

Master's Thesis
Barriers of Attracting Male Top Talents for L'Oréal: Qualitative Study
by Sarah Schwind

Additional Appendix – Interview Transcripts

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1 Graduates without Connection to L'Oréal

1.1 Interview Lisa:

Introduction: My name is (Lisa), I am Portuguese, I'm 22 going to turn 23 in August. My current occupation is kind of a hard question but basically I am writing my thesis and then I am working for a company which I am writing my thesis with and also for a consultant start-up.

Q: Do you remember the first contact you had with L'Oréal?

I would guess it was before this, but my most, or the moment that I recognize the most was during the first CEMS events that we had, the CEMS opening event in my first year at CEMS. And they organized it in their headquarters here in Prague or their local hub here in Prague and that was the first moment I would say.

Q: How did you experience the event, what did you like?

So I really enjoyed it, they were really open. The fact that they left a lot of time for conversation compared to the time that it was for their own company presentation, it was really nice. Because usually companies have more time for them to talk about themselves than to actually have students to talk with other people. They also had this stand with make-up which I thought it was interesting. So I think the event was really well organized and it gave me a really good impression of like how it is like to work in the company.

Q: Are you currently looking for jobs?

Yes, so as soon as I finish my Master, I have to get employed. That's the natural order of things. So I am looking for an opportunity. The idea for me as well is to go back to Portugal, so probably there.

Q: Would you consider L'Oréal as a future employer?

I would say for me it would really depend on the position that they have open, not that I have anything against the company but I think from the vision and the perception I have from the company, they are very marketing focused, and product/FMCG oriented, so I am not sure, like, if that would be the environment I am looking into getting. Because I am more oriented towards technology.

Q: What traits are you looking for in an employer?

Yea, I think this question is very interesting and quite utopian, but I would say, like, mainly, of course it would be the best work-life-balance possible, flexible hours, working from home as a possibility. Although I think that working from home shouldn't be allowed within all the week, but within one or two days from the week, that would be okay. Also a competitive salary, as they usually mention it but that it's fair, and I think that is something that companies have difficulty of getting nowadays due to the job market. I guess that's it.

Q: How would you describe the culture of L'Oréal?

I've known two people that worked there for Portuguese L'Oréal, and then they moved to France to the headquarters. And from what I understood is that it is a very competitive

environment, even within the firm, and also it's a lot about your image towards other colleagues and so on. This is a very important factor and that it is a bit of a workaholic environment as well. So this is what I've heard.

Q: If L'Oréal was a person, how would you describe it?

So having said what I said before, I think it would be a woman although it could be discussed later, together with the gender things. But it would be a woman for sure, full with make-up, and with a bit of a sassy look and a really defined attitude towards decision-making and so on.

Q: Is there something you would like to know about L'Oréal that you are missing?

I think it's hard to have a good overview of what a company is really like, when you are not there or when you not have like a really, really close friend that works there because they will tell you everything. But I don't think there is one thing I can pinpoint, top of mind, that is missing.

Q: Imagine you are hiring a new candidate for L'Oréal. Which traits are you looking for?

From the soft skills? Yea I would say based on the image that I have from the company, and it can be incorrect, I don't know, right, but it would be somebody who is also competitive in the way how they approach their work and their life. And would be, like energetic, I think that is also something necessary for such jobs and also that cares about the products somehow, so that you can see that this person will in the future really connect to the products and be able to work on it and sell and improve it and so on.

Q: With which of the six founding values do you agree with, see the relation to L'Oréal?

Well, I would say they are all quite normal for any company, and the, maybe entrepreneurial mindset is becoming a bit of a buzzword in every company, not only, like, big corporations because they want to mimic a bit the lifestyle of start-ups which are now their actually biggest competitors in terms of acquiring talent, so I would say this would be the most shocking one for me. Because it's something that I am not sure if the company can actually provide the environment for.

Q: 'Diversity at L'Oréal' What does come to your mind?

None.

Q: How do you perceive the gender balance at L'Oréal?

Once again the impression that I have from L'Oréal from the events that I participated, which were all lead by women, which is also why my perception that there are mostly women working there, and also from the workshops we had there was also the topic, what is it like for women to work with women, so I would guess mostly it would be a women-based environment. Although I do have a friend, which is male and is working there.

Q: Where do you see the importance of having a gender balance?

I think it is very important, but I guess the difficulty for L'Oréal is to attract the males towards the products. But at the same time, I think that the fact that you can mix both types, like, of

genders you can then embrace more into the products that women want to attract men, men want to attract women. So having both in the picture made it probably easy for like innovation and brainstorm around this kind of ideas.

Q: Do you remember a special focus of L'Oréal on attracting more male talents?

Not really, I don't remember any specific mention, and if there was one, it was probably in a joke way, what I can recall. But I don't remember any specific we are recruiting men. However, from the skill seminars we had, they were mostly for male products, so I don't know if it was, like, intended or not but its, I guess, what happened

Q: What traits do you think should be promoted to make more men apply?

If you think on like biological terms, it's an environment for women so that's the first motivation, but I guess men like to be around men. So I think for L'Oréal to capture male talent, you have to exhibit that there is also a male environment within the company.

Q: Is there anything that L'Oréal should improve or you feel like they are lacking?

Like, I think, L'Oréal should focus also on their communication, like they did in their values, to be more up-to-date towards what the young people are looking for. So, as I mentioned, what I am looking for in a job is a lot about technology but I am not restrained to a technology co-company. So I think all companies also have this kind of an environment so it's a bit for them if they want to capture more male applicants, then they should also think what male applicants are looking for, what are the backgrounds they are thinking to attracting and then really specify the job ad towards it, and put maybe the brand as a first extent maybe a bit like not the main point of the commercial or the job ad. Also they should think if they really have during the process, not only during the job ad, male people from L'Oréal that could be the ones interviewing them and giving them the first guidance, so that they can see that there is also not only female in the company, and then it's always about how that process goes and once you actually attract them to apply then it's just a matter of retaining them in the company if they get selected.

1.2 Interview Jerry:

Introduction: Hi my name is (Jerry), I am 25 years old I am studying CEMS in Prague but at the same time I am working at a tech-related company as a Data Analyst. I'm going to graduate this semester, this semester probably.

Q: Do you remember the first contact you had with L'Oréal as an employer?

That was in our opening ceremony, that I guess two years ago in September we had a welcome event with L'Oréal and that like my first impression and, you know, pretty much. How I know L'Oréal as a, as a employer.

Q: Would you consider applying for L'Oréal?

I actually did. So yes.

Q: What kind of position did you apply to? What was the main interest you had?

I remember it was Marketing, yea as Marketing.

Q: What traits are you looking for in an employer?

For me it is like, okay, so first of all, in my opinion recruiting team is really important because that is like the first impression you give to the, you give to the potential candidate. Then it's like you know some, also how my classmates, their feedback were people who was working in L'Oréal before, the feedback. Yea, those for me are really important to at least get more information about the company.

Q: Once you have more information and you are in the application process which kind of traits are important to you?

I guess it would be like, I like their product, I like their brand, that can be one reason why I want to work for them because I know them and I really trust the product, the quality. Yea, I guess for me that is the biggest motivation cause I feel connected and related with the product, with the company. I compared with my current company, cause it is IT industry and its only, were only doing B2B business, so I don't know this company at all before. So for L'Oréal it can be very big advantage to leverage this point with me, in my opinion.

Q: How do you imagine the culture of L'Oréal?

I heard so far it is, like, a lot of girls working there and, it can be, I mean like people in L'Oréal are always hard working, that's what I know so far. Also beauty company and they have a lot of different brands, some of the brands like Lush or The Body Shop they are really like sustainable and they try to be because for that I really like them because in cosmetic industry there are lot of you know people care about the environment and this kind of stuff, so that's what I know about L'Oréal so far.

Q: If L'Oréal was a person, how would you describe it?

I guess elegant, and hard-working also, I mean, for me it's very female company so it will probably be a French lady, really, really elegant and hem, not so young, maybe middle age. She like to enjoy her like life and this kind of stuff, quality. Quality about living, yea this kind of stuff. Like in my mind, right now.

Q: Is there something you would like to know about L'Oréal that you don't know so far?

I guess, I didn't hear too many stories about this, about people who work at L'Oréal. I hear a lot of stories about their products, the brands and this kind of stuff, but I don't know the story behind, so it can be interesting for recruiting people like how they got a product, like kind of like the story of a product, how they are being produced, how they go through a lots of stages, you know, so you can use product for different functions in the company, they can show potential candidates, that's how we work the company. It can be like, you know, that's for me it can be nice.

Q: If you imagine you would be the one hiring a new candidate?

If I'm the recruiter for L'Oréal? So I guess someone who has the same value as the company, like working of the same side, they like our products, they like our brands, I think that is very basic, we need some mutual agreement towards value. Then it would be other soft skills, probably passionate, then hard skills, how to use certain software's, having certain skills, but yea, that is what I would be looking for.

Q: There are six founding values, which one's surprise you or you see the relation to L'Oréal?

Well, for me maybe, can you repeat again. Yea little bit surprising is the Entrepreneurship, because I, I don't know, just I don't really relation it with L'Oréal. Like a lot of company there is Corporate Entrepreneurship but, yea I just want to know how they do it in real life, you know. It's like the surprising one for me.

Q: 'Diversity at L'Oréal' What comes to your mind?

Diversity at L'Oréal? Well, I guess, maybe they want more guys, I guess. Or people with different background, I guess, cause we are doing FMCG, there might be, you have to be from the local, local market and like your customer background since most of the customer is local customer who, who are similar as well so I guess you have to have very similar employee with very similar culture background, so yea, that's from my perception.

Q: And how do you perceive the ratio between men and women?

Not so good I guess.

Q: Did you notice any special focus on hiring more males? How is it communicated?

I mean, for me it makes sense to want more men employees, but I don't know, I feel sometimes they are doing it to deliberately, so people who are recruited they feel a special focus, like, they may think they got recruited because their gender, whatever. But I mean like, yea for some brands, some functions, you do need male employees, if this brand is targeting male so it makes more sense if you use male employee for this brand but sometimes it just doesn't make sense if you recruit male employee for example for I don't know 'Olay', like a for a men doing 'Olay' it is not what they want do. Like I don't know, I don't want L'Oréal to just want men because they don't have enough men.

Q: What do you think would attract a man to work for L'Oréal?

Well, for me it's, I mean I like the product, so that's why I would want to work for them. But for other men, maybe because well, they have lot of female employee, you know it can be a very big advantage for bachelors, probably. I don't know. What else? What can be there are, I don't know.

Q: Something that should be improved or you are not completely satisfied with?

So far, I think it's good. I mean they are spotting CEMS, they are, very proactive. Also in my company they are really like responsible, socially responsible company, so I think not much to improve, it's okay.

1.3 Interview Anna:

Introduction: My name is (Anna), I'm 24 years old, I am a student at VSE studying CEMS also writing my master thesis currently seeking for jobs and I am also very interested in L'Oréal.

Q: Do you remember the first contact you had with L'Oréal as an employer?

I think the first time would be when we came to Prague and we had a welcome event with L'Oréal in the fall of 2016.

Q: What traits are important to you in an employer?

I would say, first and foremost, that they have possible positions where I can work with something that I like, you know, like a field for example I'm not the most marketing kind of person so maybe for example the possibility of working within sales and finance and operations, is important. Also location is important and what people around you are saying, so talking to people who have been working there, who have been to the offices and actually seen the working environment, kind of experienced it. And also that they are present at job fairs, I find it to be kind of important to see how they are interacting with people, and I would say that that says a lot. Of course salary is important but I feel like you never know that until you are at the final point of accepting a job or not. So you still need to get that, you know, get to that point. So it's not like my top, top priority for sure. I think also work-life-balance to a certain extent, but I think when you are a graduate, the first years will be more heavy and you will figure out how to, you know, manage that maybe in the future. Maybe not in the beginning.

Q: How do you imagine the culture of L'Oréal?

I think people are very creative, as I've heard it's not really a structured environment so I've heard it's like really, you know not that you do whatever you want, but you get a task and you can be very open-minded so to say, which is cool. But at the same time I think it could be a bit difficult for people who want a bit more structure in their life. Also I've heard some rumors that there are so many female employees that it could be potentially a problem. Myself when I had my Business Project with them, I didn't find that to be a problem but we were just communicating with boys/guys, none of them were girls or women. So I mean, I haven't experienced it first time but I have for sure heard of it and I would do everything I can to not experience it.

Q: Do you think it was on purpose from them to give you males as responsible contact persons?

Probably. I think so.

Q: Did they say something about it, how the ratio of men and women is at their office?

They never mentioned it. The only thing is we were with the professional product division and they were saying that the, of course, the guy who was responsible for the launch of that product of course were related to him but then we also had three other guys and they were all male and you could walk around the office and you only saw females, so it nearly seemed like those were the only guys actually present. So I would expect it to be on purpose but at the same time it was bit strange. The HR women though, she was actually a woman.

Q: If L'Oréal was a person, how would you describe this person?

Okay, a bit sassy maybe. Creative, a bit trendy and cool, and maybe you know typical French who has the nose a bit, you know, thinking the person is a bit better.

Q: Something you would like to know about L'Oréal as an employer but you haven't heard of yet?

I mean, always talking to people who work there helps and I haven't gotten that opportunity yet just managers and you can't talk with them the same way, I feel as Trainees for example.

Q: If you would hire a new candidate for L'Oréal, what traits would you look for?

I think I would look for someone who is open-minded, flexible, trying to push the limits to some extent, wanting to lead the future as they are be the leader, make the change and all of this, so I think it is important that there is someone who actually can take a punch but at the same time be able to create something back, you know. And also I think social to some extent, because, or just in terms of being not the loudest but at least being able to talk and be like I want to express what I am thinking, maybe. I guess

Q Which of the six founding values surprise you?

Okay. The Entrepreneurship part, I think if you asked me two years ago, I would be very surprised. But now I feel like I've seen how they are actually working a lot on it just when I was in Paris last week, L'Oréal had these huge banners at the airport saying how more and more scientists want to more for them. Because they are actually, you know, entrepreneurial in that way, trying to make new things. Open-mindedness I completely understand, it's a huge corporation so I think in most corporations were there are multinationals you need to, you know. I kind of understand it, I am not super surprised by any of it.

Q: 'Diversity at L'Oréal' What comes to your mind?

I feel like everyone is the same, so not a lot of diversity. Females, either graduates or like in management positions. Or at least from what I would expect and kind of have experienced, that people grow old in L'Oréal. Not at least, maybe, outside Paris, just that you are there, good experience and I feel like they have a lot of, you know, I never remember the word for it but when people quit quite quickly, that they have like (turnover), I think it is quite high.

Q: How do you perceive the ratio of women and men?

Yea, more females than male.

Q: Do you think a special focus on attracting more men is communicated by L'Oréal?

I know that last year, we had the skill seminar and also they had, I think, Brandstorm, related to male product. I actually saw that none of the products they were communicating, like through events, at the university were related to females. So basically that was a good way to attract, because they wanted them to come up with some innovative way and you know, using or, I don't know, market these products. So I guess that's a good way to attract males as well, because if its only super girly and I don't think a lot of guys were interested in it. And they also gave a lot free samples and I gave them all to my boyfriend, because they were all for guys. So maybe that, yea.

