes, and support functions enable employees to perform effectively. For example, HR support and technological systems are considered as service support.

The local practices of the framework include following dimensions:

- 7) **Recruitment and induction:** The process of attracting new employees is a critical touchpoint in employer branding, as well as recruitment process and onboarding. A structured and welcoming orientation process can positively influence new employees' perceptions and integration.
- 8) **Learning and development:** Opportunities for professional growth and development are primary factors in employee engagement. Investments in training and career advancement prove commitment to employee success.

- 9) **Performance appraisal:** Fair and transparent performance evaluation systems contribute to a culture of accountability and recognition. Effective performance management coordinates individual purposes with organizational goals.
- 10) **Reward and recognition:** Comprehensive reward systems including competitive compensation, benefits, and recognition programs are essential for attracting and retaining talent. These reward systems should correspond to employee expectations and current market standards.
- 11) **Working environment:** The physical and psychological aspects of the workplace impact employee well-being and productivity. A safe, inclusive, and supportive working environment enhances employee satisfaction.

These twelve dimensions provide a comprehensive framework for organizations to evaluate their current employer brand experience to enhance the employer value proposition (Barrow & Mosley, 2005). By systematically addressing each element, organizations can construct a cohesive and attractive employer brand that engages current and potential employees. This 12-factor model can also be applied to examine recruitment communication. It offers a structure to recognize whether recruitment communication presents a balanced and holistic employer value proposition or whether it selectively emphasizes certain attributes.

### **2.3 Employer Branding as a Process**

Employer branding is defined as “the process of building an identifiable and unique employer identity” (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004, p. 502). This approach involves clarifying the internal view of what differentiates the organization from competitors and makes it attractive as an employer, and external promotion of this employer identity (Lievens, 2007, p. 51). In prior literature, employer branding is regarded as an effective organizational strategy to differentiate from other organizations and obtain competitive advantage in the labor market (Collins & Stevens, 2002; Lievens & Highhouse, 2003).

The Employer Branding Framework created by Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) includes both internal and external approach to employer branding. It conceptualizes employer branding as a strategic process, including external employer branding aimed at attracting talent, and internal branding aimed at engaging and retaining employees to increase productivity. This approach draws heavily on principles from brand management and organizational behavior.

The external employer image refers to the set of beliefs and impressions held by external audiences, primarily job applicants, about what working for a particular organization would be like (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016, p. 410). These perceptions are shaped through several communication channels such as job advertisements, company websites, and social media, particularly during the early phases of the recruitment process. The employer image is not static as it can be actively managed and is subject to change based on applicants' direct or indirect interactions with the organization (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016, p. 423). Employer branding affects how potential employees perceive employer image and are attracted to the employer brand. The internal branding enhances the loyalty and productivity of current employees. An integrated approach to employer branding claims that an employer brand is established amongst the internal public and thereafter communicated to the external public (Kunerth & Mosley, 2011).

Enhancing an employer brand involves influencing three core elements that directly shape employer attractiveness (Theurer et al., 2018, p. 164–165):

- 1) Employer brand associations refer to the beliefs, attributes, and symbolic meanings potential candidates relate to an organization. When these associations align with the person's own values, beliefs, and personality, the employer becomes more attractive. Strong alignment between employer brand associations and personal identity increases the probability of applying for a job in the organization.

- 2) Organizational identity involves how members of an organization perceive and define their collective character. A well-defined, positive identity can foster stronger emotional attachment and commitment from both current and potential employees.
- 3) Organizational culture plays a significant role in shaping perceptions of what it is like to work within the organization. An organizational culture promoting well-being, inclusivity, and professional growth contributes to a stronger employer brand and enhances employee satisfaction.

Employer brand is built on internal organizational identity and experiences (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004, p. 503–504). Organizational identity traditionally refers to the self-perceived, permanent core characteristics of an organization which define "who we are" as an organization and employer (Lievens et al., 2007, p. 47). Organizational identity emerges internally from shared understandings among organizational members. Organizational identity is a foundational element in employer branding, ensuring that external communication is aligned with internal realities (Lievens et al., 2007, p. 53). The alignment between organizational identity and employer image is critical. When these two elements are coherent, the employer brand is more likely to be assessed as authentic and trustworthy, thereby increasing its effectiveness in attracting talent. Inconsistency between internal identity and external image may weaken credibility and damage long-term recruitment outcomes (Lievens et al., 2007, p. 54).

## **2.4 Employer Value Proposition**

Employer value proposition (EVP) is a term used in employer branding literature to encompass the benefits and values that an organization provides to its employees. EVP is a fundamental part of employer branding as it communicates what makes the organization distinctive and desirable as an employer (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004, p. 503–505). EVP can be communicated through various external channels, such as job advertisements, websites, and social media.

The EVP can be examined through instrumental-symbolic framework, which is an analytical approach used extensively in employer branding research (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003; Lievens, 2007; Lievens et al., 2007). The distinction between instrumental and symbolic attributes originates from marketing research and has been widely applied in employer branding and recruitment communication. The previous research has generally conceptualized employer image from two perspectives: an elementalistic perspective focusing on specific organizational attributes such as instrumental and symbolic characteristics, and a holistic perspective concerning overall organizational attractiveness (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003, p. 77–78).

Employer attractiveness, which refers to the perceived benefits associated with employment in a specific organization, is closely related to employer value proposition (Berthon et al., 2005, p. 156–157). The employer attractiveness associated with working in the organization is crucial to arouse interest among prospective employees (Barrow & Mosley, 2005). Employer Attractiveness Scale (EmptAt Scale) by Berthon et al. (2005) can be used to assess employer attractiveness through perceived value. Employer attractiveness comprises five dimensions:

1. social value
2. economic value
3. interest value
4. application value
5. development value

Social value emerges from perceived valuable relationships with other employees and organizational culture. Economic value is related to financial advantages, such as compensation. The value of interest refers to associated interest and excitement related to organization. The value of the application includes the possibility of using something learned, and the value of development refers to the possibility for future employment opportunities. (Sirvertzen et al., 2013)

### **2.4.1 Instrumental Attributes**

Instrumental attributes refer to the tangible, objective, and functional aspects of an organization or job (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003, p. 77–78). Instrumental attributes typically include compensation, job security, career development opportunities, and working conditions, such as office spaces or remote work. Location can also be considered an instrumental attribute because it affects practical aspects of employment, such as accessibility and quality of life. These instrumental aspects are directly observable or verifiable, and are significant to traditional economic and rational decision-making models of job choice (Berthon et al., 2005, p. 156–157).

Communicated instrumental attributes are central elements constructing employer attractiveness through perceived economic value and development value. Economic value refers to financial and material benefits such as salary, job security, promotion opportunities, and compensation packages, whereas development value relates to career growth, recognition, and future employment opportunities (Berthon et al., 2005, p. 160–161). These aspects are especially important in the early stages of applicant attraction since they allow direct comparison between employers. However, prior research propose that instrumental attributes alone do not fully explain organizational attractiveness, especially in competitive labor markets (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016, p. 414).

### **2.4.2 Symbolic Attributes**

Symbolic attributes refer to the intangible, subjective, and value-expressive psychological and social meanings that individuals (current and potential employees) associate with a particular employer (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). These may include perceptions such as prestige, sincerity, creativity, innovativeness or organizational personality characteristics.

Symbolic attributes are connected to theories of social identity, since employment in a specific organization establishes individual's social identity (Cable & Turban, 2001, p. 126–127). Symbolic attributes enable individuals to express their self-concept as a member of the organization. For example, a company perceived as innovative may attract applicants who value creativity and forward-looking environments, even when instrumental benefits are similar across alternative companies.

Symbolic attributes often become particularly considerable when instrumental attributes are relatively similar between competing organizations. Potential applicants are likely to pay attention to their feelings and impressions of an organization in deciding whether to pursue employment (Cable & Turban, 2001). Previous empirical studies suggest that symbolic dimensions can significantly shape employer attractiveness and intentions to pursue employment, especially among highly skilled candidates (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003, p. 85). This emphasizes the importance of employer branding to communicate not only what the organization offers (instrumental attributes) but also what the organization represents (symbolic attributes).

Certain attributes, such as career development opportunities, may encompass both functional and symbolic meanings depending on how applicants interpret them (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016, p. 415). Similarly, certain employer attractiveness dimensions may contain both instrumental and symbolic elements. Application value refers to opportunities to apply existing knowledge and share expertise, and these aspects may simultaneously represent functional career-related benefits and identity-related meanings connected to meaningful work (Berthon et al., 2005, p. 161). Therefore, it is important to consider the comprehensive employer brand and interaction between these dimensions instead of viewing them as entirely separate categories.

### **3 Recruitment Communication**

Recruitment can be understood as a strategic organizational process aimed at identifying, attracting, and selecting suitable candidates whose skills and qualifications meet organization's present and future workforce needs (Breaugh, 2013, p. 389). Recruitment communication plays a central role in this process, as it conveys information about the job, the organization, and its values, while simultaneously shaping the employer brand and influencing both the quantity and quality of applicants (Allen et al., 2007, p. 1696). From the perspective of potential applicants, recruitment communication enables applicants to assess their compatibility with the job and the employing organization (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005, p. 283–285).

#### **3.1 Recruitment Process**

The recruitment process includes job analysis, sourcing, selection, and onboarding, all aimed at ensuring strategic talent alignment and organizational success (Potočnik et al., 2021). The recruitment process begins with workforce planning and job analysis, which are essential for identifying skills gaps and defining job requirements. Based on the job analysis, clear job descriptions and specifications can be formed, providing a basis for selecting the right candidates.

The second step is sourcing and attracting candidates (Potočnik et al., 2021). Sourcing involves identifying potential applicants using various internal and external channels, including job portals, social media, and recruitment agencies. The increasing adoption of digital recruitment platforms (e-recruitment) has significantly expanded the reach and efficiency of this stage. E-recruitment systems allow organizations to target a global audience, automate processes, and enhance candidate engagement (Abia & Brown, 2020). This study focuses on these earliest steps of recruitment.

### **3.2 Recruitment Communication**

Recruitment communication refers to the structured process through which organizations convey information to prospective applicants via job advertisements, employer branding on websites and social media, and direct interactions with recruiters throughout the recruitment process (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016, p. 412–413; Lievens et al., 2007, p. 47–48). The purpose of recruitment communication is dual: to provide essential fact-based information such as job requirements and compensation, as well as to communicate cultural, value-based cues that contribute to the employer's image and identity. Such communication is central in shaping perceptions of organizational attractiveness and plays a significant role in applicant decision-making (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016, p. 421; Allen et al., 2007, p. 1704).

