



**NEW
GENERATION
RECRUITMENT
GUIDE 2016**

♥	PREFACE "YOUR MOST VALUABLE CAPITAL" — INEKE KOOISTRA	6
1	SHAVING YOUR BEARD FOR YOUR BOSS? NOT A PROBLEM! EXAMINING THE NEW GENERATION'S PROFESSIONAL FLEXIBILITY	8
2	ON THE BARRICADES FOR YOUNG TALENT HOW DO YOU WIN THE WAR FOR TALENT?	22
3	"WE ARE A COMPANY OF FRIENDS" DIRECTOR PIETER ZWART ABOUT COOLBLUE'S EMPLOYER BRAND	34
4	DISRUPT OR BE DISRUPTED, THAT'S THE QUESTION INNOVATIVE ENTREPRENEURS SPEAK THEIR MIND	42
5	"GOOD E-RECRUITMENT IS LIKE RUNNING A WEB SHOP" FIVE GOLDEN TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE E-RECRUITMENT FROM ROGIER THEWESSEN	52
6	INNOVATIVE EMPLOYERSHIP THREE EMPLOYERS ABOUT CHALLENGES IN HR IN 2016	60
C	COLUMN: "WANTED: FAILED START-UPS" REMY GIELING ABOUT THE ESSENTIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP OF THE NEW GENERATION	68
7	OLD WAYS OF THINKING IN THE LABOUR MARKET BAD NEWS FOR STARTERS	74
8	THE ENTREPRENEURIAL DREAM SIXTEEN YEARS OF YOUNGCAPITAL: FROM THE ATTIC TO THE BOARDROOM	82



A NEW GENERATION AT WORK



**“HAPPY PEOPLE
ARE GREAT FOR
BUSINESS”**

YOUR MOST VALUABLE CAPITAL

PREFACE

I am often asked what YoungCapital does “differently” compared to other employment agencies. First of all, I have to clear something up. We do not consider ourselves an “employment agency”, rather we are an Internet company operating in the staffing and secondment industry. We use all the knowledge and technology at our disposal to put young people to work in wonderful organisations.

The new generation of employees has not yet had the opportunity to fully discover and develop its own talents or its potential value for the labour market. They could use some help to make this discovery easier. Although many companies are calling for young talent, the economic crisis has only reinforced the traditional employer mentality. Vacancies often come with daunting requirements – such as diplomas that match the position perfectly, excellent grades, a minimum number of years of professional experience – and all that has to be provided for a starting salary. This is a major waste, since young talents inspire innovation with their fresh outlook.

What the employer can do for his employee is clearly not a primary concern, nor is the employee’s satisfaction level. As a human being and as a manager, I am honestly surprised by this. After all, happy people are great for business. Regardless of your area of expertise, your people are your most valuable assets. Investing in health and happiness on the work floor helps you to achieve growth within your organisation. Our own people are the perfect example: they clearly enjoy their jobs and therefore make working with YoungCapital more fun.

Just like talent, a corporate culture has to be cultivated. Of course, an employer can set clear targets for his staff, but he has to offer something in return as well. That is why we invest heavily in the development of our people and give them the opportunity to move up in our organisation. The successes we achieve together are celebrated together as well. Last September, for example, we joined all our 350 employees on a trip to Barcelona for a weekend of non-stop partying. Their tireless efforts allowed YoungCapital to grow another 25 per cent in 2015.

When, as an employer, you know where your successes come from, you will reap the benefits. In this edition of the New Generation Recruitment Guide, we will show you how that works. Entrepreneurs share their vision on the renewal needed in order to be successful. Experts in the field of the labour market and recruitment will tell you all you need to know about recruiting and working with the new generation of employees. Last but not least, the three founders of YoungCapital will demonstrate just how far guts and entrepreneurship can take you: from students dreaming of entrepreneurship to, well, the bosses of yours truly.

If you are still wondering what we do “differently” after reading this book, feel free to stop by and see how we work with your own eyes.

Ineke Kooistra
CEO YoungCapital

🐦 @Inekekooistra

01

SHAVING YOUR BEARD FOR YOUR BOSS? NOT A PROBLEM!

EXAMINING THE NEW GENERATION'S PROFESSIONAL FLEXIBILITY

Flexible work methods are becoming increasingly prominent in the labour market and are often associated with young people. How flexible are young people really? How far are they willing to go for their job? YoungCapital and the knowledge institute TNO conducted a large-scale study of 5,500 young people in seven European countries.