Q: Do you think it was communicated well by the company, that they also want female applicants or did you feel demotivated?

To be honest, I feel like it is very difficult when you choose, either a male or female product. Of course male or guys would be happy if its cars, you know, and girls would be happy if its make-up, sure, but it's still not feeling like they are avoiding, trying to get women. It just seems like they are trying to be equal, which is good. So yea, that's life. You can never have both, and it wouldn't be the same. So I feel like, they still, I didn't see that they were just trying to attract guys, not at all.

Q: What should they promote to attract more male applicants?

Lots of hot girls, no, I'm just kidding. I mean what is important is that they have such a huge portfolio, I think what is important is to actually show, that L'Oréal is not just the women make-up but also that in the luxury division they had Giorgio Armani and they have all of these, quite male products, or good products for both women and men. And also that you are able to work with huge launches were you do not have to look at the product specifically, of course you do to some extent, but it is still, great and there are products people know about and I think you can also have a quite steep career path, I've heard that people were upgraded quite quickly and also take you seriously and good benefits and all of this, so I mean, I think, for sure the most important thing is to show that L'Oréal is not just the L'Oréal make-up, I guess.

Q: Is there anything that could be improved or you would like to know?

I'm quite satisfied, because before starting CEMS I never thought about L'Oréal as an employer at all, because in Norway for example, I never saw them. Maybe they are more present in Master studies, I mean like, CEMS is very particular in that way, but I didn't know that they had all those products until I came here. I was really shocked actually. And I was thinking, I have an interest for these businesses and find it to be interesting, so if people like me for example, don't know then I can imagine quite a lot of people, who doesn't know. Because why would you if no-one tells you, right. Some maybe the communication, and actually, but at the same time I know that they don't want to be related to all of their products because they are afraid that this might harm their brands somehow. And that they don't want people, people don't want to buy it because it's from L'Oréal as well so it's of course very important to find the balance. But if you are looking at people who want to work for you, then, I guess they won't look at it the same way as consumers do, so yea.

Q: Do you have anything else to add?

No.

1.4 Interview Tom:

Introduction: Yes, so my name is (Tom), I am from Czech Republic. I'm 25 years old, I currently work in a tech company in an analyst position.

Q: But you're not done with your masters right?

Yes, I graduate hopefully in September.

Q: Do you remember the first contact you had with L'Oréal?

Well, the first I can remember is in connection with our CEMS degree, but if there was one before, but it's likely.

Q: How did you perceive them during this event?

Yea so far a beauty company, or a FMCG company they strike me as quite innovative and quite modern, a lot of young people. So in terms of an employer, I thought it can be an interesting option, for sure.

Q: Would you consider applying for a position at L'Oréal?

Not really, but not because of the company, more because of the industry, so as it is not really my preference, the position would have to be something that's really interesting to me to consider it, I guess.

Q: What traits are you looking for in an employer?

Let me think a bit, if I had to rank them maybe. Because in a way its all of them of course. For me it's really important to, yea, see the value of the work I am actually doing. So I don't really know how to call that, but so in terms of integrity, so that's of both what the company does, what I do within the company. But also if I'm contributing with the job but also if I'm learning a lot, if I find the job fun. So that would be first as like a general category. Then the industry I would say, so tech would be my preference actually, so I'm quite happy and FMCG in contrast would be something rather low. Yea but then as you said it work-life-balance would probably be third, if I have time for other activities and salary, benefits, these things, that would be even lower. I'd say very high would also be an international exposure or multinational team.

Q: How do you describe the culture?

Yea, so to fit in maybe to these, yea I see the team, or a lot of positions I've seen as actually that they can be fun, that the team is young, that the company is doing something. I see value, I use their products and I enjoy them. I think they are trying to be innovative even though the industry isn't necessarily, or at least to that extent. And yea with work-life-balance maybe somehow, so not the best but not too bad for sure. Just from what I've heard. Yea, in terms of salary it can be average, I'm not that sure on that one.

Q: If L'Oréal was a person, how would you describe this person?

That's a very good one. Yea definitely someone setting the trend, that's how I see them. I feel they really inspire other companies with what they do, so not just with different functionalities but also in terms of Marketing and everything, I see them really as being creative and modern. Definitely young, handsome, I guess, or beautiful, depending if the person is he or she. But yea, that's another thing, I'm actually not really sure if it's he or she, so I kind of perceive it also that it's not really a girl-specific company, you know. I don't want to sound sexist or whatever but the industry, I guess you can say is attracting more females, so this with L'Oréal I also see the value they bring to guys, and I know quite a few guys that work there and enjoy it, so, yea, something like that.

Q: Is there something you would like to know about L'Oréal that they haven't communicated?

No, I don't think so. I mean we had quite a bit of exposure and there were always happy to answer stuff so, something that would be really important, I feel like I have the idea.

Q: Would you say the communication was mostly transparent?

Yea, very good.

Q: Imagine you are hiring a new candidate, what traits are you looking for?

Not too sure on that one to be honest. I'd say like creativity, some business accruement, customer orientation, things like this but this is really me guessing in a way.

Q: Which of the six founding values surprise you?

Yea, I think none of them surprise me apart from maybe the Entrepreneurship. That one is a bit more surprising, I guess, because yea, that's maybe something, I don't know that much about the company, how much can you promote your ideas and work on your projects, because it's still a big company and these things are generally a difficult in corporations. The other ones I'm not surprised at all. Innovation, I mentioned and Responsibility, that's something I know as well, that they are trying to be environmental friendly and sustainable.

Q: To which one of the six founding values do you see the most relation to L'Oréal?

Innovation, probably.

Q: 'Diversity at L'Oréal' What comes to your mind?

Yea the gender balance might be a bit difficult to guess, but it's definitely not as female dominated as one might expect or as with other companies in the industry. And yea, I see them as being diverse, not really making that much differences on the local language and so on, that if you speak English and you have the skill set, that they don't really care about yea, your gender or whatever of course. Yea, so I see them as being diverse.

Q: Did you notice any special communication on L'Oréal trying to attract more men?

That's a good question again. I think, not really. So I heard this, yes more of like a rumors or gossip in a way, that people who live there say that they are crazy about guys, they want to hire guys, but yea like in terms of treating me differently than the girls and I mean not just in the application process that's obviously, that they shouldn't but in terms of communication and so on I'm not really sure if I noticed that some roles would be communicated a bit differently which sometimes might help, I don't know if they are looking for a particular skill set.

Q: Do you think it should be communicated differently?

Yea, that's why I got to think now. Because I'm not confident enough to say for this that there are skill sets that guys have over girls with what L'Oréal does so I guess they kind of want to balance the ratio but on the other hand with a lot of the position I've seen, you cannot say a single reason they should hire a guy over a girl.

Q: What should be promoted to attract more men?

In general, some things that other companies don't have and not just in the industry but in general. So this can be the entrepreneurship, maybe seeing this as looking for someone to start like an entrepreneurial project. Yea maybe some of the digital or technical positions which might be more interesting for guys, I don't know. But that's my guess. So with these, maybe,

but yea it's kind of difficult to say. But that would kind of attract me. Having something that is really creative but I would need somebody to guide me well, I guess.

Q: Do you have any recommendations on what should be improved?

No, with talent acquisition I think they are doing a great job honestly. Because there is the Brandstorm competition, I had fun participating even as a guy. Their social media game is strong, their website, LinkedIn all this. On events same thing, they were very friendly and approachable so, yea, I cannot think of anything.

Q: When did you participate in the Brandstorm competition?

Last year, 2017 in Hong Kong.

Q: How did you like it?

I was pleasantly surprised because I applied to the Czech one asked for some details and saying that I'll be abroad and if I need to be present to present something or to work on the project. So they said that it's better to the particular country. And they were really helpful with sending me the country, you know, putting me in touch, so that was good that it felt it was connected, it's not like, that's not us, so whatever.

Q: It was all in English?

Yes, exactly.

Q: Do you have anything else to add?

Yea, when you mentioned if they should attract guy talents, are they actually consider of doing it or not really? Or maybe having it not as balanced as they would want? What kind of is their issue?

Yea, with the 50-50 ratio, I mean, that's what's a bit surprising, that for example in Management, even if it is some industries which are historically male, I don't know some steal or you know, heavy machinery, what not, I still understand the big value if the board is 50-50 or whatever in management. In terms of the whole company, I mean it sounds good as something to promote but otherwise I would take a motivated girl to do it over a guy who takes it as a second or third option any day. Do you know why they want it within the whole company?

2 Graduates with connection to L'Oréal

2.1 Interview Max:

Introduction: My name is (Max), I'm Italian, I come from Bocconi University which is my home university now I am at VSE as an exchange student. I mean I am spending my CEMS semester here at VSE and I'm 27 because I started university a few years later and.

Q: When are you graduating?

Hopefully 2 to 3 months, no in October 2018, hopefully.

Q: Are you currently applying for jobs?

Yea well, first, I mean, I will do an internship next summer at Amazon in the UK, if they make me an offer after the internship I would consider it. Also I am looking for other options, not very actively, but for the moment.

Q: What traits are you looking for in an employer?

Good salary, good salary, good salary, good salary! And career opportunities, I would like to work for a big group, so you know, with a lot of brands, lot of options. And in a good industry, a profitable industry, fashion or high-tech. I wouldn't, I would be reluctant to start in a industry that might not be great, energy or some companies or other type of companies that are not performing very well.

Q: Do you remember the first contact you had with L'Oréal?

The first contact that I had with L'Oréal as an employer was when I get the CEMS interview for the, cause I applied for L'Oréal, and I had an interview, and I got in contact because of the business project.

Q: Would you consider L'Oréal as a potential employer?

Yes, of course. It's a big group, as I said I want, I am looking for big groups to start my career, yea, you know, of course.

Q: What is the topic of the Business project?

Yea, the topic I think is confidential. Because the general manager said that, because they haven't been, it's about the brand Lancôme.

Q: How did you get selected to participate in the Business Project with L'Oréal?

I didn't. I wasn't selected. I was, we couldn't choose the business project company.

Q: Was it one of your preferences?

Yes, it was.

Q: How do you perceive the communication?

Very well, I would say very well. GM is very busy, GM means general manager of L'Oréal luxe, and because Lancôme is one of the brands of L'Oréal, L'Oréal luxe. Yes, very good, he gave us two/ three contacts, like the manager of the company at the beauty institute. Yea, they usually reply soon to give me their availability, the GM is like I said very busy but he is always open, so he is always open to us, to me and the other two members of the team.

Q: How do you perceive the culture of L'Oréal so far?

I would say that I am not an expert of L'Oréal's culture since, I mean I didn't get those many contact opportunities, you know when you go to the Headquarter, I mean the Czech headquarter of course, I was invited to the Milan headquarter as well, but I couldn't go. But, yea, I've just been to the Czech ones and that was very, it's very, you know careful to detail, they put a lot of attention to details, I guess like, everything has to be very elegant, very precise, very fashionable. Because the appearance is of course matters a lot. But then might be working place, as I could see, is like very open, GM once we should meet up in a bar, so like informal, an informal place. And GM gave us contacts to reach out to them, so everybody was very available, very even if we are students, they were treating us as like, young professionals. Yea so, I would say I was expecting a less flat, less flatter organization but I could see that it's not very hierarchical, of course like there must be hierarchy, yea, that's what I, that's what my group and I got so far.

Q: Was there anything else that you expected to be different?

I mean, I just told you that it could be more hierarchical cause, because the general manager of L'Oréal Luxe and he is, when he talks to us he's always like he considers our work is valuable even if it is, it comes from students, of course he makes sure that the, we use the data from reliable, remark, sources and we didn't make them out, make them up. He treats us very, very well, or you know he considers us as a valuable resource people, even if we are not like part of the company. We are just more like consultants, even less, let's say student consultants. And other things that surprise me, I don't know, like I mean, a lot of things surprised me, but not about L'Oréal but the project, maybe. Because we, of course, things are not easy, I think the part that surprised me, you know, really to make a decision you have to consider a lot of factors, you have to think carefully about the options, and it's not easy, even if it could seem easy for like a luxury, a luxury like brand or just a world market, fast moving consuming goods, which is luxury Lancôme, you know, it takes a lot of time, and research and it costs a lot of money.

Q: If L'Oréal was a person, how would you describe it?

Look, because appearance for L'Oréal they matter a lot, and you know, just the impression, not sure about it, the way like the GM and the others they put a lot of attention even to their appearance even to physical, you know even like physical appearance, the way they look, okay. Even you know like fancy, everything, so I would say beautiful, smart, because they are very good, very competent work, they put a lot of attention to details and they consider a lot the details and also the costs, so it's not like a person that just comes for money, that just gives the money away, so not that type of person. The person would be very interesting to meet.

Q: Imagine you are hiring a new candidate for L'Oréal, for which traits would you look for?

Person that must be smart, because really the job is not easy, okay. A person that is ready to work a lot, to commit to the company, to, he is not scared to do extra work. A person that has passion for the fashion industry or luxury industry in general, even not like, specifically about cosmetics industry because like, maybe not, but beauty industry in general. A person that, I would look for smart people and I would try to, you know, distinguish smart people, look at their CVs, making questions, and look at their education and experiences. And yea, that's pretty much it.

Q: To which one of the six founding values do you see the most relation to L'Oréal?

Quest for Excellence is about the luxury, right. So it's very, very necessary I would say. Even the others like Innovation, they always strive for new products, even like in the project we are

like, you know we are having our plans at the moment, it's about innovating. Finding new ways, you know like, finding new ways of doing the business. It's without a doubt innovation, right. Responsibility, I think that, like, I would need a better understanding, a better knowledge of the company to say something about it. Passion, of course, like people that work there, they seem very passionate about the job and yea, without a doubt, yea, I mean for sure. They seems like they have a, they are very passionate about like not just the company but also about what they produce, which is good because it makes a company work for it. Open-mindedness, I don't know. Because luxury industry is open-minded but until a certain point, right. I don't know. I think the customer that buys a product at L'Oréal of course also likes to find always the same product because he or she translates. So open-minded I don't know. Entrepreneurial spirit of course, there are a lot of opportunities in the marketplace, yea it is a company as like all the other companies they are really trying to take advantage of these new opportunities and they, you know, like to exploit them.

Q: 'Diversity at L'Oréal' What comes to your mind?

As I said, as a first responsibility I would need a better knowledge of the company here in Czech Republic at least. Diversity I can say that the General Manager is French, and all the people we got in touch with just were like younger professional women. So I think that the general part is pretty much expected. Also because like women are more likely to be into luxury cosmetics, perfumes and L'Oréal. You can say the industry attracts women more than men. For other types of diversity, I wouldn't know. It's like a sensitive topic and I don't go that far, and I'm not in the company that much to know about other people's orientation, about races, I have met to few L'Oréal people so I cannot say.

Q: How you perceive the diversity in terms of gender?

We haven't met that many people in L'Oréal but the general manager at L'Oréal luxe is a man, but other at the Lancôme Beauty Institute, the general, the manager at the store was a women and she was very competent and you know, and overall other assistants that helped us, you know, in the project that were women, so I think, that the general part is better for L'Oréal, but I am not completely sure, because I haven't, we haven't met those many people. And like the biased position sure is mistaken, by the end of the day.

Q: Did you notice any special communication on L'Oréal trying to attract more men?