In job advertisements, on websites, and across social media channels, recruitment communication is strategic, as organizations have control over both the content and presentation of their messages, allowing them to align communication closely with their broader employer branding strategies (Allen et al., 2007, p. 1696).

Importantly, recruitment communication contributes to applicants' interpretations of organizational characteristics and expectations. Through explicit descriptions and implicit cues, it shapes perceptions of person–organization and person–job fit by indicating which values, competencies, and behaviors are preferred (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005, p. 291). However, in contemporary digital environments, these signals are rarely conveyed through text alone. Instead, they are embedded within multimodal forms of communication.

### **3.3 International Recruitment Communication**

International recruitment is a central strategic concern for organizations operating in globally competitive labor markets. An international employer brand refers to how an organization is perceived as an employer in international labor markets (Špoljarić &

Ozretić Došen, 2023). International recruitment involves the deliberate attraction of geographically and culturally diverse and dispersed talent through targeted communication practices (Hallahan et al., 2007, p. 4). International recruitment can be understood as a form of strategic communication, where organizations construct and convey meanings about the job, organizational culture, and location to audiences who may have no prior experience with the employer or its national context. This communicative dimension is particularly prominent in contexts where employers seek to attract highly skilled professionals across borders, as candidates must evaluate the job and employer, but also the broader implications of relocation.

Employer branding becomes more complex in the international context, as organizations must address culturally diverse audiences and interpret organizational values into messages that resonate across different socio-cultural contexts (Špoljarić & Ozretić Došen, 2023). Symbolic attributes such as organizational prestige, innovativeness, or work culture may carry different meanings depending on the audience, requiring careful communicative adaptation (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003, p. 77).

In the context of international recruitment, diversity refers to the representation of different demographic and social groups within the workforce, while equity emphasizes fair recruitment practices. Inclusion relates to environment where individuals feel accepted, valued, and able to contribute meaningfully (Avery and McKay, 2006). These dimensions affect applicants' perceptions of organizational fairness and belonging. By communicating commitment to diversity and inclusion, organizations can enhance their employer brand among diverse candidates and attract more diverse and qualified applicant pools (Alakhoon et al., 2024).

Recruitment communication also plays a critical role in shaping perceptions of person–environment (P–E) fit, which refers to the compatibility between an individual and various aspects of their work environment (Kristof, 1996). While traditional research has focused on person–organization and person–job fit, international recruitment extends

this assessment to include the national and cultural context of the proposed country of residence. Prospective employees must assess whether they can adapt the organization but also to the social, cultural, and institutional environment where the organization operates. Communication materials, such as career websites, employee testimonials, and relocation guides, thus function as sensemaking resources that help candidates imagine their potential future in a relocation setting.

### **3.4 Person–Environment Fit**

Person–environment (P–E) fit describes the compatibility that occurs when individual and work environment are well aligned (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011, p. 3). Person–environment fit is a generic concept that includes several more specific types of fit which describe how individuals relate to various aspects of the work environment, such as jobs, teams and organizations (Kristof, 1996, p. 2–3).

The person element of the person–environment interaction has been explained through personality, values, goals, and preferences, while the different alternatives of the environment factor have been the job, organization, groups and teams, supervisors, and vocations (Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011; Kristof-Brown et al., 2023).

The core suggestion is that positive outcomes appear when the characteristics of a person and the characteristics of the environment align well (Edwards, 1991, p. 283–284). This compatibility can be based on similarities (e.g., shared values) or the needs.

#### **3.4.1 Person–Job Fit**

Person–job (P–J) fit refers to the compatibility between an individual’s characteristics and the requirements of a specific job (Edwards, 1991, p. 283–284). Person–job fit is conceptualized through two perspectives: demands–abilities fit and needs–supplies fit (Edwards, 1991; Kristof, 1996). Demands–abilities fit can be described as the alignment between individual’s capabilities (e.g. knowledge, skills) and the demands of the job,

indicating their job performance. Needs–supplies fit refers to the degree to which the job provides outcomes that satisfy individual’s personal needs, such as compensation, development opportunities, and working conditions. Together these dimensions provide comprehension of how candidates evaluate their suitability for a given role.

Prior research has consistently demonstrated that P–J fit is associated with positive outcomes. High levels of perceived fit have been linked to increased job satisfaction, improved job performance, and lower turnover intentions (Cable & DeRue, 2002, p. 877–878). In recruitment contexts, organizations assess candidates’ abilities in relation to job requirements, while applicants simultaneously evaluate whether the position aligns with their competencies and personal needs.

In recruitment communication, P–J fit is particularly relevant regarding how job requirements and role expectations are communicated to applicants. Recruitment messages that clearly communicate required skills, responsibilities, and performance expectations enable applicants to assess their demands–abilities fit more accurately (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Simultaneously, communication regarding compensation and benefits, career opportunities, and working conditions signals needs–supplies fit. Consequently, effective recruitment communication attracts candidates but also facilitates self-selection by enabling individuals to evaluate their compatibility with the job.

### **3.4.2 Person–Organization Fit**

Person–organization (P–O) fit can be defined as the compatibility between an individual and an organization, considering shared values, goals, and cultural characteristics (Kristof, 1996, Kristoff-Brown et al., 2005). It describes how individuals and organizations match one another, either through similarity or through the fulfillment of mutual needs. A central aspect of P–O fit is value congruence, which can be understood as the alignment between an individual’s personal values and the organization’s values. Shared values and identity enhance feelings of belonging and psychological attachment. Individuals tend to

prefer organizations that they perceive as similar to themselves. For example, prior research indicates that an ethical and socially responsible organization that fosters congenial environment can enhance attractiveness and the perceived person–organization fit (Tanwar & Kumar, 2019).

In addition to value congruence, P–O fit can also be understood through the broader dimensions of supplementary and complementary fit. Supplementary fit is experienced when an individual and an organization share similar characteristics, for example values or personality traits. Complementary fit exists when the organization fulfills the individual’s needs (e.g., career opportunities, rewards) or when the individual provides capabilities that the organization requires (Kristof, 1996, p. 4). Greater levels of perceived fit are linked to increased job satisfaction, stronger commitment, and decreased turnover intentions (Kristof, 1996, p. 6–7). In recruitment contexts, P–O fit plays a key role in shaping organizational attractiveness, as applicants evaluate whether they would fit within the organization’s culture and work environment. By connecting the dimensions of employer brand to the person–organization fit, organizations can improve their attractiveness among desired audience to become employer of choice (Tanwar & Kumar, 2019).

It is important to differentiate P–O fit from person-job (P–J) fit. P–O fit considers the individual’s compatibility with the broader organizational context, including values, norms, and culture while P–J fit focuses on the alignment between a person’s abilities and job requirements (Kristof, 1996, p. 3–4). These constructs are complementary rather than exclusive, and both contribute to shaping applicant attraction and selection decisions.

In the context of employer branding and recruitment communication, P–O fit is particularly relevant because organizational values and culture are primarily communicated through employer branding messages on job advertisements, organization’s websites and social media channels. For example, the descriptions of

organizational culture, as well as employee testimonials serve as signals that help applicants assess whether they would fit within the organization. As a result, recruitment communication plays a crucial role in shaping perceived P–O fit and influencing application behavior.

### **3.4.3 Person–Location Fit**

Person–location fit is a proposed additional dimension of person–environment fit in international recruitment contexts. It is my own addition based on previous research indicating that location may constitute an additional fit dimension in international recruitment, as candidates evaluate fit with the national or city context when considering relocation (Brett & Stroh, 1995; Hippler, 2009; Wagner & Westaby, 2009; Stoermer et al., 2018). Person–location fit can be conceptualized as compatibility between an individual's preferences and needs, and the physical location of an organization or job. Person–location fit extends beyond organizational and job-related factors by considering how well an individual's preferences and needs, desired lifestyle, and personal conditions align with the geographical, social, and cultural characteristics of the job location. These considerations may include factors like cost of living, commuting distance, local culture, and access to services.

Perceived person–environment fit has been recognized as a key element in shaping both attraction to a specific organization or job opportunity and expected satisfaction in long-term, and I propose that it extends to location fit perceptions. Candidates evaluate whether a potential location supports their preferred lifestyle, social life, and personal well-being. Perceived alignment with location factors may enhance organizational attractiveness and thereby strengthen applying intentions. Perceived mismatch with location-related factors may discourage application or acceptance, even when job and organizational fit are high. Therefore, I suggest person–location fit should be recognized as a crucial factor of international recruitment communication influencing applicant decision-making.

### 3.5 Multimodal Communication

Multimodal communication refers to the use of multiple semiotic modes, such as text, layout, typography, language, images, videos, and interactive elements, to create and convey meaning (Kress, 2010; Hiippala, 2015). In recruitment communication on digital platforms, multimodality is particularly relevant because digital platforms support the integration of diverse communicative elements. Meaning emerges from the interaction of different modes, each contributing distinct representational and communicative functions (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 177). For example, images may convey organizational culture and diversity, while textual content provides explicit information about job requirements and responsibilities.

The linguistic choices on organizations websites reflect their employer brand. Brand language is a significant part of meaning-making, identity construction, and strategic positioning (Rapezzi, 2026). Based on previous brand language research, the linguistic choices brands make shape the ways audiences perceive, evaluate, and relate to them. Linguistic choices comprise multiple levels simultaneously: the level of semantics containing individual word choices that convey connotations of power, authenticity, or personality; the level of grammar and syntax including structural choices, such as pronoun use, that signals who is speaking and to whom; and the level of discourse, covering the overall tone and register of a text, whether formal or informal, analytical or empathetic, constructing a particular kind of relationship between organization and reader (Rapezzi, 2026). Conversationalization is a term used to describe the process by which organizations increasingly adopt the vocabulary, rhythm, and relational ease of conversation in their public communications (Fairclough, 1994). Organizations using conversationalized language position themselves as approachable, human, and culturally close to their audience. The previous research on brand language proves that the usage and choice of pronouns can meaningfully influence how individuals engage with brand messages (Rapezzi, 2026). For example, the second-person pronoun (“you”) improves message relevance, persuasion, involvement and therefore improves brand attitudes by making the communication feel more personally directed.

Visual elements communicate meaning through composition, color, framing, and salience (Kress, 2010). Visuals contribute to both instrumental attributes (for example office environments) and symbolic attributes (culture and values) of employer branding (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003, p. 78). Website visuals often emphasize symbolic attributes by portraying collaborative working, diverse teams, and aesthetically appealing office spaces, thereby constructing an attractive and emotionally engaging employer image. This emphasis aligns with research findings suggesting job applicants rely on symbolic cues when evaluating organizational attractiveness, particularly in early stages of recruitment (Slaughter et al., 2004, p. 86–87).