No.

Q: What would a men look for in L'Oréal?

What I am looking for. A good job, perspectives to a career, you know, which can be offered by a big group. Good salary, of course. Good options about relocating maybe, and like the choice of where you want to work.

Q: So rather hard numbers, and traits and benefits than the product?

Yea. I mean, yea, of course.

Q: Would it bother you to work for rather female products?

No, not at all. Why would it bother me? Not at all. I don't, I mean I could be working for a company that I don't, like produces dog foods and I don't care if I vice versa dogs or. If the company is a great company, I would work for them, of course.

Q: Do you think their focus on attracting more male applicants should be communicated differently?

I don't know. Maybe no, because, you know, like, it would be, a side effect could be that women like, possible future employees would feel that they are discriminated. And you know it's like, it's not like going along with the vast trends which are like on the opposite side, you know prefer women instead of men to push for not promote gender diversity, I don't think so.

Q: Do you have any recommendations on what should be improved?

Well, the recruiting process was not that clear. But I am talking about another experience. Because I had an interview I couldn't go for an assessment day at L'Oréal in Milan, so I send them an email, saying like okay, I am interested in the company if it would be possible to do something else. And after that I got an interview over Skype, with an HR, Italian HR manager, after three or four weeks, I don't remember it, they sent me an email that the, you know, saying that I was going to be contacted by an HR specialist from another country, so I gave them my availabilities and gave them my preference, okay, but so far I haven't received anything. Anything more, so I don't know.

Q: How long ago was this?

It was one and a half month ago. So they said that by the end of the month which was march, so now we are already you know in advanced April, I don't know. Because I don't know, if it's still going on or if it's not. Of course I could write but it should be more clear, they cannot wait like forever and they cannot like, you know. I think it should be a little more clear, even regardless to men or women. I skipped the assessment day in Milan because I had another interview at another company so I couldn't go, I really appreciated that they could give me another personal interview, and they contacted me again but then there was like, they put me aside. So it's not good, like it doesn't feel good when you don't know, you are not sure about it and your progression.

2.2 Interview Rachel:

Introduction: My name is (Rachel), I'm 26 years old, I am also student of CEMS and I am also working as a Marketer in google.

Q: Are you working part-time or full-time?

Full-time. And I am doing the Business project with L'Oréal.

Q: Do you remember the first contact you had with L'Oréal?

Yea, last year I had a, I did a Czech master and I had a course with the man, he was super good, right, and super nice, and he is doing the products for hairdresser. You know him? He's teaching here. He's Czech and he's doing hair professional only for Salons and he was super great. He was great. He was teaching us brand marketing.

Q: Was it focused mostly on theory or also on promoting L'Oréal?

I think he combined it because, it was brand management, yea it was brand management. So he was combining his, his experience from brand Marketing with L'Oréal and he was also talking about the culture of L'Oréal and there was also the one from HR. And she told us about the L'Oréal culture and all the stuff.

Q: How do you like the business project so far and how is the communication?

Actually the communication is hard because we want data and they don't want to give us data, so it is kind of hard because it's very important for us. Because they, we are doing real project which they will use in future but if they don't believe us or I don't know why they don't want to give us the data. This is the point. Like the communication is okay, we set up the meetings and they come and occur and everything, but okay so do you believe us or no because we are working for you, we are working for you for free, but like, you know.

Q: Would you consider applying for a position at L'Oréal?

I think if there will be position in Marketing, and some kind of products which I like, I could, maybe.

Q: Has the participation in the Business Project changed your opinion?

Actually doing the business project with L'Oréal, it doesn't change nothing because I am not in touch with the company, that is the point. Because maybe they, I expected that they would invite us for some skill seminar or some seminar where we can get more information about the company, where we can get more focus and we can get, you know, in-depth the company how they are thinking and everything, but it's like we are doing, we are like the outsource company who is working for L'Oréal, so.

Q: What traits are you looking for in an employer?

For me its work-life-balance because I have one huge hobby and its running. So I really need to have time for running, so I prefer employer, where I can go for run during lunch break, for example. And also I need shower in office, so this is for example, really the equipment in offices are important for me and of course salary.

Q: How do you perceive L'Oréal's culture?

I think their image is super cool, its well-known, they have great ambassadors. But I don't know the culture of the company. So this is the point. I expected to get more in-depth in the company during the Business Project but no. So they didn't even offer us a place where we could work on the Business Project. You know, because normally for example in Google, they have for half day a week, they have booked a room for working. Also in Skoda and everywhere, and they didn't offer us place. So this is how, like how we couldn't get in touch with the people and everything, so I don't know the culture of Lancôme, not Lancôme, L'Oréal.

Q: If L'Oréal was a person, how would you describe this person?

Okay lady, slim, fit, tall, lady, with nice hair, very nice perfume, somehow this how to say, I think Eva Longoria. I think she's not fit and not slim and not tall but now when I think about it when I was younger, because I really love her, she is like my, wow, and I remember I went to drugstore because they had the you know the advertisement like the paper one the big one, and it was for something and I think it was for L'Oréal and I think it was like blue print something and Eva Longoria was on it, so for me yea, I can see about Longoria.

Q: Is there anything else that you expected to be different?

Yea, I expected the room, I expected to be more in touch with the company, with the people, to get know the company, the culture of the company, to know how the people are thinking, you know and everything. For example, also some basic trainings for the employees what they are making, doing. And yea, maybe more of consulting job from our mentor/tutor from L'Oréal. Because for example now they told us, okay so just approximately how much cost this one, but we really don't know, because neither of us is working in Beauty, so I really don't know how

much cost this and this and this. So it's like, really like, how we can do this and how we can get this data, so it's hard from us. So I expected maybe they can, they could connected us with some brand manager or somebody.

Q: Imagine you are hiring a new candidate, what traits are you looking for?

It's hard. I think everywhere it's very important to feel the brand and to feel the product, so if you really don't care about beauty and about cosmetic products, I think you don't have place in this company. So you should be like some kind of in beauty, but I don't mean like you have to be super into beauty, you have to wear super nice make-up and everything but you have to like feel with it, so yea like see that this person is interested in the topic of beauty, and who really cares about it.

Q: Which of the six founding values surprise you?

Okay, it's like almost in every company I think. I think Passion is okay, because I felt it from the teacher, I told you, we had, last year. Innovation of course, this company has to be innovative, of course, because like new products and everything. Entrepreneurial okay, this is I'm surprised. Open-mindedness, maybe yes, I really want to know if I come up with something new, if I really can do it or if it's like corporate and waiting for approval, and waiting for approval. Of course like here, it's like yea, of course but I am not sure if because there are corporate, so it sounds funny to me. But of course every company wants to have open-mindedness people. And yea Quest for Excellence, yea of course, because they are selling great products and also luxury products, so it must be top of the top. Responsibility, every employee should be, has to be responsible so it has to be. So for me entrepreneurial spirit, for its like bam.

Q: Would you look for entrepreneurial spirit in an employer?

I don't know. Maybe it's not necessary for me. Because I was working in small company which was super innovative and was kind of, they have entrepreneurial spirit. Now I am working in corporate so it's not important for me, I think.

Q: 'Diversity at L'Oréal' What comes to your mind?

Women, maybe. And I know they have problem with men, because it's of course beauty, they have beauty products. I don't know enough, nothing about diversity at L'Oréal. I just know that they don't have enough men.

Q: Did you notice any special communication on L'Oréal trying to attract more men?

It was communicated by the teacher last year and, but I didn't hear it. Only at the course, last year.

Q: What did he say?

It was like we asked him, like he is working at L'Oréal and how this happened and what is his way to come to L'Oréal and we asked how many male are working at L'Oréal and he said that this is problem because not many men are interested to work with beauty products and everything.

Q: What do you think would attract more male applicants?

I think if L'Oréal has a good company culture, this could work. And also show that like men in L'Oréal are like normal male, not like gay or something. Because I think this is how people think, and like show them the benefits.

Q: Would it demotivate you if you would hear of a special focus on attracting more men?

I think no, because I think I have a lot of experience and if I am good for them, they would hire me and if they want male, they will specify it in the job description.

Q: Do you have any recommendations on what should be improved?

More focus on students during the business project. And I don't know, tomorrow we have skill seminar. So they are doing this, which is cool.

Q: What is the topic of tomorrow's skill seminar?

Leadership skills

2.3 Interview Monica:

Introduction: My name is (Monica), I am from Austria. I'm home school student at VSE in Prague. I am in my first CEMS year. That's it.

Q: Do you remember the first contact you had with L'Oréal?

That was probably at the presentation of the Business Projects which was the real first contact. Yea I think I never, wasn't really in touch with them before and yea.

Q: How did you get selected for the Business Project?

Our names were drawn so we could not really, like we didn't had a lot of influence on which project to get because, yea, you, depending on when your name was drawn from the box you could choose the project. Should I kind of say, L'Oréal wasn't my first choice but it was amongst my favorites.

Q: What is the topic you are working on?

It's about whether L'Oréal should open an e-commerce platform, directly, like an e-shop. Or not L'Oréal, because L'Oréal of course has it but Lancôme, the sub-brand.

Q: And you are working with two other students on the project?

Yes.

Q How is the responsibility from L'Oréal? How many people are responsible for you or are you in contact with?

Actually its quite good communication, so there is one girl from HR. I really don't remember the name. Yea, so one girl from HR, then GM, the manager, like CEO. And now, like during the project, we needed someone with deeper information, so like employees from Lancôme, so we got in touch with the brand manager, or the store manager, from the Lance Beauty Institute and also like the marketing manager of Lancôme. So whenever we needed someone, they filled the relationship and the connection.

Q: How is the communication with them?

It's very good, actually.

Q: Do you feel like you have to push them to give you information?

No, it's actually very good. Like, whenever we had a question or for example today we had a meeting and so far it always worked out. Whatever we discussed in the meeting, I am just sending an email with the summary and a list of things that he promised us, for example to deliver, and within a few days we usually get the information we need, so far it worked really well.

Q: Would you consider L'Oréal as a future employer?

It's not, I would not exclude it, let's say, from my list of employer, but it's also not what I am actively seeking, kind of, like in the cosmetic industry.

Q: Since it wasn't your first choice, has something changed your opinion since you worked with them? How did you expect it?

Yea, actually. Just comparing the other projects, I feel we were lucky with L'Oréal, because the communication works and the tasks are pretty clear, some other projects don't really know what to do or which direction to go and we get a lot of support, I think and guidance, so in that regard I am happy that I ended up.

Q: What traits are you looking for in an employer?

Yea, like all Millennials, kind of the work-life-balance probably, that's the most important, because so far I was also very lucky with my employers regarding that, it was very nice atmosphere in the office, there were after work activities provided by the employer and flexibility encouraged, so that's what I really like. Salary of course is important as well, but I think its most important to have the nice office environment and you feel like the managers are approachable, you don't have the hierarchical structures from, that you need five permissions before you can change a small thing, so. I think that's the most important.

Q: How do you imagine the culture of L'Oréal?

Do be honest, I wouldn't like to answer because I can't really tell. We were in the office twice only, we also never worked there, so I can't really say. However, the office looked so far, it was an open office space, and we were there always in the evening, which also meant it was quite empty, so I really can't tell but it seemed quite nice atmosphere, because there were people sitting on these islands together and yea, it wasn't like very strict or something.

Q: If L'Oréal was a person, how would you describe this person?

Very difficult, you mean just like the Czech branch or in general? Because I think it differs, probably. Maybe, let me think a moment. Probably supportive, because if they are supportive towards us, I guess they are also supportive to its employees. Open-minded, I would say, I wouldn't say that they are excluding any countries. I don't want to say organized, but more probably they are, like on a global level for sure. Yea, it's a huge company with so many sub brands so they have to have a certain kind of structure and it works. It's difficult to answer.

Q: Is there something that surprises you in L'Oréal compared to what you expected before?

I didn't really have any expectations, to be honest. Really I haven't thought about it, you know.

Q: If you would hire a new candidate for L'Oréal, what traits would you look for?

Well, the competences must fit with the position, with the company values, I don't know, the classics. I don't know anything specific.

Q: Which of the six founding values surprise you?

The only thing that would surprise me is the entrepreneurial spirit, because I don't, I mean, depending on the position of course, but it's a corporation and its nothing, like, I don't know how individuals or individual departments are encouraged to act entrepreneurial in a way as like subsidies in itself, but yea, that's maybe the one thing that I don't really see the fit there, but everything else. Passion for sure, fits totally, Innovation must be, also the Excellence, yea, everything fits.

Q: Do you feel like entrepreneurial spirit is something you really look for in an employer or that is important to you?

Not specifically important, but it's of course a good trait, very valuable.

Q: 'Diversity at L'Oréal' What comes to your mind?

In the office I really don't have the knowledge, but from their promotions and the advertisements they use and so on I think they are trying to show that they are supportive towards diversity.

Q: How do you perceive the ratio of women and men?

As a prejudice I would think of course that there are more women because it's a cosmetic brand, it's probably very likely, but I can't say for sure.

Q: Do you think a special focus on attracting more men is communicated by L'Oréal?

Not at all.

Q: Do you think it should be promoted?

I mean, they should promote themselves as an employer itself and their values that you get from them as an employer, not so much what they represent for products, because then of course men might not be as attracted to apply for a position in L'Oréal than let's say IBM or what so ever. But if the benefits of the employer are clearly communicated for example like flexible working hours or whatever like their target group might look for, I think men can be attracted to work for L'Oréal as well.

Q: Would it demotivate you to apply to L'Oréal if they put a special focus on men?

No, I would think so. Because I usually try not to pay attention to this special, like, promotion or something, because I usually try to believe in myself and not focus so much on what they are looking for but try to be confident about what I can offer them, so for me personally it wouldn't really matter, I think.

Q: Is there anything so far that you think could be improved?

Yea, as an employer, I really don't know that much, but from, regarding the communication it worked really well and I can't say anything. Maybe, I don't know, maybe a bit more communication, because so far, okay we have every two weeks a meeting, so maybe a bit more communication in between, but I mean it must also come from our side, so I can't really blame them for any improvement. So far it worked fine.

Q: What would make you apply more for L'Oréal as a future employer?

I mean, so far, just from my personal experience, I already have a quite nice image of them, so there is not so much I like to know. But now that you raise the topic before regarding the diversity, I would be interested if they, what kind of initiatives they have? Because actually we have another topic on diversity with Danone and they do a lot and there are a lot of initiatives for, like, yea gender balance or even encouraging diversity, different work forces, so I would like to know how multicultural maybe the employment is, or like the office, if they are, what's the language spoken usually, people from different countries, and so on. That would be nice.

Q: What kind of diversity programs does Danone have?

One was for example the supporting female, entrepreneurs, also like with the gender balance, one was supporting young talents, there are like several sport events encouraging diversity starting from not only different nationalities and backgrounds but also men and women and also that they support disabled people or employ them, that they really actively promote, their slogan was kind of 'We are all unique, we are all individuals, but we are all Danoners' kind of, so that, that like really their whole website and everything they promote about themselves screams diversity, it's almost already too much, like I mean it's still very nice and I think it's very attractive because they really promote the international work environment and they don't, they really give you the feeling no matter who you are, or where you come from you can apply and you have an equal chance. And I think that's really communicated, sometimes you feel like okay they just put diversity because they have to but Danone really, I think feels it and lives it, that's the image they give.

2.4 Interview Peter:

Introduction: My name is (Peter), I'm 25 years old, I work as a financial analyst or business analyst for a major capital firm and ventures. I'm Czech. And I'm also a student.

Q: Do you remember the first contact you had with L'Oréal as an employer?

I did an school project, so first contact was in the spring, or actually Fall 2017, sometime around the beginning of 2017 and it was at the university where they showcase about the Business Project so that was my first personal contact with them as an employer.

Q: How did you like it?

It was a lot different from what I expected or what I was just to, from my other work, more friendly French structure-like, I would say, so it wasn't very structured, it wasn't too organized, but it was still fun to work with (HR) because she's just a nice person to work with. But it was just a different experience. So I did like it in general, I really liked the team, which was very nice. But like the work itself wasn't exactly what I want to do in life. So if I would have to rate it, I would say six and a half out of ten.

Q: Was it different than what you expected before?

Yes, very much so the biggest takeaway I have from L'Oréal before I had the project and after is that the company is completely different, in general the FMCG industry is that a lot of people, including me perceive it as a Feminine Company as a cosmetics company, but then you realize there are so many departments that are not feminine and it's not about, you know, the products

are one side of the story, but the company is a different side of the story. So then I realized, hey, it's good to work for L'Oréal because you can do Finance or whatever else. And that the actually like development or marketing of the cosmetics is very, just a small part of the whole picture. But I, I do believe that it still prevents a lot of people from applying just because they are maybe worried that they will be perceived as working for a feminine company.

Q: Would you consider applying for a position at L'Oréal?

Under certain conditions, Yes. It wouldn't be Top of my priority list or choice list. But uh, yeah, I can imagine working for them. If it was interesting offer, they would have to counterbalance that it's not my field of interest in the industry. So, uh, if they would balance it with a nice offer, being financial incentives, being some benefits then I can see myself working there.

Q: Did the Business Project change your opinion of applying or considering L'Oréal?

Yes, definitely. The exposure to the company changed my mind. I probably wouldn't work for them, otherwise, I probably wouldn't even think about it.

Q: What traits are important to you in an employer?

So should I just give a list of things? But not in order. Still since I'm at the beginning of my carrier, like the financial incentives are really strong, then the location, being in Prague, the team I would work with, that's very important, I'm starting to learn that it's crucial to have good people around you in the company. Like the actual team but not like the whole company, but the court team you work with. Then probably the environment in the office because again, if I compare to my current work, right, where I am right now, the offices in L'Oréal are not my type, because its disorganized and I like things to be in place and organized, so the working environment obviously helps a lot and then what's really important for me is, I do other things besides work, like a set of side jobs is the time management, so for example can be very crucial for me to have like a flexibility on the time front so, you know, I can do my work and one day and take a day off, and its project based not 9 to 5 job.

Q: How do you imagine the culture of L'Oréal?

It's hard to judge because I never was within the company, I always just interacted with a couple of people, I never sat in the office, but the culture, I think there are unspoken tensions between the employees and I don't want to say it's because of its, you know, a lot of women, but it's just, I see there's like a war between male/men and female/women and also that is fueled by the campaign of hiring more men. So I think also because a big company that the air is very clear and it's not, it's not as friendly as I would expect, but it's just outside perception and I don't have an objective insight. Then the culture from what I saw on like the hierarchy level, I think it's pretty easy to climb up the ladder, which is always nice, that you have, you see your potential where it can go if you stay with the company, which isn't always clear. For example, in my company, since it's a small company I don't really know where I can go in five years. So this is a benefit I would say. And then from what I heard, the culture of being very nice to the employees in sense of benefits and time balance and all this, it's, I think it's good. So again, if I should rank it seven/eight out of ten, maybe.

Q: If L'Oréal was a person, how would you describe this person?

So again, I would say it's different before the business project and after. Before the business project, I would say, you know, women, 35, successful, you know, working in management position, taking care of herself, medium to high income, beautiful, obviously, smart and afterwards I don't, I don't know, it's hard. It would still be the same description, like job description and age description, but it can be a woman, sorry, I mean it can be a man as well. For example, the regional CEO, what is his name, Tomas (Hruska), he is an ex-CEMSie as well, so for me that is the men-version of L'Oréal, it can be either or. It's slightly less organized than I would expect, but yeah, friendly.

Q: Which of the six founding values surprise you?

Innovation is the first, responsibility one, I would say, from what I've heard again, that the employees have their own projects, then maybe the entrepreneurial spirit as well. Passion, no, I would say, no. Innovation, yes, Entrepreneurial, yes, Open-mindedness, I cannot judge and Quest for Excellence, I wouldn't say. So out of these Entrepreneurial spirit, open mindedness, sure, but I wouldn't say Passion.

Q: If you would hire a new candidate for L'Oréal, what traits would you look for?

Analytical thinking, to bring some structure, not structure, but like more analytical thinking in the company so it's less soft, but it's more structured but maybe that's because of my character, Also sense of responsibility, so not to hire kids that are just following the rules, but people that are trying to push it forward and come up with new things, because L'Oréal supports it, I think, they give people projects and let them run them. So responsibility, organization or being structured, very good soft skills, because L'Oréal after all is a Czech company so the people should represent the company. So I would say they should have a good presentation, interpersonal skills. So these three things I would say.

Q: 'Diversity at L'Oréal' What comes to your mind?

I would say Sweden, surely, because I think they are pushing it to the extreme level and the whole impulse of trying to make it more diverse came from a number instead of an experience, meaning that someone sold, there's 70 percent women, 30 percent men and they said, hey, this is not okay we should change that but it didn't come from analyzing the actual culture and the way things work there. So this, yeah, I think that's my perception. So I think they should build upon the actual problems and not just the number and no it creates, coming back to the topic, know it creates tension between men and women because women from my experience, they kind of feel offended and threatened because they see that good female hires are not being hired because they have to hire men and it's frustrating, some people left the company from what I heard and it's not good. So diversity to a certain extent is important. But I would say that it needs to be built underneath not on the number. And if I can close it up, I in don't think L'Oréal it's too necessary to have more men. I don't think that the business does require it and I think the women make it as well as guys. So there's no actual need for having more men, from what I saw.

Q: Because you said women are getting threatened by the special focus on men, how do you think it should be communicated?

It's very, very sensitive and I know that they're struggling with it because how do you tell a women they need to hire more men because they're men, Because it's fundamentally wrong and that's connects to my prior answer, that they shouldn't look just for gender. I think the way it should be communicated, HR is also trying to, I think, that's not to hire more men per se, but stop losing lot of male talent. So I don't think the problem is, you don't have enough men, the problem is, we don't have enough men candidates, like qualitative candidates, because I suppose in my case I would've never think of applying for L'Oréal. So I think they should be targeting more men, but you know, just to increase the inflow of men candidates but they shouldn't just be hiring them to increase the number. So yes, in the pipeline of potential hires, it should be more equal in the ratio, but then the people you hire is a completely different story.

Q: What traits do you think should be promoted to attract more male?

If I use my example, I would say that the position, they offer. So they should go to fairs and they should promote their finance department, they should promote their technology department, they should promote their technology department, like innovations and I think HR started doing this over a year ago and they're doing a good job on it, but, yes, promote the positions you have.

Q: Do you have any other recommendations for improvement?

One thing I remember from our research is that they should put more attention to detail, already during our business project, I know they went to VSE or somewhere, and they were already trying to hire more men and then they had this little pinky mouse that, like a mouse to the computer, which was like sparkling and all that shit, and their Wi-Fi password was, I don't know, something like super feminine and I think it's the little details that really matter just like their office, which is not very attractive to me as a man, it's pretty messy. And so there are these little things that are easy to fix, but I think they can make a big impact. Attention to details.

3 L'Oréal Employees

3.1 Interview Daniel:

Introduction: So my name is (Daniel), I started working here in July last year, July 2017. And it was after I participated in Brandstorm, that year. My current position is Retail Design Intern, which usually is for 6 months but I decided to prolong that period and to extend the contract and I still work as an intern because I still go to school, I am still studying. Was there something else?

Q: Are you working part-time or full-time?

Its a part-time. My, I need to work 25 hours a week.

Q: Do you remember the first contact you had with L'Oréal?

The first contact I had with L'Oréal was actually in my previous job because before I was working as a talent sourcer in a recruitment agency and L'Oréal was our client, so I was actually recruiting people for L'Oréal, and that was my first connection to L'Oréal as in general. And after that the HR Employer Branding manager, she was my boss in my previous job so, she actually approached me if I was interested in some position that she could send me the current available position so I wanted, then I picked one and I applied for it.

Q: Was this after you participated in the Brandstorm competition?

Yes, when I was participating in Brandstorm I was still working in my previous job. So actually there was no period in between the jobs. I finished, or I ended in my previous company in June and beginning of July I started working here.

Q: Did you get hired because of the contact with the HR manager or did it had something to do with your participation at Brandstorm?

I had contact with (HR) before, she was always asking me because that's her job, to recruit people. And I was always like 'no, I'm pretty good, I'm pretty comfortable at my current position, I don't want to change' and then after Brandstorm, when I experienced the culture and I actually visited the office and met the people, I decided to apply to one of the positions that was offered to all the participants.

Q: So you could say that participating in Brandstorm changed your opinion of applying?

Yes, that's true.

Q: Was there a certain reason why you changed your mind?

I think one of the reasons was that I started to be a little bit less happy at my previous job, I was working there for almost two years so I was feeling like part-time job for two years is pretty long time. And I wanted to try something new and experience the corporate culture because my previous job was in a start-up company.

Q: What traits are you looking for in an employer?

yea, all those I would say it's a technical feature of this, salary, some benefits are important but for me not that much. For example, when I started working here, I actually went a little bit down with my salary. But I, what I'm most interested in when some job opportunity comes is some progress that comes along with the opportunity. So when I thought of starting as an intern here, I saw that there is a possibility to climb up in the corporate structure, to set the goals and go up

for it which in the start-up company is also possible but its more flat and really depends on where you are getting in, how you deal with some other responsibilities. So this was something I wanted to try and the most important thing for me was like, progress, the career progress.

Q: How would you describe the culture of L'Oréal?

First thing I can, I have in my mind about the culture is its really I would say beautiful or luxurious, something in between that and it goes along with the products because since we are cosmetics company, I think its speaks for itself that when you come into the office you can see the products, you can see the nice visuals on the walls, so that is something, that is one feature of the culture, that its beautiful. And then it is really open, when I started everybody was really nice, they, it's not really common in English but there is no like formal, like real formal talking to each other, its more informal, which I was first a little bit surprised, I thought it was more formal, but I was happily surprised that it's not. So openness, beauty, and what else about the culture, I really don't know.

Q: Is there anything else you expected to be different before you started working at L'Oréal?

Maybe it's just because I didn't had that much experience before I started working here, but I actually thought that people working at L'Oréal would be more professional but not in a bad way, more in the manners in the way of their talk, the way of their act, but they still are professionals in what they do in the content of their work but they don't seem like to be too much cocky about it.

Q: DO you think it should be communicated differently?

It might. Now I am trying to think of how our like brand or the company is communicated actually and there is like a stress put on the openness of our company about the opportunities and like career progress, so I think it could be maybe more communicated but one easy way how to do it, is when people are going to a job fairs or maybe to visit universities and there not in a suit and tie but there are informally dressed and I think L'Oréal is doing that, so I think it is okay.

Q: Is there something that you expected to be different in regards to your position?

To be honest my position is really, I don't want to say unique, but it is a little bit. Because there is no retail design team in the whole company structure except for luxury division and its the unique form of marketing, I would say. So first I wasn't, I had no idea like what my responsibilities would be, then during the first interview, I kind of got the idea. and then, Yea I was a little bit surprised, I was a little bit surprised about being more in the field, like in the stores, checking the right visuals, and if the furniture is okay its broken or it needs to be fixed, some kind of like maintenance a little bit, but it's a good thing. First I thought like okay I have to go there and do this and do that but actually it's nice to once a week, twice a week to go out just to check things and it's not really that annoying, it's nice not to sit in the office the whole day. That was something that surprised me.

Q: Which of the six founding values are you confronted with the most?

For me, I really identify with responsibility, because the work that I do, like maybe after those one or two month of some kind of on boarding, I think that there is a lot of responsibility that lies on me personally, that my boss, my boss is kind of really trusting me in these projects and she lets me to work pretty much on my own. So responsibility, definitely which is great for I think, young people starting to have and to experience that, but I don't really, I don't know if it's really common for everybody, I think that maybe there are certain intern positions that need

to have really like supervision about them, so but for me personally its really responsibility as I mentioned earlier the openness.

Q: Imagine you are hiring a new candidate for L'Oréal. Which traits are you looking for?

Well, if I would be hiring manager I would definitely, I would focus on like the personal characteristics of the person, like I mean not really professional history or job experience before, I would try to be aware who is the person going to be working with, if they are going to click, if he has what it takes to do the job, So what are those qualities, its like being a team-player, its being able to, being flexible in my opinion, its better than to be a big head and going one direction, and then definitely innovation, because if something runs the business forward nowadays is innovation so to think really wide and not focus on just one direction.

Q: 'Diversity at L'Oréal' What does come to your mind?

Immediately, yea of course, it's the fact that there is not a lot of guys in the whole company structure or especially when I think about our division, there is definitely not a lot of guys in luxury. But also when I say diversity, I kind of connect it, I want to connect it to the thing that, people here are really open about their personal diversity, I think that nobody really cares if you are straight, gay or bi, nobody really cares about that. So personal diversity and then like yea, diversity of gender.

Q: How would you describe the ratio between male and female?

Well in my team, my team is really small so I'm the only guy there, and three other girls. But in the whole division the number is getting higher, the number of guys in the division, which is in my opinion a good thing and since I started last year, I can see that there are many new male faces. So it seems to be that the number or the ratio is like, starting to getting equal, or no not equal, that would be really overestimation, it's just number of guys is getting higher. But I still think.

Q: Could you name a percentage?

I feel like 80 - 20. Well, what I remember, I never met the whole company, it's like really a lot of people, but yea it has been maybe like 80/85.

Q: Do you remember a special focus of L'Oréal on attracting more male talents?

I think it is noticeable but I don't think it is communicated. I think it is noticeable by, maybe it's because I'm pretty close to the HR and I was working with them during the Brandstorm, I was working with them after the Brandstorm, because sometimes they need some interns from L'Oréal to go to schools for job fairs for some lectures just to tell their experience, so I was doing that with the HR and I think that it was noticeable for me that they always either tried to ask a guy to go there and to present something and to be there instead of girls, so I think HR is trying to push it a little bit and I think it is a good idea, but I don't think it's like really communicated throughout the company.

Q: Do you think it should be communicated?

I think that, it's a tough question because some people or some women in the company could find that a little bit unfair, they could see that yea, now it doesn't matter about the qualities and the professional experience but it matters if it's a men or women and that might be tricky because maybe not all the women are feeling the same way that the ratio is actually a problem and they might be disappointed. So it should be communicated, there should be communicated how, getting the ratio more equal has benefits for the whole company, so that they know that

having more guys in the teams and in the company will benefit even to them and not, so that they are not taking it as a discrimination.

Q: Do you have any recommendation on how to communicated these benefits?