In international recruitment, visual imagery such as representations of diverse employees and teams may shape perceptions of inclusivity. Similarly, video content presenting employee experiences can personalize and authenticate employer brand communication, especially when it includes narratives from international employees.

The layout and navigation structure of a career website further guide candidate's attention and influence how information is processed. Usability features of website, such as clear structure, intuitive navigation, and well-organized content, guide users' attention and decrease cognitive effort during information search (Williamson et al., 2010, p. 799–804). Concept of information value refers to the spatial placement of elements contributing meaning-making: the upper part of a structure typically represents the ideal (values, vision, and abstract principles), while the lower part tends to represent the real or practical dimension of action and implementation. The central positioning of certain elements can further signal core identity or the most significant message (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 177–203).

Multimodal communication is therefore not only an aesthetic enhancement but a fundamental component of how organizations construct employer brand narratives. In recruitment contexts, it enables organizations to present a compelling and emotionally

engaging representation of work life, which can significantly affect applicant perceptions and intentions (Williamson et al., 2010, p. 564).

### **3.5.1 Career Websites**

Organizations' career websites represent a central platform for recruitment communication (Cober et al., 2004, p. 624–627). Websites are fundamentally multimodal environments, typically combining written descriptions, employee testimonials, photographs, videos, and interactive features to communicate the employer value proposition.

One key function of multimodality in career websites is the visualization of organizational culture. The textual, visual, and interactive elements communicate symbolic meanings and organizational values that shape applicants' perceptions of the employer (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 20–27; Cober et al., 2004, p. 627–632). For example, photographs of employees, office spaces, and social activities serve as visual cues that help applicants imagine themselves within the organization and such imagery may emphasize messages about collaboration, creativity, or inclusivity often more effectively than text alone (Carpentier et al., 2019, p. 3).

Video content further enhances this effect by providing dynamic and narrative-driven representations of the workplace (Allen et al., 2007, p. 1704). Employee interviews, "day in the life" videos, and leadership messages allow organizations to communicate authenticity and transparency, and previous Research proposes that richer media formats can increase organizational attractiveness by fostering emotional engagement and reducing uncertainty.

In addition, the design and structure of career websites play a central role in shaping user experience (Chapman et al., 2005). Navigation, visual hierarchy, and responsiveness influence how easily candidates can access information and how they evaluate the

organization. A well-designed website signals professionalism and organizational competence, while poor usability may negatively impact perceptions.

### **3.5.2 Job Advertisements**

In online contexts, job advertisements often combine branding elements such as company logos, color schemes, images, and sometimes embedded videos or links to additional content. Research on online recruitment shows that organizational websites and recruitment materials integrate visual and informational features to communicate employer image and influence applicant attraction (Cober et al., 2004, p. 627–632; Allen et al., 2007, p. 1697–1705). The textual component of job advertisements remains central, particularly in conveying job requirements, responsibilities, and qualifications.

The use of inclusive language, storytelling, and value-based messaging can make job descriptions more appealing and relatable (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016, p. 415). Therefore, the linguistic style of job advertisements plays an important role in shaping applicant perceptions.

Visual elements in job ads serve to emphasize brand identity and attract attention in competitive digital environments, and the use of consistent visual branding across career websites and job advertisements can strengthen employer brand recognition and credibility (Theurer et al., 2018, p. 160–169). Moreover, images portraying employees or workplace environments can provide cues about diversity, work culture, and organizational values.

Digital job advertisements often function as gateways to broader organizational content. Hyperlinks embedded within job postings allow applicants to access career pages, employee stories, and other resources, thereby extending the communicative scope beyond the advertisement itself. This interconnected structure enhances the overall richness of recruitment communication (Theurer et al., 2018, p. 164).

## **4 Analysis and Findings**

This chapter analyzes how Supercell constructs its employer brand through recruitment communication on Careers website and job advertisements. The analysis follows inductive-deductive approach introduced in the methodology. The theoretical framework guiding the analysis of the Careers section is based on the concept of Employer Value Proposition (EVP) and structured according to the instrumental-symbolic framework (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003).

The job advertisements are analyzed separately, focusing on how the advertisements construct the ideal employee and communicate expectations regarding compatibility between a person and the working environment. The analysis follows the person-environment fit approach (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Although the Careers website and job advertisements are examined through different theoretical perspectives, the analyses are interconnected, as recurring themes appear consistently across both forms of recruitment communication.

### **4.1 Construction of Employer Value Proposition (EVP)**

The findings prove that Supercell's key employer brand messages are built around its vision, mission, and organizational values, which are introduced in the Careers section and presented consistently across the analyzed materials. This reflects the strategic perspective of employer branding, which identifies organizational vision and values as foundational elements of a coherent employer brand (Barrow & Mosley, 2005).

The vision and mission are presented on the Careers page: "We believe games have the power to bring people around the world together and closer to each other. We work to create new, innovative, memorable experiences no one has played before." The core values are presented on the page Why You Might Love It Here (Image 1.) The core values include:

- Independence & responsibility

- Ambition & risk-taking
- Humility & kindness

## WE DEFAULT TO TRUST

Independent cells and trust are at the core of our culture. Supercell is made up of independent teams, or "cells", trusted to work together towards our mission: to create games for as many people as possible that are played for years and remembered forever. Each team is empowered to pursue our mission in the ways they see best.

We trust teams to make decisions they believe are best for Supercell and our players. To make six games, we've killed over a dozen, like Smash Land, Rush Wars and Hay Day Pop. What happens with a game is in the hands of the game team itself.

At Supercell, we empower people to take ownership. We encourage people to use their talents where they'll have the most impact – even in opportunities outside the scope of their role. Supercellians are trusted to follow where their skills and passion lead.

"Disagree and commit" is not just one of our CEO's favourite slogans. To keep making our dream a reality, we have to trust each other even when we disagree. We work to earn and uphold trust, and we trust each other to do what makes sense and is right for the game, the players, and ourselves.



## WHAT WE VALUE



**INDEPENDENCE & RESPONSIBILITY**  
The Best Teams Make the Best Games



**AMBITION & RISK-TAKING**  
Shoot for the Moon



**HUMILITY & KINDNESS**  
Clear is Kind

**Image 1.** The core values on page Why You Might Love It Here (Supercell, 2026)

Supercell's employer brand proposition is strongly dominated by symbolic attributes related to organizational identity, culture and values, while instrumental attributes are comparatively limited and often embedded within symbolic narratives. This may be interpreted as a strategic emphasis on differentiation through organizational culture, values and identity rather than through tangible employment benefits.

Several attributes cannot be clearly categorized under symbolic or instrumental attributes. These hybrid attributes highlight a key limitation of the instrumental-symbolic framework in practice. Many employer characteristics function simultaneously

at both levels, and the boundary between two categories is often ambiguous (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003).

#### **4.1.1 Symbolic Attributes**

Symbolic attributes are strongly communicated, particularly through the company's emphasis on organizational culture and values. Based on the analysis, Careers section emphasizes independence and autonomy, ambition, innovation and creativity, collaboration, respect and internationality, which can be categorized as symbolic attributes. Such elements create employer uniqueness and act as symbolic differentiators (Barrow & Mosley, 2005, p. 9; Berthon et al., 2005, p. 158). These distinctive features are likely to appeal to candidates who value ownership, autonomy, or social purpose, thereby supporting segmented attraction strategies (Theurer et al., 2018, p. 162–163).

##### **4.1.1.1 Independence and Autonomy**

Central themes across the dataset are independence and autonomy, thereby strongly demonstrating autonomy-driven organizational culture. Supercell repeatedly describes itself as a company built around “cell” structure, and these “independent cells” are trusted to make decisions autonomously. The content in Careers section highlights:

- Independent small teams (“cells”)
- Decentralized decision-making
- Trust
- Responsibility
- Ownership

For example, Supercell declares its culture very clearly on the page Why You Might Love It Here: “Independent cells and trust are at the core of our culture” and describes its working environment as “A place where we trust each other and value independence.” Employees are expected to demonstrate a high level of autonomy and self-direction. As

stated in the recruitment communication, "You are a proactive doer, which means that you take the initiative to get things done and solve problems without a boss telling you what or how to do it."

Independence and autonomy are connected to trust and responsibility. Trust is highlighted and repeated across the data: "We trust our teams to make decisions." Responsibility and full ownership of work are repeated and reinforced: "You own results – both successes and failures". Employees are characterized as empowered experts with ownership over their work. Employee stories further support this, for example Game Designer's statement "What I enjoy about Supercell is being truly responsible for my work."

The emphasis on autonomy aligns with research suggesting that intrinsic aspects of work are particularly important in knowledge-intensive industries (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). The strong emphasis on autonomy and trust can also be interpreted through employer attractiveness dimensions, particularly development value and interest value (Berthon et al., 2005). Rather than presenting career development through formal structures or hierarchical advancement, Supercell frames development as self-direction, responsibility, and freedom to influence outcomes. Professional growth is associated with independence and creative ownership.

#### **4.1.1.2 Ambition, Passion and Collective Purpose**

Another dominant symbolic theme is ambition, passion for games, and shared purpose of developing the best games. Supercell is portrayed as a community of highly passionate professionals motivated by creating games that impact millions of players globally. It is constantly repeated but in different ways, for example "If you love to think, talk, play and make games, Supercell is the place for you.", and "Supercellians are trusted to follow where their skills and passion lead."

Employee statement on the main Careers page summarizes the gaming culture and shared passion for gaming: “Everyone in the company plays at least one of our games passionately. The best players of a certain game might work in marketing or finance instead of a game team.”

#### **4.1.1.3 Innovation and Creativity**

Supercell’s communication repeatedly emphasizes innovation, experimentation, and creativity. Innovation is presented as a core purpose and framed as central to both organizational success and employee identity. The first section on Supercell’s Careers landing page is titled *Why you might love it here* and it describes the vision of Supercell: “We work to create new, innovative, memorable experiences no one has played before.”

Statements such as “maximizing room for innovation” and “failing smarter to maximize learning” present the organization as a space of continuous experimentation and learning. Notably, failure is framed positively, which contributes to presentation of supporting environment, safety and learning orientation: “We are here to make and operate great, important games while doing industry-defining things for our players. Since this is hard and risky, we know to expect failure. Our environment must make failure feel safe.” The culture is also described encouraging: “We encourage people to use their talents where they’ll have the most impact – even in opportunities outside the scope of their role.”

These statements strongly reflect interest value, which includes innovative work, creativity, and challenging tasks (Berthon et al., 2005). Communication supports candidates to perceive employment at Supercell as participation in a meaningful creative community and gaming culture. This reflects the symbolic purpose of employer branding (Cable & Turban, 2001), where organizational membership contributes to individual self-concept and social identity.