I think that the ratio that is now, I don't want to sound sexiest or something, but I think it's pretty common knowledge that the women teams or when there is a lot of women in a team, the communication is a little bit trickier, they have to be a really careful what they are saying to each other so they don't make somebody upset and stuff like that, which when there is a guy and there is like a offer for this kind of miscommunication between women and I personally experienced that, that maybe the one is thinking something but don't want to tell it to the other one, so when I say the idea, she would support me and didn't want to be the one who is actually coming up with the idea. So the diversity in this kind of way is definitely plus. And this is something that needs to be communicated and I think there is one more thing about, I think L'Oréal is one of the few companies that actually has women at the top positions also, and that is actually great example for all the employees, so I think it should be communicated from the top managers of the divisions as for example their communication on the board level or the higher level so that the people that are working on the lower positions, and that there is the ratio, like the difference is the highest so that they can see on the higher level it works so it will work on the lower.

Q: At your previous job, you had a male boss and now you have a female boss, is this correct?

Yes, actually at my previous job I had two, because I changed the position once, so I had the women boss and men, I had male.

Q: Did you notice any big differences between them?

My experience was that my women boss at my previous job, or my women boss was really straightforward, she was, actually I really appreciated her and I appreciate her now. She was straightforward, she always told me directly what she wanted, there were clear targets that need to me obtained and for example the CEO of the company was a guy who was really like, opposite like my boss, my boss was really fast and straightforward and like okay, lets do this. And she was really quick with everything. And the CEO was more like moderate, he was more like a very diplomatic person, which is also good when you are at the CEO level and then when I had the male boss it was for half a year and the communication was a little bit trickier because he never actually directly said, he was kind of a slow talker and he was more like a, asking for the ideas, which was fine, I was happy to come up with ideas but he was not really decisive manager, which I kind of lacked. I wanted to have somebody who would say yes, let's do this. He was more like, okay, what else can we do and always thinking of other option and never really stucked with one, so that was my experience.

Q: What traits do you think should be promoted to make more men apply?

I think that if L'Oréal wanted to hire more guys or communicate the position to guys, it would probably need to be, it is quite tricky. Now I'm thinking of how I got involved but it wasn't actually throughout some, like employer branding communication, actually it was, like Brandstorm is pretty much a employer branding tool, but it's easier for to attract guys on the university level in my opinion, however it needs to be communicated as, it is not just like a nice cosmetics or nice products, because that's something that attracts girls, it needs to be like a professionalism, it needs to be communicated as like a responsibility, that you can progress quickly, that gives you maybe opportunity for internal mobility throughout the L'Oréal zones and other countries. That would be something that I would be interested in.

Q: Back to your Brandstorm participation, do you remember how you experienced L'Oréal during the competition?

During the competition, the only contact persons that we had was (HR), which are HR and they're pretty professional, I think, they always communicated everything clearly, they were, I remember my team mates or maybe the other teams that participated to complain about some kind of a miscommunication about how the presentation should look like and stuff like that, but from my perspective it was just like a little bit of laziness from their part to maybe focus on how previous years went and to check maybe videos which are available and stuff like that. So I think everything from their part was okay and yea that was immediately and after I actually attended the national round here, it was nice to go around the building, to see the meeting rooms and stuff like that, so like seeing actually the working environment was also a good step to perceive L'Oréal very well.

Q: Is there anything that L'Oréal should improve or you feel like they are lacking?

I think since the number of guys in the company is getting higher, that's one improvement that is already proceeding somehow. I think L'Oréal also needs to have a little bit faster opportunities to promote in place. I think after like here after almost a year, I know a lot of people who are actually stick to their position for a really, really long time even though they expressed some kind of, they expressed that they wanted to go on a different position, doesn't necessarily mean to a different, like a level but maybe just to try something else. Which is definitely possible, I have seen those examples here, but it's not that common. It's possible, but it's not that common and nowadays when the amount of time that person spends in the one position really is shortening, I think nowadays, then I think L'Oréal should adapt to that and be able to promote people more quickly, to don't let them to get stuck on that one position for a really long time because then there is no progress, the person is always in that position and stuff.

3.2 Interview Natalie:

Introduction: I'm (Natalie), I'm from Slovakia, I'm also 25. I also study at VSE, but I study at the second faculty the International Business with a focus on Marketing, which I basically do here. I started here in L'Oréal when I was in my third year so writing my bachelor thesis and I stayed with them for a small break for an exchange till now.

Q: What is your current position at L'Oréal?

I'm a marketing intern. I started as a trade marketing intern in the CPD which is the mass market division, so L'Oréal Paris, Garnier and I was there for half a year, I was preparing planograms, which is how the shelf is supposed to look like, the secondary placement in Tesco, Keta, DM market and all these like mass market channels and the sales analysis. That was basically the most of the job I did and then I went to the US for a semester and after I came back, I started as a brand marketing intern in the selective division for active cosmetics. So which means La Roche Posey and Vichy. And my brand is La Roche Posey, so for it was, well now it is Cerave, which I am going to be a brand manager from first of July. Which is a new brand now entering to the market, like from the first of April this year, so now and I started on La Roche Posey, so first in the beginning, I was mostly preparing the digital, like banners and newsletters and then PLVs like leaflets, of course all with an agency but I was kind of the head of the process and

then I only showed the final version to a manager or a director. And we sometimes changed something and send it to the print and then after a few months I had the full, like, processes on my own, so I was creating basically the action from the beginning from the creation of the code through tenders through graphics through I don't know, the execution, packaging, copying and finally to distribute it with the orders to the pharmacies and it was also like plastic materials and paper materials and all these things. And then I was also collaborating on campaigns like digital campaigns and competitions, that's basically what I do. And last three months I was trying, well I was launching a brand, which is not very normal for interns here, but as I was here for such a long time, I just needed one day of to be at school of course, so I was launching a brand with the marketing director.

Q: So you are basically working full-time?

Well, its full time. Well it's not, the contract is 32 hours but yea, well.

Q: Do you remember the first contact you had with L'Oréal?

For me I wanted to go to L'Oréal since my first year at university, it was mostly like my dream job. I didn't really know what I wanted to do, but once I was reading some magazines about the employers and who are the bests and it was in that time, I read that Samsung is cool which also was something that I was interested in, like technology and innovation and then L'Oréal was one of the best also and I just decided one day lying on my bed, I'm going to work for L'Oréal or Samsung. And then when I came back from my exchange in my third year from Germany, I just tried to find some normal like first job, some internship that would be valuable for the future and I went to Samsung first and they said me no, I was not like old enough, I didn't had the bachelor diploma and blabla. So then I was really trying to look for something, I signed for the L'Oréal careers and they said me no and then I found an announcement on the Facebook page of VSE that they are looking for an intern, and I contacted directly the person who was sitting basically here, and she said me, yea yea okay, send me your CV, so it really, really a nice day because one day I came here and I only went to try, I knew that they are not going to accept me for all these things that I didn't have yet. Because it was not normal that people without the diploma worked here, but then they had an intern they hired before me, and he was here for two weeks, and they kicked him out because he was not really capable of doing things so they really needed somebody fast. And they took me in without like all these procedures, so it was really luck.

Q: Did you participate in any programs or at a job fair before you got hired?

Well, not really because when I was in my first year I was not participating in the fair trade and afterwards I didn't have time because I was here already.

Q: What traits are you looking for in an employer?

Well, for me it's the challenge and innovation, maybe, cause I really like to challenge myself, I really like the dynamic style of the work. Maybe sometimes it's really crazy here but when you have a good team you really somehow handle, so maybe this. So that the people are nice and the work is like really challenging and that you can touch like really nice things, that afterwards you can see somewhere else, which is what I really love here.

Q: How would you describe the culture of L'Oréal?

Crazy. Dynamic, and really open, I mean if you really want to do whatever, and you find or you come with an idea, most of the time there is no problem that you execute an idea or that you do somehow really can touch things that are not maybe normal or ongoing everywhere, but when you have an idea you can really develop it.

Q: If L'Oréal was a person, how would you describe this person?

I don't know. This one is tough. I don't know, maybe trendy, young, stylish, person. We mostly work with bloggers so that might remind me of some bloggers that like colors and style.

Q: How did your expectations change after you started working at L'Oréal?

Well, I was really scared because I really wanted to come here but I didn't know anything about how the work would look like, they only told me at the first interview, which was my last. And then I was surprised how much responsibility they gave me, which was the thing that I was surprised. But like I don't know, as before I hadn't had any decent job it was only like part-time job or in a boutique or something like really easy. Then this was for me like a big shock, like a big challenge and then I don't know, here are things that everyday surprise me, to be honest.

Q: Do you like this challenge?

Yes, I do not like the monotony or to do repetitive things. The good thing is that you really can do like different things.

Q: Imagine you are hiring a new candidate for L'Oréal. Which traits are you looking for?

Well somebody who is really open to challenges, not really like closed person, and I think the most important is that the person is willing to learn and is excited about learning. He doesn't need to know anything, because I didn't know anything when I was coming, but the excitement for the things. I think it's that.

Q: With which of the six founding values do you agree with, see the relation to L'Oréal?

So probably combination of first two.

Q: Which one is reflected most in the daily life at L'Oréal?

Passion.

Q: How is the entrepreneurial spirit reflected within the daily work?

Innovation. Well, L'Oréal is always the first one who comes with a new product to the market and then the competitors are basically only doing the same thing. For example, the mass market I would say is the mass market or like its most visible that it is innovating, like for example we had clay masks, which were first in the mass market, then we had scrub masks, like the sugar masks, which are also the first in the market. It's always a big boom, surprise for the consumer, always something like, different, from what market offers, or maybe in the selective division, where I work, with La Roche Posey, we had last year, well there are always innovation going on just the mass market is very fast or much faster than other divisions. But we also came out

with products that were completely different or in different forms or uses or application type, so I would say always in the category we are trying to innovate.

Q: 'Diversity at L'Oréal' What does come to your mind?

That its open, like, to everybody. I have never meant anybody that was discriminated here. We have a lot of, how do you say this correctly, I don't know, like we have a lot of gays working here, which are really nice and they are completely part of the group.

Q: How do you perceive the gender balance at L'Oréal?

We have not very many males here. But they are trying, they are preferably hiring men.

Q: Did you notice a change since you started working at L'Oréal?

I don't know, I think HR is really trying, like on these fairs and there trying to do something that would also attract guys not only girls, but still like the bigger percentage here, just if you look around the office, are women.

Q: How are they trying to attract more men?

Well, I would say for example now in the fair that they did in VSE, they prepared this virtual reality, that was more, like you know, like when you told a guy to do a virtual reality more even fine, than the girl. So maybe these like activities that they are trying to do.

Q: Do you think it is working?

Well, there are much more guys now here than three years ago, that is what I must say. Mostly interns, like when I was starting we had no like male intern and now there are several of them here, so yea maybe. The young generation.

Q: Did you notice a communication of L'Oréal trying to attract more men?

I don't know, I don't feel like that. But I remember I was, not really hiring a new person, or new intern or new people but I had friends who were brand managers who were always hiring our new interns, like every six months. And you really can see in like, when you have five CVs and one of them is guy, so then the brand manager is more like, you know, not really, I don't want to say happy but more not passionate but it's always like something special when a guy wants to work here.

Q: What traits do you think should be promoted to make more men apply?

Well actually, I don't know. I think that HR is trying to put more focus or communicate that we also have guys working here, so it's more less this, but then most of the guys who work here in the company they are not doing marketing but do controlling, finance and all these other things, we don't have that many brand managers as guys. But I think it's also because, because of the product that you are offering, like when you are communicating make-up or more like something like really, really womanish it's hard to, harder for him normally to get in the mind or present it in a way that it would be more attractable for a girl, the product.

Q: Do you feel their special focus on attracting more male is somehow demotivating for you?

It's more excited before the interview but I mean that after the interview it doesn't really matter if it was a girl or a guy, it's more like you know, more rare. That's why it is more special.

Q: Is there anything that L'Oréal should improve or you feel like they are lacking?

Well, maybe the way how they treat interns why they are here. They are not really putting too much attention on people staying here, it was not my case, I was really lucky because I also had like very good managers and good relations also with the GM and all these nice people. But I know many interns who was working here for a year or even more sometimes, and then once they were looking for a full-time, there was just no free, no free position open, so they might be improvement with this. So they maybe should focus more on people who really have the experience and have the I don't know, the challenge experienced of staying here after already know so many things, maybe this. But in my case it was not a problem, because well, I told I was lucky.

3.3 Interview Lucas:

Introduction: I am 27, working in L'Oréal for two and a half year. my current position is Key Account Manager. And it's after graduation my first job and the first year was the Management Trainee here.

Q: You are from Czech Republic?

Yea, from Czech Republic.

Q: What are your main tasks at your current position?

So is the lead the account, I currently have three accounts, it's our customers in Food channel, that means that's the client who sell food not only the logistic items. And I have to make the strategy, communicate with them on daily basis, forecasting, and negotiate, and to be the only one with whom they are communicating.

Q: Do you remember the first contact you had with L'Oréal?

Yea, I remember. You know, after the graduation this is the first job, but I had just short episode like one month in Tesco in the management trainee but I understood after two weeks that it is not for me because I had to be the manager of the store and not my dream job. So, I called to my friend, he is working here and I said that I quit from the Tesco, that it was mistake and so on, and he said that he is happy and he can recommend me to HR and I can try something, then I said that for me could be something good like a buyer or something that is all good. But there was nothing like that. So he said, just send me the CV sometimes can be there even positions that are not open publicly. After like two days, they called me and invite me to the first meeting and I totally like it. I like it the reception, the smell, the people, how they look like and I love the position. It was management trainee in sales, just in sales, and there was nothing like a copying job or something like that. that was like the real job, that I felt that I could have some responsibility and there will be something visible. And after all this, my interviews, was like four rounds, but from my first contact was just one week and I sit in my chair. So it was just one week and before he told me that he is working in L'Oréal, I didn't understand actually, I thought that it is really small company, I thought that its going to be like 30 or 40 people and I didn't know that they do the other brands, I didn't know that they had the luxury and this items. So if I know, I maybe want more. Because then I went to the interview I actually thought that

it can be good, I did like for fun or like a, okay I'm a bit of chill and waiting for this interview and it can be some just experience.

Q: As a management trainee, what rotations did you have throughout the program?

Oh, actually the name was Management trainee but it was like the assistant of the Key Account Manager but it wasn't the real trainee as.

Q: How was the setup of the program?

No, it's supposed to be now, like from the first (Trainee), but I didn't have like that. But just when I look on it, it could be nice to know the marketing and so, but I didn't lose the time. After half year I lead my time, so.

Q: Did you participated in any other events before you started working at L'Oréal?

No, they are not cooperating with my school cause I'm from private school and there are interested only about the VSE.

Q: Would you say that without the contact through your friend, you would probably not work here?

I'm in bank now because I had the second opinion was the Uni Credit Bank, I was in the last round and I just.

Q: Did you consider applying before?

No, no, my god. Any guy will not like, oh my god, when I grow up I will working with the lipstick, no nothing like that. But for guys like this hair and beauty because in the division of the mass market, it can be for guy fine.

Q: What traits are you looking for in an employer?

People. Just like I want to see that the manager after me know what to do and that they can allow me what I want to do. The work now just if I were to change the job I would ask this is the way how I think the job is right, I want to do it this way, can you allow me to do it this way? The youngster doesn't know yet, when I was, apply to this job, I even didn't know what Key Account Manager is doing and 99% of the people apply doesn't know. So this is I think important, the people. And the second is like to, if you say, I am working in L'Oréal you want the applause form the others, like you are working with L'Oréal, you making the great things and so on. I couldn't work in the company such as some short renting money would after some blackmailing and so on. I would like to work in the company which makes sense, where the people like it and so on.

Q: How would you describe the culture of L'Oréal?

French. Just yea it's like a French culture. Oh, no. Now it is a bit different, it's a bit worse than I came, was like a really come when you want, you know, if you are ready go home. Lunch can be for one hour or one and a half hour. Now in the division it's a little bit looking like when you are from till you are sitting there. I think it's completely bad idea, it should be like a free, like you know, the L'Oréal culture is like the French, we launching some products everything is ready and someone say oh, stop, we did mistake, everything stop, and you will do it again, or we are not planning to launch anything, oh we must launch it now, that's the right, the only one chance to launch it and we do it like in two weeks, like prepare everything, communicate with clients and that's like our competitor is Henkel, the German company, they can't do it. Cause the culture is not ready for it.

Q: If L'Oréal was a person, how would you describe this person?

Okay, I think the L'Oréal is a woman, L'Oréal is fancy, maybe trying to be someone who is not, to pretend how cool is she but she's not in the deep and she's do illogical things in people development, such as someone who is already developed, developing more, for example I am two and half year, I am leading three accounts and my daily work is negotiating. I have zero, zero preparation for negotiation, zero. If I'm not reading the books about it, I wouldn't know anything. So I had nothing just about it. So it is illogical. I think that the L'Oréal as she, has to ask, okay we have to develop the people, what if they stay here and we will not develop them, and they are not asking like that.

Q: Do you remember anything you expected to be different before you started working here?

So before it was like three days. Yes, a bit. I thought it was even more fancy than it is.

Q: Do you feel here in the Czech Republic the atmosphere is a bit different than in France?

I never been there but I think, yes, the French company attract the people who can be a bit easy going.

Q: Imagine you are hiring a new candidate for L'Oréal. Which traits are you looking for?

I think that I would like to look on Excel or the hard skills, just the soft skills. I think that they are important to fit the L'Oréal, it's the soft skills, so that means not be the people who is based on his chair and look only for work, it's to be like a visit people who is responsible for something, you want to talk with them and choir with them and say that you don't think it's right, they look for you, so I think the people should just be like a Person, like a person with a big P, not the shy or something like that. That's the only one thing. Everything the hard skills, they will learn.

Q: With which of the six founding values do you agree with, see the relation to L'Oréal?

I think its open-mindedness. Or should be. I think like, you know, sometimes here is the rotation of people and the work can change a bit because now comes some people from German company or American company and they are not open-minded at all or so, but when I started in my first one and half year, was totally open-minded. So I think that's what strives the company.

Q: Which one do you identify the most with?

Maybe, I'm not pretty sure if I just have the one thing, maybe the responsibility but not in the way how the L'Oréal is thinking but, you know, I'm trying to be really responsible, to communicated to my client to always understand their needs and so on, so maybe I am this kind of person, who thinks in this way.

Q: 'Diversity at L'Oréal' What does come to your mind?

So the fact is that almost 95% of people here is Czech, so the diversity here is not that deep. Here is, of course we are hub, so we are working with Slovak colleagues and Hungarian colleagues, maybe they are not in Sales, more in Marketing, but here is some, but I am not sure that L'Oréal is ready for diversity. Yea, maybe it's because of Czech who are not ready, but here I don't feel that we are ready for diversity.

Q: How do you perceive the gender balance at L'Oréal?

So, it's like that, a more female than male. Of course it can be visible in some work, cause the men in my opinion are the different thinker, they are solving different way the problem, and could be fine if here are more men, they are more easy-going. And I think that men, or women are really good here, we need them here, because it's the beauty business, but the men especially older men can be good for the first boss or something like that because you can to watch only or and say I don't want to be like that and if here is the guy, like real engineer, maybe he can't really identify with the female process, or they need to see some big boss. but it's nothing against gender.

Q: Why do you think men don't really want to work for L'Oréal?

Cause if you say just imagine for a guy in pub, you say I'm working in L'Oréal say would say come on girl, in L'Oréal, you make the lipstick what are you doing there, cut hair or something. You know, just the imagination of the people of what you are doing can be a bit of a problem. So if you say I'm working as some manager of automotive, they say oh cool, because they can imagine what they make business, it's the car and you sell the car, it's a lot of cars, the economy is so good because of the Skoda or so, but here is not. And you have to say, come on, I make 50.000.000 CZK for my company last year and you have to arguing, so.

Q: Do you feel that the gender ratio changed since you started?

Yes, I think there are much more guys, probably its some KPI of HR, yes but the question is how long they gonna stay here, the new guys.

Q: Did you experience that the turnover of males is higher than of females?

Maybe it's just more visible, the rotation is the same but you are just 10% of guys and just a few will leave, you will see because there is, no guys.

Q: Did you notice a special focus of L'Oréal on attracting more male talents?

Yea of course, because they ask me for some help on working on stand in some VSE Šance and so on and we have been there mostly the men, so they wanna attract the men, look, the guys are already there, you don't have to worry it's only the female company, so they want to show, so I see it and probably its good.

Q: Is it somehow communicated within the company?

No, it's like outside the company its communicated but here it's nothing.

Q: Do you think it should be communicated?

No need for that.

Q: Do you think it could be demotivating for the female employees?

I'm not pretty sure, how they can react. Sometimes, you know I think it's good to attract more male but we have to be really worried because we have some strange situation because some position just can't be, the guys can't be there. For example, brand manager for skincare or skincare for makeup. and that was like that, that the normal heterosexual guy did the skincare for L'Oréal, he is not using that and you must have the passion, you must choose the model right, you must do this better. You can be really good brand manager for haircare, because shampoo is just using everybody, the penetration there is 95% or so, but I think we have to be, we should use the guy on the right position and not just brand manager as the brand manager, not like that. We need to be really carefully to choose the personality there.

Q: At Šance, what kind of questions do the students ask the most?

How is it there, if it's fine for me as a guy and they are usually target to marketing, I'm trying to tell them, I ask them if they know what the sales in the big company is doing, if they know what the key account management is about, I just briefly tell them what's behind and they really, they like it always, if I tell them, the key account manager is in the middle of the all department, they are the only one communicating, negotiating, they really like it. I always tell them, you are not selling anything, it's not like you will go to the field and sell with some, it's not like that. and they like it, so maybe we have to attract them, like show them some figure, that we are really big, how big we are, what we are doing but I think it could be better in sales, logistic, in this way. But in marketing it can be also good as well, but just my point of view.

Q: What traits do you think should be promoted to make more men apply?

Now can be a bit, sound a bit stupid but for men it's like cars, money, more the material, and the career, how fast you make the career. But for example I know, for me I don't care about cars. But some key account managers in the other company has the Volkswagen Passat, we have Skoda Octavia, its fine, but in two years we will have the Toyota hybrids, it's not attractive car for guys, so it can be, the company can lose the male, the guys.

Q: How do you perceive the career progression at L'Oréal?

It's important, it's really important, because you want to grow, because L'Oréal attracts the people who really know where they are going and they want the big career so they need the potential but be careful because if you say to someone, that he can make the big career in two years you piss off usually the people who is already inside the company. I know, I never choose anyone for any employer, because I don't have anybody under me, but my colleague who is leading like three people, she chose some employee for the position for intern. And the problem was that the intern thought that they are already general manager of their work. They have to say, I don't know anything yet or in this business and I would like to learn it. And they usually say, I learn everything and in one year I will be in your decision. It's bad because the people inside don't want to work with these people. And usually in the CV there is like the Skills and in the skills there is already the Key account management 5 of 5, People development 5 of 5, how. You never did it, how you can be better in key account management. I'm like a 3 of 5, so they have to still be on the ground. And if you tell them how good they are, they usually will not pass the manager, because they will not choose them.

Q: Is there anything that L'Oréal should improve or you feel like they are lacking?

I think, we have to communicate how we are, just like to be real honest to the people that we are not drawing the sky castle, just to say the real truth and if we are not sure if the people can be in his dream position in one year, but in two years, we have to tell them and have to be really honest with people, cause like my first manager, when she hired me, she told me like, here is possibility to be key account manager to try it in one year, but only for the best and we don't know how good you are but you can show us, we give you the chance. She was 100% honest and right because she did me in half year, and what she promised, she got, but now my colleague, you will interview with him in lunch time, as well, they promised him a lot and didn't got him so fast as me to him, so I think it was really wrong, because he was in depression, not like a real depression but like he was maybe he was very pissed off, because they promised him something and they didn't got him, so it's always problem.

Q: Do you have anything else to add?

I think just the company attract for the young people, maybe we should show to the youngsters that here is some people, from whom they can learn. We have to attract people who want to learn and who want to be good, because now we attract, and say, hey this guy was key account manager after one year, everybody wants it because he has car, he has good salary, but maybe, if we can just think, maybe we have to show him this is the sales director, he is here for fifteen years and he was working in such company as this, this, this and you can learn from him. could be a really good motivation as well and can be the nice motivation. The current money is for sure not the best motivation. Yes, I think that can be always good, like this is the name. but we don't have anybody like that. We have the Tomas Hruska who is the general manager here, he's the L'Oréal baby and maybe some more, but it doesn't have to be the real L'Oréal baby but it can be someone who is a believer or you can learn from him as well.

3.4 Interview Paul:

Introduction: My name Jiri, I'm 27, I work for L'Oréal already one and a half year, I come from west, which is a city in the north of Czech Republic but I've been living in Prague for like 7/8 years. I also graduated from University of Economics, but not CEMS, but Corporate Finance and Management. And I work as a Key account executive, which means I started working as a Management Trainee which means I was in some different positions but mostly it was in Sales Department, so afterwards I became Key Account Executive, it means that I am responsible for some categories and brands and some clients and I'm responsible for Sales and numbers, so that's the actually my task to fulfil numbers.

Q: When did you start working at L'Oréal?

It was like one and a half year ago, so it was November 2016.

Q: Did you start working at L'Oréal directly after Graduation?

It was directly after graduation but I worked in a bank during the studies, like three years. And then I just graduated and I was looking for some company which can offer me some, I would say, like bigger companies with like brand name and could offer me some Management Trainee program, or not Management Trainee but Trainee Program, because I didn't know if I want to work in Finance or somewhere else and I worked in bank in finance and I was not pretty sure that I want to continue in bank. But say I was pretty sure, I don't want to continue in bank sector and I wanted to do some business. And then I applied for some Trainee programs but L'Oréal was very fast, it was like one week after I had first interview, two days on top of that I had another interview and then I was accepted. So I was like, okay, let's try it, I don't know, I will see, but after two months I realized that it was actually good decision, so I stayed here.

Q: How was the trainee program structured?

Yea, actually it should be more, it should be divided into four categories, so it should be, I should start in Sales and I should be transferred first to Marketing, Logistic and Finance, but they asked me after three months if I want to see myself in Sales or if I want to try something else, and I said that I want to try something else because that's the only one thing I can be comfortable with in L'Oréal, so I stayed in Sales, yes.

Q: Do you remember the first contact you had with L'Oréal?

Yes, it was already during my studies because L'Oréal was very seen on Šance's and some like employment markets and stuff like that. So that was the first touch with L'Oréal because I knew that this company is not only L'Oréal Paris but it includes a lot of brands and signatures so this

was my first touch but I never realized, I would work for L'Oréal, I was like I know this company of course it's like Unilever, Procter, L'Oréal, of course I know it but I never realized I would work for L'Oréal but then I saw the job offer and I just applied.

Q: So you rather applied because of an interesting position or did you also consider it before?

Yea, let's say, yea, exactly.

Q: During your studies, the only contact you had was through these job fairs?

Yes, and I had one of my close friend who worked here as an intern, so he also told me some information.

Q: What traits are you looking for in an employer?

Generally, first of all that's what I look for at the first sight, is that the I wanted to work in very known, very well-known and successful company, with some multinational scope and I also wanted to have, to start on a position which allow me to grow, and those two criteria are the crucial, are the most crucial probably. And I wanted to work in some company which is prestigious on the market.

Q: How would you describe the culture of L'Oréal?

I would describe it, you know it's like a very French culture, so its French company with all those negatives but also positives attributes. It means because before I went to the L'Oréal I worked in bank Raiffeisen bank, which is German company, so everything is very structured, everything has own process and if you go the meeting you have to be there on time otherwise you are, there is someone like worse, I would say. But in L'Oréal its absolutely normal if you go to a meeting 2 minutes after or 5 minutes after, and the culture is not that structured. For example at the beginning of my start here, it was quite chaotic and messy for me here because there were no structures, everyone was like, did it like on the me, I would say, but afterwards I realized that its quite, if you have the personality and if you have some good approach so you can fit to this company cause if there are no structures or processes you can do whatever you want actually and if you can do whatever you want and if you have the entrepreneurial approach and you have some motivation and ambition so you can knew actually what you want, so it means if I want to do this I can do this and I'm not absolutely bounded and stuff so finally I found out some positive attributes on it and I realized its quite good actually, but its I would say it's very difficult for someone who has different personality and couldn't never fit here, so then it could be problem, but if you have the personality then there is no problem, I think.

Q: If L'Oréal was a person, how would you describe it?

It would be girl, or women, I would say like 34 years old which is, I would say, quite she really cares about herself, she really want to look good, ambitious, little bit emotional and chaotic but in the end quite stable and more like opposite let's say pragmatic.

Q: Do you remember anything you expected to be different before you started working here?

Yea, to be honest before I came to L'Oréal I would never imagine that I would do work like this. Because they told me I would start in Sales, and I was like Sales in L'Oréal, I cannot even imagine, cause when I was in university we never had like sales classes, like sales lessons and stuff, so I didn't know what FMCG is, I didn't know how Sales and L'Oréal work and operate on the market, so I didn't have so good and detailed imagination of it. So to be honest I really didn't know what to think and what I am going to do.

Q: How were your expectations regarding the atmosphere in the office?

To be honest, like my first day, I was really like skeptical I would say, because I saw people who are like individualistic, who don't want to cooperate together, really individualistic, but then I realized that it's in sales because you have here outline that you are responsible for the numbers. Of course there are people above you who need to collect the numbers so then it starts, they need to cooperate and coordinate but if you are an individualistic person, so it was really obvious at first sight. No-one didn't really want to help each other, I would say, yea so it was quite negative.

Q: How did this perception change over time?

Because then I realized that there were like, because there are like more groups of people, you know, if you are in Marketing and if you are in Garnier team for example, so they really cooperate together, they are like friends and cooperate together but if you are in Sales in drug channel in DM or Teta and stuff so they are very individualistic, because they are here for long time, like 10-15 years and they are really individualistic, they never talk to each other or like they just want to fulfil their targets. But I was in food channel, it was very young team and my manager was very friendly, familiar so she really helped me to really fit to the culture and to the team because like I said she was like 100% honest, friendly, she wouldn't do anything wrong me so then it started to be good.

Q: Imagine you are hiring a new candidate for L'Oréal. Which traits are you looking for?