The repeated focus on creating high-quality games with the best teams, often framed as “making games players love”, positions meaningful work as the primary source of value. This emphasizes the perception that, in this context, EVP is centered on the nature of the work rather than external rewards.

#### **4.1.1.4 Collaboration and Teamwork**

A strong emphasis on collaboration, teamwork and shared purpose can be recognized. Words like “collaboration” and “teamwork” are repeated constantly, and Supercell consistently promotes collaborative and respectful work relationships. Teamwork is described as essential for success. The Careers section also emphasizes kindness and psychological safety. Kindness is one of the determined core values of Supercell: “In a safe and supportive environment, we can work together better and faster”.

#### **4.1.1.5 Humanity and Respect**

“Humility and Kindness” are presented as core values of Supercell on the page titled Why you Might Love It Here (see Image 1 on page 37). Kindness is defined as “the foundation of strong relationships, trust, understanding, and emotional safety.” and these themes are repeated across the Careers section. “Humility” and related expressions are mentioned only on this one paragraph and therefore, in my interpretation, it does not constitute a central theme, even though it is included in the company's stated values.

The Careers section and job advertisements present Supercell's principle, in which the employee is seen as a human, not a resource. The blog post about compensation and benefits clarifies “We start with perceiving you as a human being, not a resource. Figuring out the best way to support everyone's holistic well-being is a never-ending journey of listening, learning, and developing.”. Even the instrumental benefits like health care are merged with statements related to organizational culture: “An extensive health care plan is a no-brainer for us, but so is a culture where we are encouraged to care for ourselves above everything else.”

These themes reflect symbolic meanings associated with warmth and sincerity, which are recognized as central dimensions of EVP in employer brand research (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003, p. 80). This kind of dimensions of employer branding create organizational associations that shape how potential employees perceive the company (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004).

These statements also align with perceived social value (by Berthon et al., 2005), including workplace relationships and organizational atmosphere. Prospective employees are more likely to select an organization that fosters certain moral values, especially values matching their own personal values (Tanwar & Kumar, 2019). However, rather than focusing on friendliness and collegiality alone, Supercell frames social value through trust, autonomy, and low hierarchy, which differentiates it from more traditional employer branding narratives.

#### **4.1.1.6 Internationality and Diversity**

The Careers section promotes a global, multicultural employer identity. Diversity is framed primarily as cultural openness and international collaboration. International teams and international collaboration are mentioned frequently. Examples also include mentions like “Over 40 nationalities” and “People from various backgrounds and walks of life”.

The webpages dedicated to topics “Living in Helsinki” and “Living in Shanghai” reflect internationality and encouragement to relocation. Office locations Helsinki and Shanghai are categorized under instrumental attributes on this study (see 4.1.2.3 Locations: Helsinki and Shanghai).

Diversity is demonstrated on the main page of the Careers section, with an employee comment: “As I reflect, I realise that being a minority has never deterred me from my work. Something that perhaps speaks on the kind of progressive work culture Supercell

has had from the beginning. Even though we are still working towards being a diverse company, your skills, talents and work matter more.” However, this is a general description without details. Previous research indicates that presence of descriptive diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) statements in recruitment materials commonly enhances organizational attractiveness, and findings demonstrate that including DEI statements broadens the reach of job advertisements and may encourage diverse individuals to apply (Alakhoon et al., 2024).

#### **4.1.2 Instrumental Attributes**

A notable finding of the study is the invisibility of the key instrumental attributes, such as compensation, benefits, and career development opportunities. Information about these themes is not integrated into the main Careers section, where prospective applicants would typically expect to find such details. The information about compensation and benefits is not easily discoverable through standard navigation paths on the Careers site, but it can be found via the link in the latter part of the job advertisement. This creates a form of selective transparency: the information exists and is available, yet it is not accessible in the primary recruitment interface. This can be interpreted as a strategic communication choice rather than an oversight.

Another interesting finding is that even communication related to instrumental benefits is embedded within symbolic narratives emphasizing humanity, care, and trust. This demonstrates how the boundaries between instrumental and symbolic attributes are blurred in practice. Healthcare, flexibility, work-life balance and well-being are not communicated only as offerings, but as reflections of Supercell’s broader organizational philosophy.

##### **4.1.2.1 Compensation and Benefits**

Supercell provides information on compensation and benefits in the blog post “Compensation and Benefits”. This blog post describes instrumental offerings, including

salaries, bonuses, healthcare, relocation support, and various employee benefits. These elements align with what prior literature identifies as core instrumental attributes influencing employer attractiveness, particularly among applicants motivated by external rewards (Berthon et al., 2005, p. 156–158).

Neither the blog post or analyzed job advertisements provide salary ranges or other concrete details, instead relying on more general descriptions of compensation and benefits: “While salary is based on your background, skills, and experience, your financial compensation model consists of an annual bonus and equity that comes with dividends, refresh grants, and liquidity.” This lack of specificity may reflect a deliberate employer branding strategy aimed at emphasizing long-term incentive structures rather than instant, fixed financial benefits, thereby aligning compensation-related communication with the value-based employer brand narrative. The limited and abstract information may not be equally accessible to all applicants, as some may not be familiar with equity-based compensation systems, which could affect their ability to fully evaluate the financial value (Berthon et al, 2005).

The benefits mentioned in the blog post also include health care and well-being benefits, as well as international travel benefits for employee and their family, generous parental leave and paid sabbatical program. Well-being and work-life balance are reinforced in the blog post. Instrumental attributes are often communicated with symbolic statements describing the organizational values and culture: “Quality work and creativity need space, time, and relaxation. Resting and taking time off when needed is in your hands.”

#### **4.1.2.2 Career Development**

The career development opportunities introduced on the Compensation and Benefits blog post include “continuing education support”, “extensive personal development support” and “individual coaching assistance”. There is also a dedicated page for a 16-week program called Spark, which “gives top-tier, founder-minded game devs – whether

they already work at Supercell or not – access to an expert-led, accelerated path to creating the best possible game with the support of a world-renowned performance coach.” This emphasis on learning and development aligns with employer branding theories (e.g. Barrow & Mosley, 2005) which identify opportunities for professional growth and career advancement as a key component of the employer value proposition, demonstrating organization’s commitment to employee development, satisfaction and long-term engagement.

The emphasis on learning support and coaching suggests that Supercell positions itself as an environment where employees can continuously develop professionally. These elements reflect the development value dimension of employer attractiveness which refers to the perceived value an organization offers for professional growth, skill acquisition, and career advancement (Berthon et al., 2005). In particular, the Spark program extends this proposition beyond traditional employee development by targeting both internal and external talent. This may enhance employer attractiveness among highly ambitious applicants seeking career opportunities, while it also indicates a selective and high-performance oriented culture that may not align with all applicant expectations or needs.

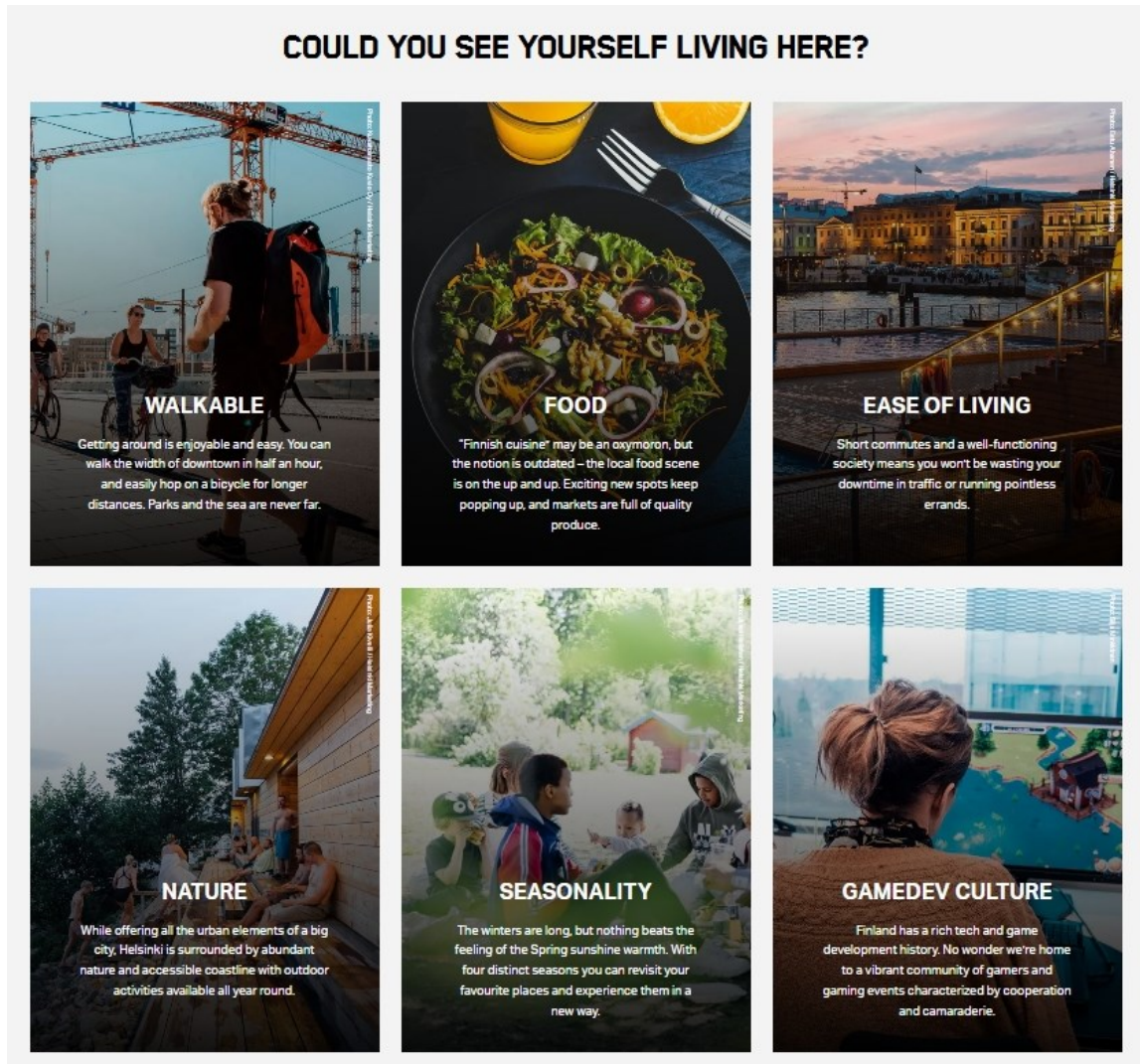
#### **4.1.2.3 Locations: Helsinki and Shanghai**

Supercell’s Careers section includes specific pages about offices and office locations Helsinki and Shanghai. Modern offices are presented on the page titled Offices. Offices and locations can be categorized under instrumental attributes, but location is not only an instrumental attribute related to living conditions and relocation practicality. Location can be considered as a symbolic extension of employer identity. Statement “Five unique personalities. One unifying culture.” on the page Office highlights the uniqueness of each office, while emphasizing a strong organizational culture that is shared over geographical boundaries, thereby maintaining a consistent employer brand identity.

The pages Living in Helsinki and Living in Shanghai are clearly aimed at international talent considering relocation. These pages provide location-based employer value propositions, which are influential particularly in globally competitive industries like game development, where attracting international talent is critical.

Page Living in Helsinki provides a concise overview of what a candidate can expect in Finland and Helsinki. The page constructs Helsinki as high-quality living environment for global talent and their families: “If you like the idea of living in one of the cleanest and safest places on Earth with free world-class education, Finland might just be for you. Oh, and people are really happy, too.” The concern of Finnish language is also taken into consideration: “While Finnish is notoriously one of the most difficult languages in the world, worry not as pretty much everyone speaks English.”

The page Living in Helsinki highlights six key themes that frame Helsinki as an attractive place to live, presented below question “Could you see yourself living here?”. These messages are presented in Image 2. Textual statements are paired with aesthetic photographs.



**Image 2.** Content of page Living in Helsinki (Supercell, 2026)

The advantages presented are listed below:

- **Walkability:** Photograph of walking and cycling people combined with text introducing how getting around in Helsinki is easy and enjoyable.
- **Food:** Photograph of a non-Finnish meal, text highlighting the growing restaurant scene and quality of food.
- **Ease of Living:** Scenery photograph paired with text describing short commutes and a well-functioning society that minimizes everyday friction.

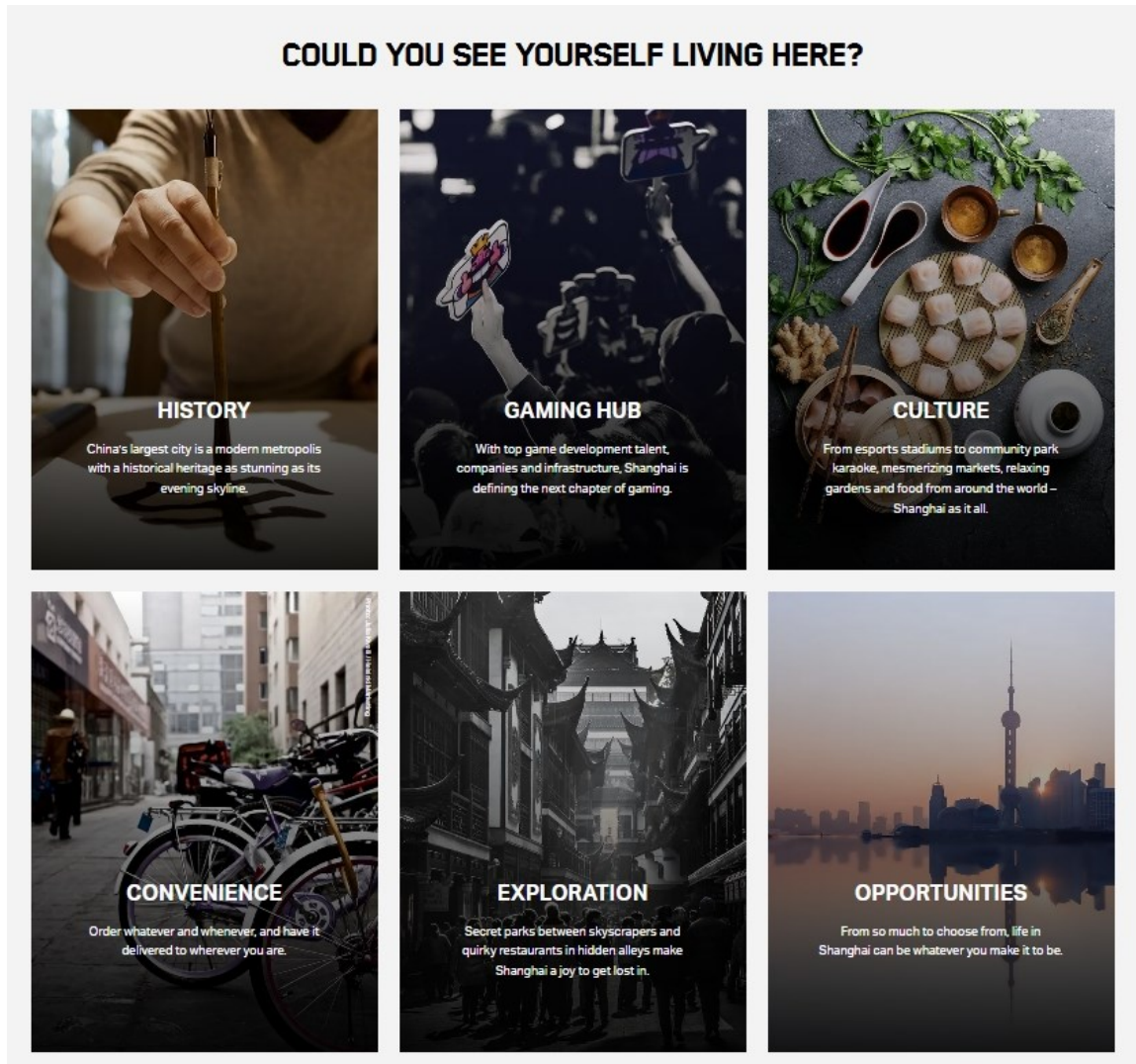
- Nature: Photograph of sauna in the middle of nature portraying accessible nature with outdoor activities all year round.
- Seasonality: Photograph on people enjoying summer, with a text framing seasonal variation as enriching and experiential
- Gamedev Culture: Photograph of a person in front of a screen, combined with a text highlighting a rich tech and game development record in Finland and describing Finland as a home for collaborative game development

The page also includes employee testimonials from international employees, which reinforce authenticity through personal narratives (e.g., appreciation of nature, short commutes), highlight emotional aspects of living in Helsinki and normalize relocation by showing diverse backgrounds. These narratives function as social proof, which is a common EVP practice to reduce uncertainty for international candidates.

The page Living in Shanghai presents a location-focused employer-branding narrative tailored to an urban and dynamic context. Like the Helsinki page, it functions as a strategic extension of the employer value proposition, but with a distinct emphasis on opportunities and exploration. The page highlights following themes:

- History: Photograph presenting a person writing Chinese calligraphy and text describing Shanghai as a modern metropolis with a fascinating historical heritage.
- Gaming hub: A photograph from an event, text highlighting Shanghai as a place top game development talent, companies and infrastructure.
- Culture: Photograph of Chinese food and the text stating that the city offers endless opportunities for activities.
- Convenience: Photograph of bicycles on the streets, paired with text explaining highly developed services and efficiency of everyday life.
- Exploration: Photograph from the street, with a text describing Shanghai as one of the world's largest and most vibrant cities.

- Opportunities: A panorama photograph and statement “Shanghai can be whatever you make it to be”



**Image 3.** Content of page Living in Shanghai (Supercell, 2026)

These themes presented in Image 3 seek to construct Shanghai as a location for curious and experimental individuals, which is consistent with Supercell’s overall employer branding.

The page also includes employee testimonials by two international employees, describing the excitement and variety of daily life, emphasizing personal and

professional growth in a high-energy environment and normalizing relocation challenges while highlighting adaptability. The page provides guidance and links related to living logistics in Shanghai, cultural adaptation and everyday practices and broader contextual information about China and the city. This supports candidate decision-making by combining inspiration with practical orientation.

Location constitutes a central instrumental attribute in the evaluation of employer attractiveness, as it reflects tangible and practical aspects that directly affect applicants' daily lives (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003, p. 77–78). Helsinki is presented through quality of life, calmness and balance, while Shanghai is framed through urban intensity and energy, appealing to different candidate motivations. In contrast to Helsinki's "quality of life" positioning, Shanghai is outlined as an energetic location for endless activities and career opportunities, particularly in technology and gaming. This aligns with research suggesting that employer branding must be contextually differentiated across geographies (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004, p. 505; Berthon et al., 2005, p. 156). In this case, communication is clearly tailored to attract different target audiences. The content of Helsinki page appears to target applicants with families, who are likely to value safety, high-quality of life and free education, as well as the overall ease of everyday life.

#### **4.1.2.4 Relocation Support**

Supercell highlights relocation support, including assistance in the process, integration support and activities: "No matter where you're moving from, our dedicated mobility team and partners will support you throughout your move."

Support for family members is also mentioned multiple times: "We'll ensure the process is as smooth as possible for you and anyone joining you – whether they're family members of the human or animal kind!". These family-related messages are clearly targeted at Supercell's desired talent, who are experienced professionals who might have a family.

Additional instrumental elements mentioned on the blogpost include onboarding practices, such as buddy programs and onboarding sessions. The descriptions of relocation support are presented in a way that emphasizes inclusion, support and social integration. Therefore, even instrumental elements are symbolically enriched, reinforcing the overall employer brand.

These international accessibility messages are crucial for attracting a global talent and for building employer brand equity in international markets (Theurer et al., 2018, p. 170–171). However, communication remains relatively general and avoids concrete details.

The descriptions of instrumental attributes construct an employer identity that appeals to intrinsically motivated candidates who are attracted by meaningful work and cultural fit, while providing limited, general instrumental information for those who seek it.

## **4.2 Construction of an ideal employee**

While the Careers pages focus on organizational identity, values and culture, the job advertisements define more clearly who fits the job (P –J fit) and the organization (P –O fit). Job ads convert symbolic EVP elements into behavioral expectations, operationalize culture into selection criteria, and encourage candidate self-selection reducing unfit. The job advertisements construct a representation of an ideal “Supercellian”, a candidate who simultaneously has competencies for the role and belong to the organization culturally. This aligns with prior research suggesting that recruitment communication shapes applicant pools by signaling person–environment compatibility (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011).

All the job advertisements analyzed are for senior/manager/lead roles. No junior-level positions were available for analysis, which reflects the company’s broader recruitment philosophy emphasizing extensive prior experience and high levels of professional expertise. This orientation is explicitly expressed on the Careers website, which states that “Supercell doesn’t really have any junior artists on board” and that even the least

experienced artists could already be considered senior professionals. The statement further emphasizes that many employees are “hardened industry veterans”, highlighting the company’s preference for highly skilled and experienced talent. Based on the analysis, an ideal “Supercellian” is experienced, highly skilled professional, autonomous, self-directed and responsible, collaborative and passionate game enthusiast.