So someone who is like very self-confident, someone who is very proactive, who is not afraid of new challenges and new things, someone who don't need to have anyone who holds you or grab you for the hand all the time, someone quite individualistic. But I don't think it's actually good way, but if he or she should fit to the company I would do it like this.

Q: What would you personally value more?

Yes, but I would be more, I would rather hire someone who is like stronger moral principles maybe, who would want to cooperate more in the team, but still is ambitious and self-confident, yea that's true, more like, someone who is more like for the company, for the team, not just for himself.

Q: With which of the six founding values do you agree with, see the relation to L'Oréal?

For me definitely on the first place is entrepreneurial approach, that's definitely first thing, then probably Responsibility and afterwards, it's like, I wouldn't say it's important then, I mean it's like on the same level, Innovation, Passion, those are attributes which are like on the same level.

Q: How is the entrepreneurial spirit reflected within the company?

Because you have to, it's like, no-one is going to help you so much with everything, I would say so you really need to get up from the chair and you really need to go and ask and try to get the information for your own. Then you need to, there is no like processes and structures, so there is no like job description you have to do, but you have the target, you have to bring money or let's say, of course you have some targets or KPIs but not so many, so you need to think on your own, how you going to achieve the targets and KPIs.

Q: 'Diversity at L'Oréal' What does come to your mind?

Yea, sure. For example, of course at L'Oréal there are many girls, or like women, for example in my division, like the CPD division, it's one of the four, so it's like almost equal, in Sales its equal, but in Marketing it's like 70 to 30 but in different divisions I would say it's quite terrible because it's like 80 to 20.

Q: Do you feel that it changed since you started?

Yes, it's changing, because to be honest, I'm pretty sure that HR and people who are responsible for branding and stuff, so they have like KPIs, they need to hire more men, definitely and they need to make diversity higher, so it means they try to get, or catch the attention of the men and people from university to go, to come to work here. So yea, it's changing, there are much more men than two years. I didn't work here two years ago but my friend told me that two years there were for example four guys here and now its equal, so it's changing.

Q: Do you remember a communication of a special focus of L'Oréal on attracting more male talents?

It was not actually formally communicated, I would say but it is my feel, my feeling, and I'm pretty sure it's right feeling and also I know HR and I talked to her many times and she told me that they need to bring more men because it's not.

Q: Do you think it is important to have a more balanced gender ratio?

I don't know, I think it's really important, I would say. I would say that diversity is really important generally so I think it's important to bring more men to the company which leads to let's say, remake the culture of the company. Of course, there is nothing against like women and stuff, of course they can do their job very well because its prestigious employer so the best women or girls come to L'Oréal so they are like very ambitious, so they are clever and everything, but I mean for the culture of the company, if you are men or women you have let's say a little bit different point of view on some situation so you can cooperate together on the final result is better afterwards.

Q: Should it be more openly communicated?

It probably should be communicated by the company.

Q: What traits do you think should be promoted to make more men apply?

For example, from my side I knew what L'Oréal is because I knew it's on the same level like Unilever, Procter Henkel, L'Oréal, but it's just one division, like CPD, mass market division so its FMCG and it's on the same level, but just the same L'Oréal is different than name Procter & Gamble, so of course I wouldn't suggest to rename the company but I would focus. I mean there are many things which are done pretty well, like I mean when our employers go to university and have some seminars there, and we are on the University of Economics on Šance and stuff, so it's really, it really works, I would say. But maybe I would focus all the things not only on L'Oréal as a brand but more on numbers, like achievements that we are top 1 company here, and we grow 10% every year and our market share is higher than market share of Unilever, something like this. So to make the perception of the company that it's on the same level like Unilever, Procter and stuff. Actually I don't know how to make it.

Q: Did you go to the job fair as a representative of L'Oréal?

Yes, three times.

Q: Do you remember what they were asking the most?

Yea, they asked about like of course like interns, internships, job offers and stuff like that but there was also those boys, or guys, who were a little bit afraid to come and ask for something, so most of the participants were girls. For example, in this concrete example it would really help if there is some big poster with like numbers that L'Oréal has like 3 billion CZK every year

and market share of L'Oréal and that we have brand like this but also men brands, you know. Like Diesel or other brands

Q: Is there anything that L'Oréal should improve or you feel like they are lacking?

I would say, no. I think I said all the things.

Q: Do you have anything else to add?

Yea, that's actually very relevant output, that boys/men want very good position like money, wage and career path and women are more about the brand and passion and make-up and stuff, I would say that's relevant.

3.5 Interview Simon:

Introduction: My name is (Simon), I'm Czech, based here in Prague working at L'Oréal, I'm 32 soon to be 33, so working here for 7 years at L'Oréal.

Q: Are you from Czech Republic?

Yes, born and raised.

Q: What are the main tasks of your position?

So I'm Business Controller, means I am in charge of the finances of our largest division, so consumer products, so I am leading a team of five in three countries and I am managing all the financial aspects of the business unit.

Q: Since when do you have this position?

Since last July.

Q: Do you remember the first contact you had with L'Oréal?

Yes, I remember. Like I know the business before I joined. I knew, I was a CEMS student, I know the HR at the time, so that was my first contact and I thought the company was interesting, so I asked them for a job and they said okay.

Q: Why did you apply for a position at L'Oréal?

I think I was interested in finance and what L'Oréal, I was interested in the Business Model so this is way I joined.

Q: Did you participate in any CEMS events with L'Oréal?

No, I was not involved directly, I think I did, I did the Rotation Dinner but that was a CEMS at the time, or was it some. Yea, I did the Rotation Dinner as a, when I was on CEMS.

Q: Did you consider applying for L'Oréal before you started CEMS?

Yea, it was one of the companies that were interesting throughout my studies, I would say.

Q: What traits are you looking for in an employer?

For me it's really, for me it's mainly when I think about being happy on the job, I think what I looking for is mainly development, so something that would make me grow, personally or career wise, and in the end L'Oréal is my, without taking to account all the like internships or

part-time experiences, L'Oréal is my first real, real employer. but at the end it is to, for me it is to get if I think about a five-year perspective, I think as long as L'Oréal has something to offer for me, I will have, I will like to stay. So this is really the perspective that I am looking for, to grow. Because at the end the salary will grow with your positions so this is what makes me stay and this is so far true, so career was the different and interesting things.

Q: Was there something that you expected to be different before you started your position?

Before I started the job, I was through into waters so I was thinking that the job would be more smooth more training, a bit less, a bit less because I joined and the two people, my boss, we were both new so and there was a big table so I was thinking that something more than an empty table but, so it was quite challenging and I was expecting it would be more training like on the job or that I have to, I would learn the company.

Q: And in regards to the culture?

It was more positive, I was thinking that it would be more strict, more making more, let's say, I will not say professional but more serious, which was not true.

Q: So was that something that surprised you?

Yea.

Q: Do you think this should be communicated differently?

I think really the stories of our people, so I think we are, we are a company that makes people grow that will develop and there are endless perspectives for prospective growth or for the people who join us and I think we are not clearly communicating that. So the successes of our people, but the practical ones and it's not just something, but its real life, both locally and globally. So I think that's something we mainly need to focus a bit more. And I think we are also a company where really young people can try whatever they want, and the, yea we are not like, I think we are in a way more even if I compare it with the digital and with these, these player, we are really more I would say independence and play with the big money, to try things, try campaigns for marketing or really develop their own thing so, something that we need to communicate. That we are not so strict on the new ideas and all this.

Q: 'Diversity at L'Oréal' What does come to your mind?

For me it's really a typical French company, so very disorganized, but there is organization in the disorganization so I think we are not the most tied up company, but on the other hand it gives us a big leverage in terms of, well if you want to try, you can, there is okay, if you are, you can choose, there are some priorities but we're not tied up, we are trust in frame, so within the frame you can always, always within some frame you can play with finance, you can develop new things, you can bring new ideas, so this is something that is very nurturing for the team, there is not just to move it from here and then from there, there is always a space within which there is room to play. So I think this is various attitudes to people gives for them their entrepreneurial spirit and all this.

Q: Imagine you are hiring a new candidate for L'Oréal. Which traits are you looking for?

When I hire my team members, I always look for people who are, who have a talent, so I would say that I can imagine, it's difficult form the interview to support this, but that I can imagine that in five years can replace me eventually on the job. So they would have a learning path. Also that they are humble, so that they are able to, there is not the challenge every day, so I mean we make the people grow but people work hard for it. So it's not like what we experience

now with the millennials is that in one year they expect to be the GM, so I need people who have the drive or the ambition to grow but they are able to admit that it takes you steps to do that. So these are the main, of course I, the person really has to be capable to take decisions, be reasonable independent, not hesitate to ask questions, doesn't have to be, should not be satisfied with the little so he should always try to improve and try to outperform so this is what I look for when I hire a talent.

Q: There are six founding values, which one's surprise you or you see the relation to L'Oréal?

I would say passion. I think, in the end for me if you don't like the job where you spend, I don't know, to be honest ten hours per day, then you are, you will be unhappy, so I have the passion for the job, for what I do for what we can really achieve or what we sometimes, it sounds stupid, but there are small achievements that you can celebrate with the team, getting the job done, getting the job done well, what is your task, and I think I'm also passionate about what we do, what we, about our products, so I think there are not many people but I had a fight with my girlfriend because she bought the makeup from a competitor and we got into a fight, I was super pissed, I thought she betrayed me so it is bad, I told her it is bad, you should have bought ours, this is why it's the passion.

Q: Do you think these values are reflected within the company?

Yes, they are very reflected within the company.

Q: Do you think passion is reflected by most employees?

Yes, I think that's what makes, because we do something very tangible, you know with beauty, so beauty is very visible so it's something you can identify with, you want to buy it you need to B2B solution, like invisible things, so we have something that we can be proud of so the passion is something that people have in general. And I think we also ask a lot from the people, so I think those who don't in general follow these values will never succeed here.

Q: 'Diversity at L'Oréal' What comes to your mind?

I think for me it's very true, I think we are a very diverse company, because we operate around the world, we develop talent across country, we have very diverse teams in general across the globe, of course within the, within different teams, yes I think we are.

Q: And how do you perceive the ratio between men and women?

I think in general, we are very female company, in general, because beauty naturally attracts more women than men, so I think contradict to other companies, I think we might have the opposite view, we have too many female and too little male, so I think overall we can be on the spotlight that we can be one of the big best female-male ratio, but I think it's not fair, because the company is from different industries were simply and don't mind me it's not the most attractive are for men or car industry, so I think we try hard to employ men into the organization but simply somehow it's, you are not able to succeed.

Q: How do you think is the percentage here in Prague?

70 for women and 30 for men

Q: Do you feel that it changed over time?

I don't think I've seen a big, but I was not working here half of the time in this office, so the last three years I was abroad but I think, the ratio stays. In the end for me it's not I would say if it

is 65-35 or doesn't make any difference, for me it's nothing that I would pay particular attention to, because I think we develop people, we should develop people based on the merit, not based on their gender.

Q: Did you notice any special focus on hiring more males? How is it communicated?

well, ever since I joined we always tried to attract more guys, so I think it's something that I understand but nothing that I would particularly 100% identify me with because for me there will always be jobs that are very difficult to have men, so make-up marketing, I cannot imagine there will be many men coming, so I think we should build more diverse teams so I imagine that we can have the whole finance division can be male and the whole, I think it's not the bad activity, but all marketing female and all controlling male, so I think we would be 50-50 but in the end I think it's more important to build more diverse teams within the teams so have a really general, get a mix, you know, get the make-up stores so I mean, no matter what you do, when you have one out of 20 men, you are very happy, you are very lucky. So I think this is something we should more take into account, how within the teams we can than attract men.

Q: Do you think the special focus on attracting more men should be communicated towards the female employees?

Yes, I think we should be more, more, that the company is not just for ladies, that so for men that you know, make-up as a sales person or is just the product, so I think there we can be more active in that it doesn't matter if you are a sales rep for beer or of make-up, also try to it can also be sexy for a guy. So I think that can be, that can be something that we can promote better. I think for marketing it will be difficult but for the sales team, sales people it is easier, for finance people were at the end you don't care too much if you do controlling or in a L'Oréal, we are a bit less about the sensitivity to the product.

Q: What do you think should be promoted to attract a man to work for L'Oréal?

For me it's at L'Oréal the quality as a man is that you stand out. So it's something, you know it's not like you're not among the one hundred guys that all want the same job and you have to, you are more visible, because you are not one in the crowd. And I think is also attractive, we can play with the fact that the guys that doesn't mind female employees, female teams. SO you can work with the girls sometimes you know, that this is not the investment banking, trading, buddy-buddy club but its somebody who wants to work, who likes to work with women and who likes to, who doesn't mind that can say my colleagues, who can say we go out with my colleagues for a beer but its three girls and one guy, so who doesn't mind this, because there would be people who want to have the bold with my buddies that happens in the different industries.

Q: Something that should be improved or you are not completely satisfied with?

No but I think, I think we are a great company, of course there is room for improvement, in our processes in the way we can be more a bit more efficient in the way we work, in the way we do business, I think this is too general question.

Q: Would you like to add anything else?

No, I think what I in terms of the diversity we tend to sometimes tend to focus more on the men women side, but I think I've been in many countries with L'Oréal what I noticed is that okay, the gender bias is very balanced but in terms of the background of the people we hire always the same people. So I was for example, I was in Pakistan and all the people who we hired were rich, were western educated they were all from the same social background. It was the same for example working in Morocco, it was the same. And I think we should give more opportunity

to people from different backgrounds just to understand like the, but of course in countries like this in order to get employed by L'Oréal you have to speak fluently English, in order to speak fluently English, you have to when you are young, when you were a kid, you cannot go to public school because the English they will teach you is bad. So if you have a bad English you will not get to high school so that means, you are already out. So I think we need to focus more on the people from different backgrounds and I think if we want to build a diverse company it's also about having people, at the end, we are 90% of these people we are from the same business school, we have the same lifestyle more or less, so I think we need, if we want to be more agile cause our consumers are not just, you know, we are all living in the Prague bubble, were we are, especially with developing countries the workers at L'Oréal we present like the 1% of the population so I think this is something we should work on a bit more to ensure we have all this. And of course in terms of diversity here, speaking of complicated in terms of language, because in marketing you have to speak Czech, or Czech, Slovak or Hungarian because we are three countries so of course in terms of internationalizing the teams here we can do it either on the other functions were you have supply chain you can do it in finance you can't do it in sales because your customer is Czech speaking environment, you cannot do it on the low to mid level of marketing, you can do it on the senior level were you can develop, the language and stuff is not important so this makes it a bit difficult to, we are not a consulting company so it's different here with the language and makes it tougher.

3.6 Interview Maria

Introduction: So my name is (Maria). I am of polish nationality, however for the last four years I've been living here in Prague, working and living. And my current position is PR and communication director in professional products division and I've been in L'Oréal since 2002, which is like I would say like long, long time. However, L'Oréal has been my first but not the only employer. I had a moment when I switched, I moved to another city. I worked somewhere else, but I missed the company so much that, well, I went back. Obviously the first country I worked was Poland and I was on the course, you know, over the years I was offered this opportunity to come to Prague, which I liked very much, so much that even though I had to go back to home to Warsaw finish some, let's say professional mission, I have that I always knew that, ok, once that one's done, I'm going back to Prague and happily there was this possibility to move within the company, to stay here to just to find another, another position or another business unit to work for.