#### **4.2.1 Experienced, Highly Skilled Professional**

Job advertisements specify required skills and explain responsibilities, thus filtering candidates based on competence. The job ads define job content and tasks, required competencies and responsibilities. All the selected job advertisements highlight experience and construct an ideal candidate who has strong technical mastery (e.g., programming, systems design, analytics, cloud infrastructure) while also being able to operate across multiple extents, such as design, product thinking, or player experience. The ideal employee is not narrowly specialized, as they can extend their expertise into next areas and adapt to different problem spaces. For example: “This role is wide and varied, as well as coding features, you'll put on your designer hat.”

The analyzed senior roles demand accountability, stability, and stress tolerance, for example “Ability to think clearly under pressure”. The employee operates in high-stakes, large-scale environments, requiring reliability and self-control: “The systems you work on directly impact hundreds of millions of monthly players.”

#### **4.2.2 Autonomous, Self-directed and Responsible**

The ability to take full ownership of work can be identified as a central requirement in seven positions out of nine. The job advertisements include phrases related to ownership, entrepreneurship and/or full responsibility of projects, for example “Exceptional ownership, project management and prioritization skills – own everything like it’s your own business” and “Highly autonomous and proactive, with a strong sense of ownership.”

Employees are expected to own their work end-to-end, including designing, implementing, and maintaining solutions, while simultaneously operating in highly collaborative, interdependent teams. The employee is self-directed but aligns closely with shared goals and contributes to collective outcomes: “Game development is a team sport, so we work together to achieve the best results.”

The ideal employee is “Curious, proactive, and always looking for better ways of doing things”, as stated in one of the job advertisements. Other job ads include similar information. The ideal employee embraces experimentation and learning through failure, as many of the roles requires tolerance for uncertainty and continuous learning: “This is a senior role for someone who’s comfortable with few clear answers, but a lot of interesting questions.”

#### **4.2.3 Collaborative**

Beyond technical skills and ownership, the employee must be collaborative, as collaboration is listed as a central task or requirement in all the job advertisements. For example, being able to collaborate with team colleagues, multiple internal teams and/or external partners, communicate complex ideas clearly and translate between technical and non-technical perspectives are mentioned. Knowledge sharing and alignment across teams are key expectations. “You will often discuss features, design, and roadmaps with product managers, game developers, designers and software engineers.”

The requirements in the job advertisements emphasize the same themes as the employer value proposition in the Careers section. The employer value proposition highlights collaboration and teamwork, which is also reflected in the job advertisements as a requirement for strong collaboration and communication skills. Communication skills are identified as central requirements, as six out of nine job advertisements include statements such as: “Excellent communication and collaboration skills” and “Being a clear and concise communicator”.

#### **4.2.4 Passionate Game Enthusiast**

A defining characteristic of “Supercellian” is genuine passion for games and player experience. Employees are expected to have “passion for games”. The ideal employee is intrinsically motivated and driven by a desire to create meaningful, engaging experiences for game players: “Passion for mobile games and a drive to create visually appealing content.” The ideal employee is emotionally engaged, not only technically competent, which is clearly demonstrated in the “What you have” list of expectations, for example “Curiosity about players, social systems, and what makes people connect through play.”

The employer value proposition emphasizes passion for game development, and this expectation is also reflected in the job advertisements (in seven out of nine postings, passion for and/or experience with games is either required or at least preferred). When the passion for gaming is not mentioned in the job advertisements, employees are expected to demonstrate ambition in supporting game development, which aligns with Supercell’s vision.

### **4.3 Multimodal Communication Strategies**

This part of the analysis discovers how multimodal communication strategies are used to support the construction of Supercell’s employer brand. The textual, visual, and interactive elements communicate symbolic meanings and organizational values that shape applicants’ perceptions of the employer. The following analysis focuses on structure, language and visual elements.

#### **4.3.1 Structure**

The overall design of the Careers section is relatively minimalist. The structure of the Careers section is clear and easy to navigate. The interface uses extensive white space, short text blocks and large headings that enhance the usability of the pages, allowing users to quickly navigate and process key information (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). The

design creates a sense of lightness, reducing cognitive load and contributing to an accessible and engaging experience. Visually, these choices also construct an impression of a modern technology brand that is dynamic and user-oriented. These features can be understood as part of compositional meaning, in which typographic and layout decisions influence perceptions of the organization's seriousness, creativity, and approachability.

Page titles are informative and describe the content. The page Careers includes the elements "Why You Might Love It Here" text, featured positions, video of Supercell's vision and mission, employee testimonial with photographs, global offices on the map, short descriptions of recruitment practices and relocation support and list of open positions. According to concept of informational value, the spatial placement of elements contributes to meaning-making (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), and the layout positions mission and values as the primary layer of the employer brand, while culture and practices turn these into organizational reality, and open positions represent the most concrete, practice-oriented layer. The composition of the page visually encodes a transfer from abstract level to concrete employment experience, thereby reinforcing a coherent and structured employer image.

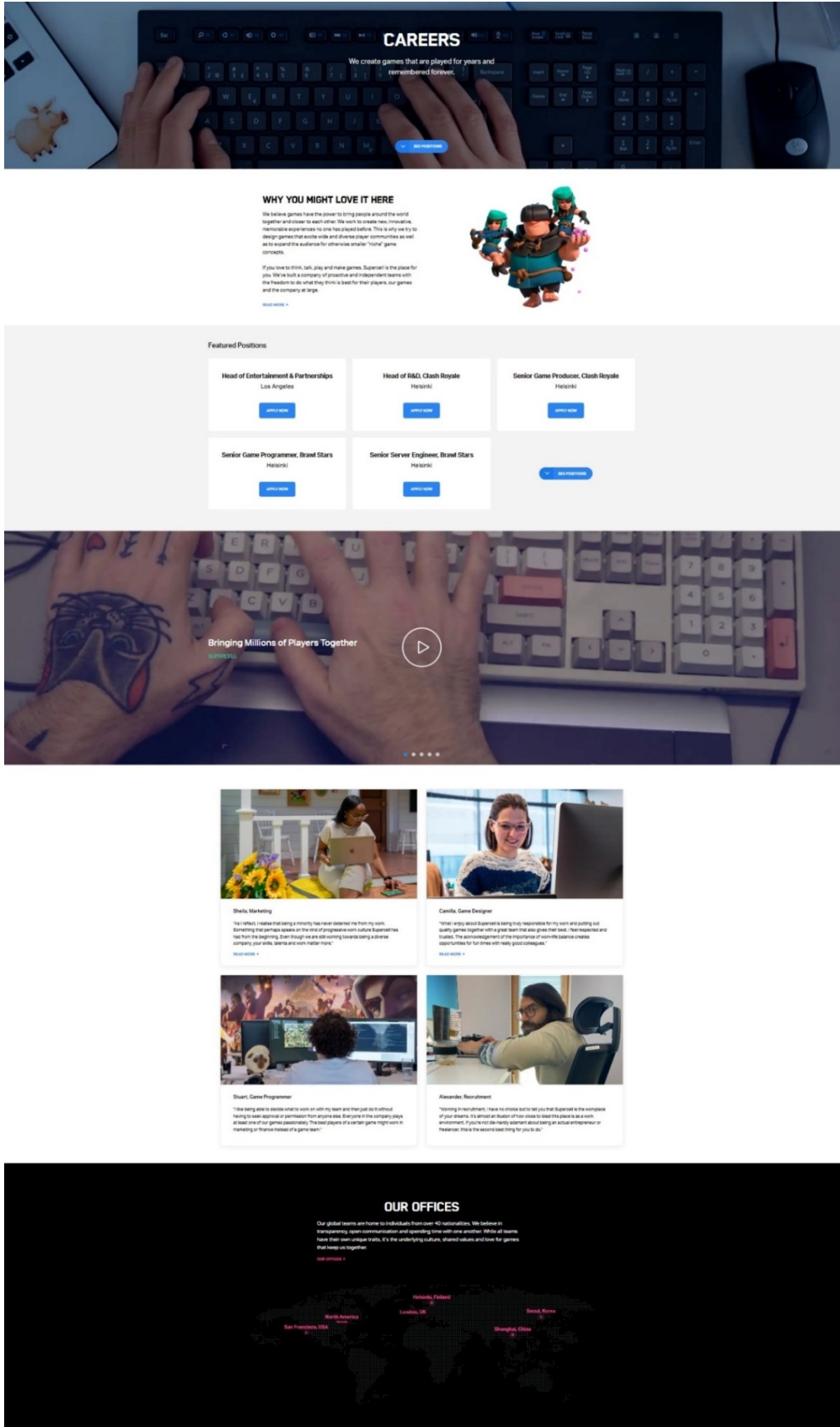


Image 4. Structure of page Careers (Supercell, 2026)

Image 4 presents the main page of Supercell's Careers section where key elements of the employer brand are communicated in a structured and accessible way. The page brings together essential information related to the organization's employer value proposition and presents it through multiple modalities, combining textual content with visual and interactive elements to enhance engagement.

All the job advertisements analyzed follow the same format, starting with an image and introduction of the game or team, following with role-specific content:

- What You'll Be Doing – descriptions of the role and tasks
- What You Have – list of the requirements and expectations
- Where You'll Be – information about the location, and if it is necessary to travel

The image at the beginning of each job advertisement primarily serves an attention-directing and meaning-making function (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). It attracts visual interest and instantly positions the role within a specific game context, helping applicants associate the position with the game product and corporate brand. From a recruitment communication perspective, such imagery constructs organizational identity, reinforces brand consistency, and supports emotional engagement by connecting the role to recognizable game world. In this way, the image contributes to early-stage employer brand interpretation before applicants engage with the more detailed job descriptions.

The job descriptions, requirements, and expectations are presented in clear, easy-to-read lists. As shown in Image 5, the overall structure is readable and well organized.

HELSINKI – ONSITE – FULLTIME

## SENIOR SERVER ENGINEER, CENTRAL TECH



Are you excited to work with every Supercell game team and own a piece of critical game technology? Are you ready for the challenge of building a platform capable of handling hundreds of millions of active players?

We are looking for an experienced Senior Server Engineer to join Supercell's Central Tech organization in Helsinki. As a Senior Server Engineer, you will collaborate closely with all of Supercell's game teams, developing critical server-side technology that enables reliable, scalable, and efficient game backends and Live Operations (LiveOps). The systems you work on directly impact hundreds of millions of monthly players, making stability, performance, and operability essential.

Our core mission: enable game teams to focus on creating great player experiences by providing robust, scalable and easy-to-use server technology.

Game development at Supercell is a team sport. We value humility, pragmatism, and open collaboration. Central Tech engineers work seamlessly with game teams and with each other, share learnings across teams, and are comfortable discussing both successes and failures.

[Read about the engine behind every Supercell game \(and why you've never heard of it\).](#)

### WHAT YOU'LL BE DOING

- Design, implement, and evolve highly scalable backend solutions for our games.
- Take technical ownership of critical parts of central game server technology, from development to production.
- Collaborate closely with game teams to understand their needs and help them use central systems effectively.
- Troubleshoot production and customer issues and help coordinate long-term solutions.
- Participate in a rotating on-call duty, providing first-line support for production environments.
- Contribute to best practices around scalability, reliability, availability, security, and operability.
- Improve operational procedures for our infrastructure and services.
- Share knowledge, learnings, and improvements across Central Tech teams.

### WHAT YOU HAVE

- Strong experience in server-side Java, including concurrency and distributed systems.
- Strong communication and collaboration skills, especially when working with multiple teams.
- Proven ability to design and implement high-performance, scalable distributed systems.
- Experience with cloud platforms (e.g. AWS or GCP), automation, and Infrastructure as Code.
- Understanding of operating live systems with large user volumes.
- Highly autonomous and proactive, with a strong sense of ownership.
- Humble, pragmatic mindset and a respectful attitude toward others and their work.
- Passion for games and building technology that enables others to succeed.
- A self-starter approach to use AI: you've found ways to use it in your day-to-day work, you experiment, figure things out and bring the same energy to every new challenge.

### WOULD BE NICE IF YOU ALSO HAVE

- Experience or solid understanding of large-scale containerized environments (e.g. EKS, ECS, Fargate, GKE).
- Experience with high-throughput live systems.
- Strong SQL and database design experience.
- Experience with Linux, shell scripting, and automation.
- Knowledge of networking, security, and cloud security practices.
- Experience with Terraform or similar IaC tools.
- Familiarity with ZooKeeper or similar coordination systems.
- Prior game development experience.

**Image 5.** Structure of the role-specific part of job advertisement (Supercell, 2026)

The latter part of the job advertisement (Image 6) describes Supercell as an employer, giving an overview of company's employer value proposition and leading to broader

Careers section. The latter part of job advertisement is identical in every job advertisement. It consists of alternating text and visual elements that convey Supercell's employer brand.



#### ABOUT SUPERCCELL

Supercell is a games company from Helsinki, Finland, with offices also in San Francisco, Seoul, Shanghai, and London. You might know us as the makers of Hay Day, Clash of Clans, Boom Beach, Clash Royale, and Inland Stars. Our mission is to create great games that as many people as possible play for years and that are remembered forever.

So, how do we make great games? By putting together the best teams and giving them the freedom and independence to succeed. And by taking risks, failing, sharing learning, and killing lots of projects.



#### HEY, YOU MIGHT LOVE IT HERE!

Independent cells and trust are at the core of our culture, but it takes more than that to make great games. We take good care of our people, providing them with the compensation, work environment, and resources they need to succeed while having fun along the way.



#### YOU ARE NOT YOUR JOB TITLE™

Here, you won't need to focus on chasing titles or climbing ladders. Internally, our job titles don't include prefixes like Senior, Junior, Principal, or Director. Recognition isn't tied to your title, as it doesn't define the impact you can have around here.



#### BENEFITS AND COMPENSATION

Luring you in with glitter, glamour, and game isn't what we're about. We want you to enjoy your time here fully, so we structure our compensation and benefits with that in mind. It starts with perceiving you as a human being, not a resource.



#### RELOCATION? YES!

No matter where you're moving from, our dedicated mobility team and partners will support you throughout your move. We'll ensure the process is as smooth as possible for you and anyone joining you – whether they're family members of the human or animal kind!



#### NOT SURE IF YOU SHOULD APPLY?

Many candidates with great skills and experience second-guess themselves. The bar is high, but if this role excites you, apply! We're here to help you succeed. Also, we're happy to learn about any specific accommodations you may need to fully engage in our recruitment process.

Wishing you all the best,

The Supercell Recruitment team



Image 6. Structure of the latter part of job advertisement (Supercell, 2026)

As these examples show, both the careers section and the job advertisements are clearly structured and include a considerable number of different types of visual elements. These visual elements help to break up and structure the text, creating a more readable and balanced presentation.

#### **4.3.2 Style and Tone**

The style and tone of voice on Supercell's Careers section play a central role in communicating the employer brand. The linguistic choices, narrative style, and rhetorical strategies construct a distinctive organizational voice that emphasizes the company's positioning as a creative, autonomous, and non-corporate workplace.

The most prominent characteristic of the textual content is its conversational and direct tone. The text avoids formal or bureaucratic language typically associated with corporate communication and instead adopts a style which appears relaxed, informal spoken interaction. For example, the use of second-person address ("you") creates closeness and personal engagement, positioning the reader as an active participant rather than a passive recipient of information (Rapezzi, 2026).

This conversational tone serves multiple functions: it lowers psychological distance between the organization and the potential applicant, which has been proved to increase organizational attractiveness (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). It reflects the company's broader cultural emphasis on low hierarchy and openness, thereby aligning linguistic style with organizational values. The intentional use of informal and anti-corporate language is related to conversational tone (Fairclough, 1994). The text avoids corporate jargon, and instead relies on simple, clear, and often blunt expressions. This stylistic choice emphasizes the company's differentiation from traditional corporate norms and bureaucracy.

The tone of voice is consistently confident and direct, particularly in statements describing organizational practices and expectations. Supercell communicates its values

as clear and non-negotiable. For example, statements about autonomy, responsibility, and decision-making are presented as defining features of the organization rather than optional benefits.

In addition, the tone occasionally includes unconventional phrasing, particularly when considering topics such as failure or the absence of hierarchy. Failure and learning are described “At Supercell, we kill our darlings, take bold swings and push the limits of what’s possible.” This rhetorical strategy separates the company from more conventional employers and contributes to a sense of authenticity.

Research indicates that tone and inclusivity markers shape perceived fit and attractiveness. An engaging, authentic tone tends to strengthen symbolic employer attributes such as culture, while clarity and formality support instrumental evaluation including role and requirements (Sivertzen et al., 2013, p. 475; Lievens & Slaughter, 2016, p. 418–419).

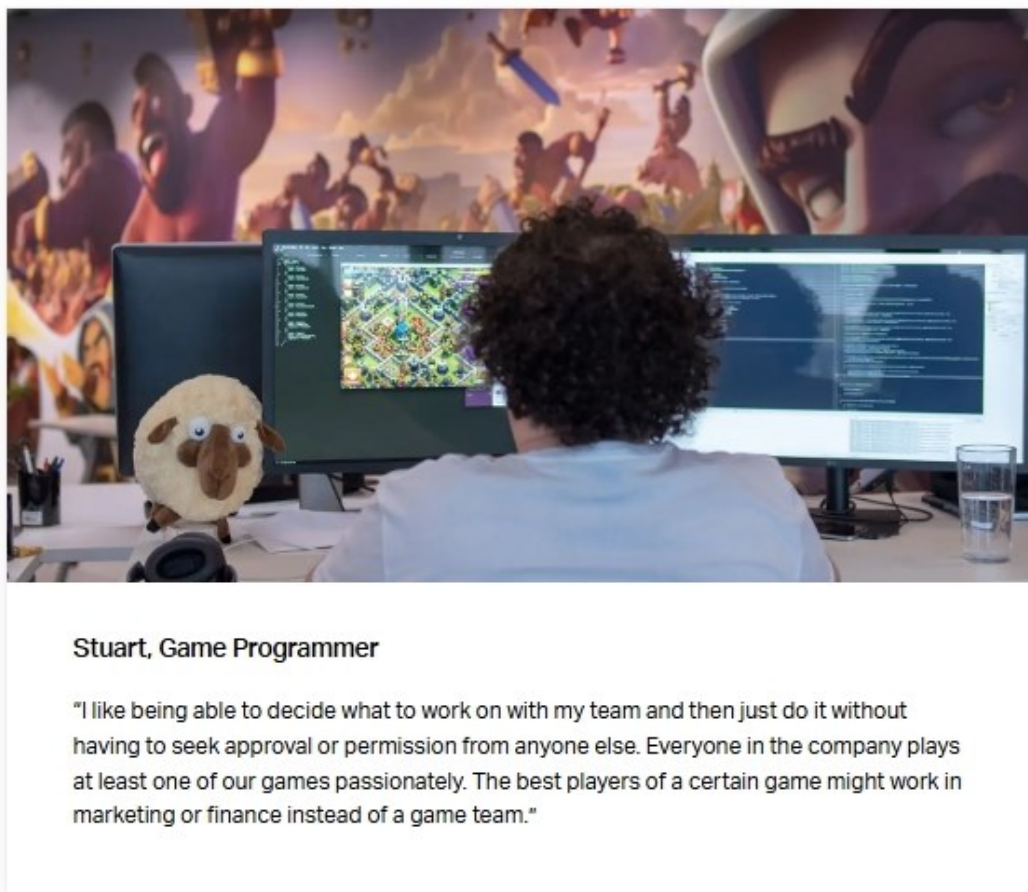
### **4.3.3 Visual Elements**

The Careers section and job advertisements rely heavily on visual communication. The visual design combines game-related images and animations, employee portraits and cinematic videos to create an immersive and emotionally engaging experience. Based on Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), these visuals contribute to meaning-making through representational and compositional elements.

A central finding is the extensive use of game-related visuals. Colorful game characters and game environments dominate the pages and connect the employer brand to the company’s game products and product brand. These game-related visuals are familiar to candidates who have played Supercell’s games. The visuals highlight creativity and innovation, emphasizing the idea that employees participate in building globally recognized gaming experiences. The use of game aesthetics may also blur the boundary

between gaming (as a hobby) and working, suggesting that working at Supercell is closely connected to passion for games and gaming culture.

Another significant visual feature is the presentation of employees through portrait photography and testimonial carousels. Employees in different positions and from different departments are introduced with quotations about autonomy, teamwork, diversity, work-life balance, and relocation. The photographs appear informal and authentic. Smiling employees in the photographs indicate warmth and belonging, and relaxed employees and informal interactions support textual claims about collaboration and informality. Employees are often portrayed at their computers focusing on work, as seen in Image Image 7.



**Image 7.** Employee portrait and quote on the page Careers (Supercell, 2026)

The photographs portray a relatively gender-diverse workforce, particularly considering the broader context of the game industry, where women remain underrepresented. Women are present across the imagery, which may indicate an effort to communicate inclusivity and gender diversity. This is notable, since the Neogames' report (2025) revealed that approximately 25% of employees are female in the Finnish game industry, while 9% of employees identify as non-binary. Similarly, the State of the Game Industry Report 2026 found that 64% of respondents identified as men, 24% as women, and 8% as non-binary. In this context, the visual representation of women in the photographs may be interpreted as an effort to position the company as more inclusive and diverse than the industry average.