Q: Do you remember the first contact you had with L'Oréal as an employer?

Well, for sure. That was pretty much unforgettable because, I was very obviously very young, I just finished my master thesis in Warsaw School of Economics. And funny thing, I was always very much, you know, international relations oriented at that time. It was the time when the European integration was super hot subject and this was really something I was very much into. So I believed that by no means marketing and business is definitely not for me, this is not what I want to do. That was my first strong conviction. However, when I started looking for a job, I had this better, you know, classic way to do so. First I had my Master thesis, then I went looking for a job. One job that caught my attention was L'Oréal, however, it was, they were advertising internship in HR, the HR department, which I thought, OK, that's interesting. I had some good

experience from my studies in Canada about this area, so I felt like, that might be this. So I send my CV and the mail came back. So I sent it again and then four times more because it came back four times. So I was actually very happy when finally, after like two minutes, I got a call from a lady from L'Oréal saying she really thanks me for all five CVs, I send her. And obviously I got invited for an interview, so already then, you know, I felt like that's really cool that it started with a joke, although completely awkward from my side, but, and then they convinced me that definitely marketing is my, apparently it's the way to go. So yes, I did to try.

Q: So you started as an intern and then moved to a full-time position in Marketing?

Yes, that was correct. I think I had only three month internship, in the meantime the opportunity showed itself, so I very quickly became full-time employee.

Q: Can you shortly describe the main tasks of your position?

Currently the main objective is to ensure, the proper, let's say building the proper image and strengthening the awareness of professional division brands across all media like online, offline and interesting, in relevant target groups in Czech Republic and Slovakia. So I'm responsible for two out of three hub markets. Not the Hungary.

Q: Did you search for open positions or did you also attend other events at university?

I don't think I had any contacts apart from purely consumer kind of contact and I was always much, longer time before I was a huge beauty addicts. My interests, professional interests seem to evolve elsewhere during my studies. It was always some sort of, you know, very alluring, attracting thing for me. Plus, another huge advantage or another strong point for me was that it's a French company and I'm a French speaking person, huge friend. So I really could imagine myself here.

Q: What traits are you looking for in an employer?

No it would be values, definitely, this is probably why I feel that well in this surrounding here, just because it's sort of, you know, when we speak about work life balance, it's not only about time that we spend here or at home, my, my idea of having work life balance, it's not having to change who I am the moment I enter the office, and then getting back to someone else. So the fact that I am pretty much, or totally in line with company values and what I value is valued here and somehow it works. So it makes me feel very comfortable and also very confident. Also in the beginning taking business decisions.

Q: How do you describe the culture of L'Oréal?

It's tough to describe. However, for me it's what I like about it is that is very human oriented. I very much like the fact that respect is one of the top values here. Then diversity, which is we can say just another way to show respect, we show respect to every kind of person with all possible differences which actually we embrace, and this is something that for me creates an

ideal environment to thrive for people, for teams. So yes, it is very idealistic, but it is that way and as long as we all believe in this idea, it really works, especially in today's world, I feel like we start, we sort of are like, you know, an example or a bubble of values, which I hope will always keep and nurture and strengthen because here it's, it really shows, well this respect, diversity, this curiosity, you know, for me it's also one way to stay happy all my life is that I keep this childish curiosity and I can't always be surprised, I can always try things differently. I never assume that I already know. And all those things are somewhere in the heart of this, of this huge corporate organism after all, you know, it's, tens of thousands of people working here, so we have to know that it's a big corporation. But in a way how we work every day, with the people I meet every day it still works like as if, you know, we just bring here our passion, ideas and we move on. So this is what I personally like and for me, yes, I mean it's not the only, not the only face of our everyday work. Obviously there are deadlines, there is stress, but this also pushes us to do a little bit more and you know this entrepreneurial spirit, this encouragement to, you know, try to get a little bit better, a little bit of perfection, I find myself totally in the this. So I just think that I couldn't have found a more fitting environment for myself. However, I do also respect and understand that it might not be the ideal for other people. I'm just lucky that it fits here. So that's why I also had this decision at some point that even if I had to completely reorganize my life, I decided to go back to this company because I felt like not only I feel best here, but also I can really develop my full potential in those, in this kind of environment. So this is my experience of those values in real life.

Q: Can you describe the atmosphere at the office also compared to the office in Poland?

Funny thing there is always something very similar in different teams, even in teams in different countries and so different cultures after all, there's no doubt that all, sort of L'Oréal people have something in common. Although they are so diverse there is still, there is this common understanding this, I don't know, this sphere where we all are on the same wave length in a way. However, yeah, that's the general atmosphere, I would say, this you know, striving for perfection, respect for diversity. However, this striving for perfection in hard times or in more, you know, let's say just times when we have more deadlines to me, it can have an impact on us and yes, people sometimes are more stressed or more nervous and, this atmosphere that you're asking about, that also sometimes depends on, you know, on the factors that are changing in time. So yes, I have gone through rough times with teams being quite demotivated or frustrated but never detached. I've seen all teams, you know, almost completely decomposing, people leaving massively, but none of them were detached. They were, they were passionate to the last year and many of them returned couple of years later and after they gain some more experience and after that they realized that maybe there is still a way to find their place in L'Oréal. So this, I think this enthusiasm, passion and also sometimes it's also devotion because I have not seen many people here who have this very kind of square nine to five work attitude and it's not about time that I'm referring because it's really, I think that people just enjoy working here. And those who do seem to be the most say, lasting and the most successful I would say.

Q: If L'Oréal was a person, how would you describe it?

For me it would be something like a man of renaissance, you know what I mean? Someone who is really, interested with everything, respecting every aspect of life, always eager to learn and adapt and change. Friendly but not too overwhelming. I personally like all the French aspects, in the culture. But to be very honest, I think that this has changed a lot over the course of the years when I have been in the company but still, you know, all this, this chic and the beauty and of course its somehow, it is there in the DNA of the company and I hope we will never lose it. Yes. Now we have very large portfolio of brands. Some of them are not French at all, but in a way, I like this sometimes even this, you know, slightly chaotic way of doing, which for me, goes quite creative in the end. But, so yeah, that would be probably the person.

Q: Is there something you expected to be different before you started working at L'Oréal?

I don't think I had a very defined set of expectations. I was super curious and very eager to learn, but one thing that surprised me was the extent to which I was ready to go full length, especially in the beginning, so that I was not expecting. I was more, maybe I was thinking that work is something like school but maybe more organized or, and it was totally not. So I must say that the main surprise came from myself and my behavior rather and how much, how much I liked it to, how much I enjoyed it. Although it was very often hard in terms of time and in terms of scope of work and it was super challenging and I'm not saying it's, you know, it's always really with a full smile. No, but in the end it's. So that was surprising for myself and also for my family.

Q: If you imagine you would be the one hiring a new candidate?

Yea that's actually quite accurate question because like I quit often do search to my team so that obviously depends on the position and depends on the brands and it depends on the divisions because I've been through three already so it's totally different, but I search more or less for people that are enthusiastic and eager to learn. So I think that, you know, set of skills are something that can be developed. I look more for this open minded attitude, an attitude more important for me, certainly then skills, especially with young people. Yeah. Because I think that's, you know, we learn all our life's, we have time to, to gain experience, to gain skills, to change our own profile in the end if we wish to. But one thing that will probably not change is the attitude and exactly this readiness to be a bit generous because this generosity, I think is something that I think can help a lot. And I, I do find this is required sometimes, it helps also to survive that type of tasks.

Q: There are six founding values, which one's surprise you or you see the relation to L'Oréal?

I think passion because with this is, you know, all others are super important, but without passion we wouldn't probably go very long way. So I think that if you combine passion with the striving for excellence, the result will be just multiplied. So and passionate is also something that makes us stand up after some drawbacks and move on again. And so this also changes, it changes, or it adds up to this nice and innovative, inspiring atmosphere. And that's also what I just personally like. I like the passion in people and anyone who is passionate about what he or she's doing, it's a super interesting person after all, whatever that is. And I think you can tell

immediately when you speak to someone like that, someone has this passion, so that, look, that's my personal favorite, but business wise, obviously I think it's the combination and I think the entrepreneurial spirit is maybe the one that can make the most difference.

Q: Do have an example how the entrepreneurial spirit is reflected within L'Oréal?

So the way how, how I see it the most often is when I work with young teams. So currently we are in a sort of, in a phase where we struggle with like high complexity that work because we are growing big and we need many systems and suddenly we realize we have so many systems that it's a bit overwhelming so it might seem, especially to young people that, I would like to do this, but in the end it's not possible because I have to go through, you know, there's so many obstacles, and I think that this entrepreneurial spirit can help and just stopping for a moment and thinking OK, what would I do if it's all my company and as I still want my idea to be executed, to be seen on the point of silence. So it's very simple. It's details and we are not talking here about, you know, huge investment decisions and stuff like that. However, gradually the people who got that thing here, like they also got there, but it starts with very, very tiny thing just persistent, OK somebody told me, no or didn't like it, but I will go in person and try and try again until I have it done. This yeah, persistent, consistent and staying on track, that will be adjusted sometimes when it's needed and learning new way and not giving up so easily. Especially that, it's usually not the people who aren't able to put up with the system, they will overcome this.

Q: Do you think that passion is also strongly reflected among the other employees?

I am not sure it's the most universal one because I think it has a lot to do with personality and some people, maybe they don't show it that much, but again, maybe the question is not because I'm showing that often, but about just enjoying what one's doing and what's happening every day, so I do see a lot of that, but if it's the main one and the most universal one as the last time I just cannot tell.

Q: 'Diversity at L'Oréal' What comes to your mind?

This is the respect of embracing all kinds of beauty, in the end because obviously we are a beauty company so everything we speak of refers to employees but also to the world in general, all consumers in the world, but that's diversity, that's accepting the beauty can have million different forms and shapes and all of them are great and also ideas come from many different people and can be composed of very various profiles. So that's actually, I experienced that in many stages of my career. I had myself, a team composed of students, a flight attendant or ex flight attendants and everybody was bringing something absolutely unique and that kind of team really was unique and was perfect. So that is diversity for me and also accepting that very fast you discover that all beauty segments on the market regardless of distribution channel, category, gender, so this is really the best way I guess to discover diversity. And maybe one more thing when we look at a team here, we are maybe at the first glance not so diverse but I think it does correspond with the structure of society in general. So we tried to be as diverse as possible, but still not, yea, you know.

Q: How do you perceive the ratio between men and women?

Well, I'm often asked about that actually. Many people think that L'Oréal is a very female company, which it is not. It just depends on the profession. There are professions and there are departments where you see many men, and the fact that yes, we are selling beauty products in the past, it meant that, ok mainly we are addressing products to women and the communication was women oriented but it's not only the case. It's no longer relevant at all, I think to even think like that when he, you know, open YouTube and see many my makeup artists and others being such, you know, super skilled in using beauty products like, we see it is really no longer relevant to look at it through gender perspective, but if we want to see if there are more women or men in the company, I really think we should go deeper than just look over the marketing teams. But also sales teams, logistic teams, purchasing departments and at then I wouldn't say it's so much, women, female company.

Q: Do you see it changing over time that there are more men employees now?

No I would rather say only opposite, there is more women in higher positions and otherwise I never thought that it's mainly women. I've always had men in my team and pretty much on equal ratio so I cannot share that experience.

Q: Do you think a special focus on attracting more men is communicated by L'Oréal?

Not really, I haven't noticed that, you know, I haven't noticed that very clear communication OK, now we are trying to hire more men, it's more like everyone is welcome and we have to open our minds a little bit more because there might be a super talented guys that can work on makeup brands for example, and let's not be biased and think they cannot, I would rather, this kind of approach would seems more logical to me. And yea, well I think that many, probably, you know, events that we organize, or competitions like Brandstorm, you know, in several years I remember a couple of examples that there was specifically a men product topic which obviously attracts maybe more men than it would otherwise. So I think this is maybe the way exactly to show to young people, young students, guys, you know, it's fun for you as well. By the way, I have lot of very successful super talented male colleagues, that were responsible not only for men categories.

Q: Do you think there is something L'Oréal could especially promote to attract more men?

That's the thing. I think that to be very honest in the core our work, it's quite masculine in the sense that you need to have, you need to have a little bit of, how to say, you need to combine the traits, like that are culturally understood as masculine. That's what I want to say. That you need to be sometimes pushy, quite decisive, you need to know what you want to do, you need to be able to present it to convince others, to be persistent and you know, yes, co-operative which is more, like what I would say female behavior, it's more a behavior than a characteristic, but in its core, as I said, the work, the activities that we do, the behaviors. We have to show very often belong more to this masculine world as we might, you know, understand it on the very traditional way. So I think it's, it's this, the area we can realize our full potential, just no

matter what brand, because the only thing that can make a man think that this is a female company is the product category, but you know, the scope of work, whether you work on the lipstick brand or not can be quite requiring a lot of masculine strength to be successful.

Q: Do you think a focus on attracting more men is demotivating for female employees?

No, I don't think its demotivating. I certainly believe that there must be some sort of balance and balance is always better and diversity is always better than having the like really, you know, uniform team. Diverse teams are also more efficient and it's more fun working there. So I think that's, that's probably the reason behind, I don't think it's only about numbers. At least I would be very surprised to hear that this is only based on numbers and we need to have 50-50, I don't think it's that, it's more like keeping that diversity is probably the real reason to do so.

Q: Is there anything that could be improved?

Yeah, well certainly there are, there are at least two things that I think we should improve or at least start to work on them. One is, we must be much more clear about work content, because very often we fall in that trap, you know, that there is this dream build just based on nice logos, and nice visuals and young talents applying for example for marketing departments and then they are so sort of, they are facing the reality that is a bit more challenging than that. I don't mean challenging in the sense that they have to do something more than testing new shades, exactly. Then they face the situation that, OK, we have 50 systems to suddenly that we have to start working with, and I mean, IT systems not all of them are super efficient or super new and in the end this work starts to be retrieved of this beautiful dreams. So I think that we have to first fix this problem and to make this a bit more balanced, but then also be very transparent about it. From my experience, it looks like the more transparent you are during the interviews, the bigger success afterwards. So it is not necessarily bad what we need to say, this is the point. And actually very often I see that, the more I try to share with the candidate, what the work is really about, the more I see enthusiasm in their eyes and the more they want the job. So I think this is one thing we need to improve, what we really disclose or what we really explain about the job content. But the second thing we need to improve, is also a little bit of employer PR, I very often hear even from my own team that their colleagues, their friends from the outside of the company, they are usually are very surprised that they do work for L'Oréal saying like, oh really, oh my God, that must be so hard. That you know there is this bad, sort of, bad PR. Which for sure, has it's roots in some reality but certainly does not give the right picture or the true picture for sure. So I think we should work on that. But I do believe we do work on that and that we just have to, you know.

Q: Why do you think they have this opinion?

Probably, you know, based on someone's opinion who didn't really feel happy here who wasn't taking care of properly, who finally left with quite high frustration.

Q: Do you have anything else to add?

No, I think that's all I have to say about the topic. I could go on probably because I really like working here but I think that this is a very huge subject, but I think your questions covered it pretty well.