Diversity in terms of age appears more limited. The employees portrayed seem to be approximately 25–45 years old. There is no representation of younger trainees, or junior employees, and similarly no older employees close to retirement age. The imagery therefore emphasizes a mid-career workforce, which aligns with the characteristics of “ideal employee” described in the job advertisements.

A video titled “Creating Games that are Played for Years & Remembered Forever” is embedded at the bottom of each job posting (see Image 6 on page 60). The video features CEO Ilkka Paananen, as well as employees. The involvement of the CEO can be interpreted as a way company personalizes its employer brand and supports the idea of a non-hierarchical company. Informal conversational interviews are used to increase authenticity and humanity of the employer brand. The content emphasizes autonomy, creativity, and responsibility. Employees are portrayed as highly talented professionals who are trusted to make independent decisions and take ownership of their work. The video also highlights Supercell's interest in experimentation and failure, framing risk-taking as an essential part of innovation. The messaging constructs Supercell as a workplace for ambitious, self-directed individuals seeking meaningful work.

## 4.4 Summary

The findings indicate that Supercell's employer branding is strongly centered on symbolic employer brand attributes. The Careers section consistently emphasizes themes such as autonomy, trust, ambition, innovation, creativity, and collaboration. "Supercellians" are portrayed as highly skilled, independent professionals who are trusted to make important decisions in supportive teams. The organizational culture is framed as ambitious and driven by shared passion for game development.

The quote "If you love to think, talk, play and make games, Supercell is the place for you" chosen as the title of this thesis represents Supercell's employer value proposition as well as the person–job and person–organization fit perspectives. The statement communicates several core elements associated with Supercell's employer brand:

- Think – refers to innovation and creativity
- Talk – emphasizes collaboration
- Play – reflects passion for gaming
- Make games – highlights the shared purpose of developing high-quality, globally successful games

Instrumental attributes such as location and relocation support, compensation, health and well-being benefits and work-life balance, and career development opportunities are communicated, but they function mainly as supportive elements rather than the core attraction factors. However, the structural placement of the information related to compensation and other financial benefits is analytically significant. The information about compensation and financial benefits is not integrated into the main careers section, where prospective applicants would typically expect to find such details. Instead, it is a blog post published in 2023, embedded in a separate news/blog archive. There is no detailed information available on the compensation and other financial benefits.

Supercell's employer value proposition (EVP) is conveyed through multimodal career websites and job advertisements. Supercell is using the website comprehensively, integrating multiple features such as detailed company descriptions, career and job postings, employee testimonials, and visual content to present a cohesive image of their organizational identity and culture. Previous research indicates that comprehensive and consistent communication enhances perceived organizational attractiveness and strengthens alignment between potential employees' expectations and the company's culture and values (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003; Berthon et al., 2005).

The job advertisements construct a representation of an ideal "Supercellian", a candidate who is compatible with the organization and the job. Supercell prefers highly skilled and experienced talent. Based on the analysis, an ideal "Supercellian" is experienced, highly skilled professional, autonomous, self-directed and responsible, collaborative and passionate game enthusiast. The requirements and expectations in the job advertisements emphasize the similar themes as the employer value proposition in the Careers section.

Overall, Supercell appears as an employer for experienced, highly skilled, ambitious, creative, and self-directed professionals who fit the high-performance, autonomous but collaborative organizational culture. The employer brand messaging is consistent across the Careers section, including job advertisements, which reflects brand coherence and carefully considered strategic choices. Another strength of the communication strategy is the alignment between textual and visual elements, which consistently reinforce the same symbolic meanings. This increases the credibility and persuasive power of the employer brand.

Previous employer branding research suggests that organizations may intentionally emphasize symbolic attributes (e.g., culture, values) to attract compatible candidates (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011). Based on the analyzed contents, it can be concluded that Supercell intentionally prioritizes symbolic differentiation over informational

completeness. While this may enhance emotional appeal, it may also limit transparency and exclude applicants seeking concrete employment details.

## 5 Conclusions

Effective employer branding improves organizational attractiveness, differentiates the employer from competitive organizations, and increases the possibility of attracting the right candidates. The purpose of this study was to examine how Supercell constructs its employer brand through recruitment communication. The study focused on questions concerning the construction of the employer brand proposition and the profile of an ideal employee, and the ways the multimodal communicative elements are used to support that messaging.

The findings demonstrate that Supercell's employer brand is constructed on vision, mission and values, aligning with employer branding theories. The employer brand is strongly centered around organizational values, identity and culture. The employer value proposition highlights symbolic attributes: independence and autonomy, ambition, passion and collective purpose, innovation and creativity, collaboration and teamwork, humanity and respect and internationality and diversity. Instrumental attributes are not prominently emphasized. Location and relocation support are instrumental attributes targeted at international candidates considering relocation. Compensation and benefits are mentioned, but detailed and transparent information about the compensation and benefits is not available. Instrumental information is embedded within value-based and cultural messaging, which suggests that Supercell strategically prioritizes symbolic differentiation.

Location and relocation support are instrumental attributes targeted at international candidates considering relocation. Compensation and benefits are mentioned, but the content is concealed in the old blog post instead of the main Careers website. Detailed and transparent information about the compensation and benefits is not available. Instrumental information is embedded within value-based and cultural messaging, which suggests that Supercell strategically prioritizes symbolic differentiation.

The ideal “Supercellian” is described as experienced and highly skilled, autonomous and responsible, collaborative, ambitious and strongly passionate about games. The job advertisements also include descriptions of specific job tasks and requirements, providing the applicants chance to assess person–job fit based on competences. In addition to practical competence, employees are expected to fit the organizational culture and values. Person–organization fit is communicated particularly through organizational culture, shared values, and emotional attachment to gaming culture. The repeated references to passion for games and collaborative culture communicate expectations regarding cultural compatibility and identity alignment. These findings highlight how employer branding in knowledge-intensive industries often relies on value- and identity-based differentiation, and employment is a meaningful and lifestyle-oriented experience.

The study also identified a contextual dimension of person-environment fit that can be described as “Finland fit” or “Helsinki fit”, and Shanghai in comparison. Supercell’s relocation and location-related communication constructs Helsinki as a safe, peaceful, family-friendly, and high-quality environment for international professionals. The content promotes a broader lifestyle and social environment. In contrast, Shanghai is presented through narratives of urban culture and opportunities. These findings demonstrate how employer branding is adapted to different geographical contexts while still sustaining a coherent organizational identity. However, the information related to relocation is limited and general. This absence of key instrumental information about compensation and relocation may constrain the ability of certain applicant groups to evaluate the practical feasibility of employment and relocation, especially those with families as they might have significant financial responsibilities. Without transparent information about compensation, especially salary details, the employment and relocation may seem less convincing to international candidates with families. Those considering relocation need practical information, such as salary ranges, to assess living costs and residence permit or visa requirements. The EU Pay Transparency Directive coming into force in Finland 2026 requires to strengthen salary transparency, including

obligations to disclose pay ranges and reduce unjustified pay gaps. The new directions will make it obligatory for employers to inform applicants about the starting salary or pay range of advertised positions, whether in the job advertisement or before the interview. It is interesting to see if this changes the recruitment communication practices of Finnish companies, including Supercell.

Overall, this study proves that Supercell constructs a highly coherent and distinctive employer brand primarily through symbolic employer brand attributes, including strong emphasis on organizational values and culture narratives. Employment is presented as meaningful and lifestyle oriented. However, the employer brand of Supercell appears highly selective. Communication constructs an image of an ideal employee who is professionally highly competent but also deeply committed to gaming culture and self-directed ways of working. Combined with Supercell's globally recognized reputation and prestige within the gaming industry, this likely enables the company to attract a large number of applicants while simultaneously filtering candidates based on cultural fit.

The findings contribute to employer branding research by demonstrating how recruitment communication simultaneously functions as attraction, differentiation, and filtering process. At the same time, the study highlights the importance of critically examining what is emphasized, what remains less visible, and how communication shapes perceptions of organization as an employer.

## **5.1 Limitations**

This is a case study focusing only on one company and its website and job advertisements. While this approach is suitable for a detailed and in-depth understanding of the specific context, the findings cannot be generalized to other organizations and may not represent broader trends. The findings are influenced by the unique characteristics of the company studied, which may differ significantly from other companies, even the other game studios in Finland. There is also a risk of researcher bias

in data interpretation, particularly when the analysis relies heavily on qualitative data. It may affect the study's validity.

The analysis is based solely on employer-provided material, and it does not examine job applicants' perceptions or the actual experiences of employees. Furthermore, by relying on publicly available content, the study excludes internal recruitment materials or direct interviews with HR or communication professionals. However, the chosen approach remains valid and reliable for exploring external recruitment communication strategies of the case company, as they are purposefully constructed to influence potential employees' perceptions.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

Additional research is needed to produce comparative understanding of employer branding, especially the international aspect of recruitment in the game industry. Future research should adopt a more comparative and/or candidate-centered approach to better understand how (game) companies are positioned in global talent markets and how their employer branding is evaluated by highly skilled professionals.

Initially, I started analyzing employee reviews published on Glassdoor platform, which is dedicated to anonymous employee reviews and experiences. However, I decided not to include the data in this thesis, in order to keep a clearer focus on organizational communication and official employer branding content. Analyzing employee comments and reviews would be an interesting direction for future research, as it has become very common for job seekers to search for authentic experiences shared on social media and review platforms when considering potential employers.

Systematic comparisons could be made between Finnish game companies, and/or leading global studios. Comparative research would also allow for a clearer assessment of how different employer branding strategies influence global talent attraction.

Future research could examine the location aspect shaping employer attractiveness. Finland's international brand as the happiest country in the world, and a safe, peaceful, and family-friendly society may influence perceptions of Finnish employers, but it remains unclear how strongly this national reputation affects individual company attractiveness. Comparative studies with countries that have different socio-economic profiles could clarify how national branding interacts with organizational employer branding.

Research should focus more directly on the perceptions of highly skilled professionals targeted by game companies, as fewer studies have examined how recruitment messages are interpreted by potential candidates. Qualitative interviews and survey-based approaches would help identify how professionals evaluate key employer brand factors, and how these influence decisions related to application, selection and relocation.

## **Disclosure on AI Use**

AI tools ChatGPT and Claude were used as supportive tools during the research and writing process. These tools were used to assist in identifying and summarizing relevant academic references, generating initial drafts for theoretical part based on my own ideas, and supporting translation and grammar checking. AI-generated content was reviewed and edited.

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