Paul Preenen (1978)

works as a Researcher at TNO and specialises in sustainable productivity and professional flexibility in organisations. He earned his doctorate in researching work-related challenges.



Friso Schous (1988)

is a Master student of social and organisational psychology and an intern at TNO.

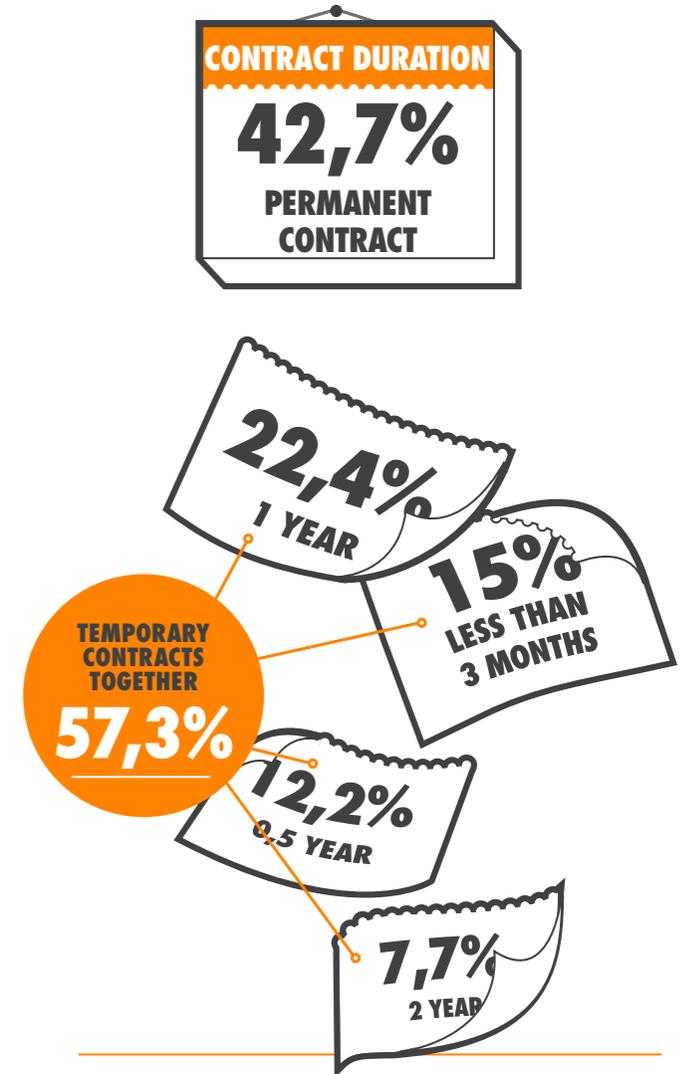
We questioned nearly 5,500 young people from the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Spain, France, the United Kingdom and Austria via a sample test of YoungCapital's representative international database. At the time of the study, this database contained around 3.7 million profiles of people who had signed up via one of thirty YoungCapital job boards

in order to apply for jobs. The study's respondents were between 17 and 35 years old, with most of them being between 21 and 25 years old. Forty-three per cent of the Dutch respondents and eighty per cent of the foreign respondents had not yet finished their education.

The time of joining a company after finishing your education and spending the rest of your professional life working for that same organisation is long past. "The new generation has a different mind-set," says Paul Preenen, researcher at TNO. This much is obvious: no less than 57 per cent of the Dutch respondents would prefer a temporary contract at the moment. "Young people are still on a journey of discovery on the labour market," Preenen explains. "They are trying to find out what suits them. Many young people are not looking for a job to last them a lifetime. They want to move from job to job and learn something new in each position."

Permanent contract means security

Do not believe, however, that young employees are not interested in a permanent contract at all. Although most of them do prefer a temporary position to a permanent one, 67 per cent of Dutch young people definitely appreciate a permanent contract. That sounds like a contradiction, but it makes perfect sense according to Preenen. "Young people do not wish to be tied down, but, at the same time, it is part of human nature to look for security." He believes that young people are not so much interested in the contract itself as in the long-term job security and the practical advantages – such as the ability to apply for a mortgage – that come with it. "In our modern society, many people still associate job security and buying a house with having a permanent contract. Although that is certainly an outdated philosophy, there are no alternatives yet."



IDEAL CONTRACT DURATION ACCORDING TO DUTCH YOUNG PEOPLE

BELGIANS LOVE A PAT ON THE BACK ON THE BACK

Germans want children, Spaniards want to marry

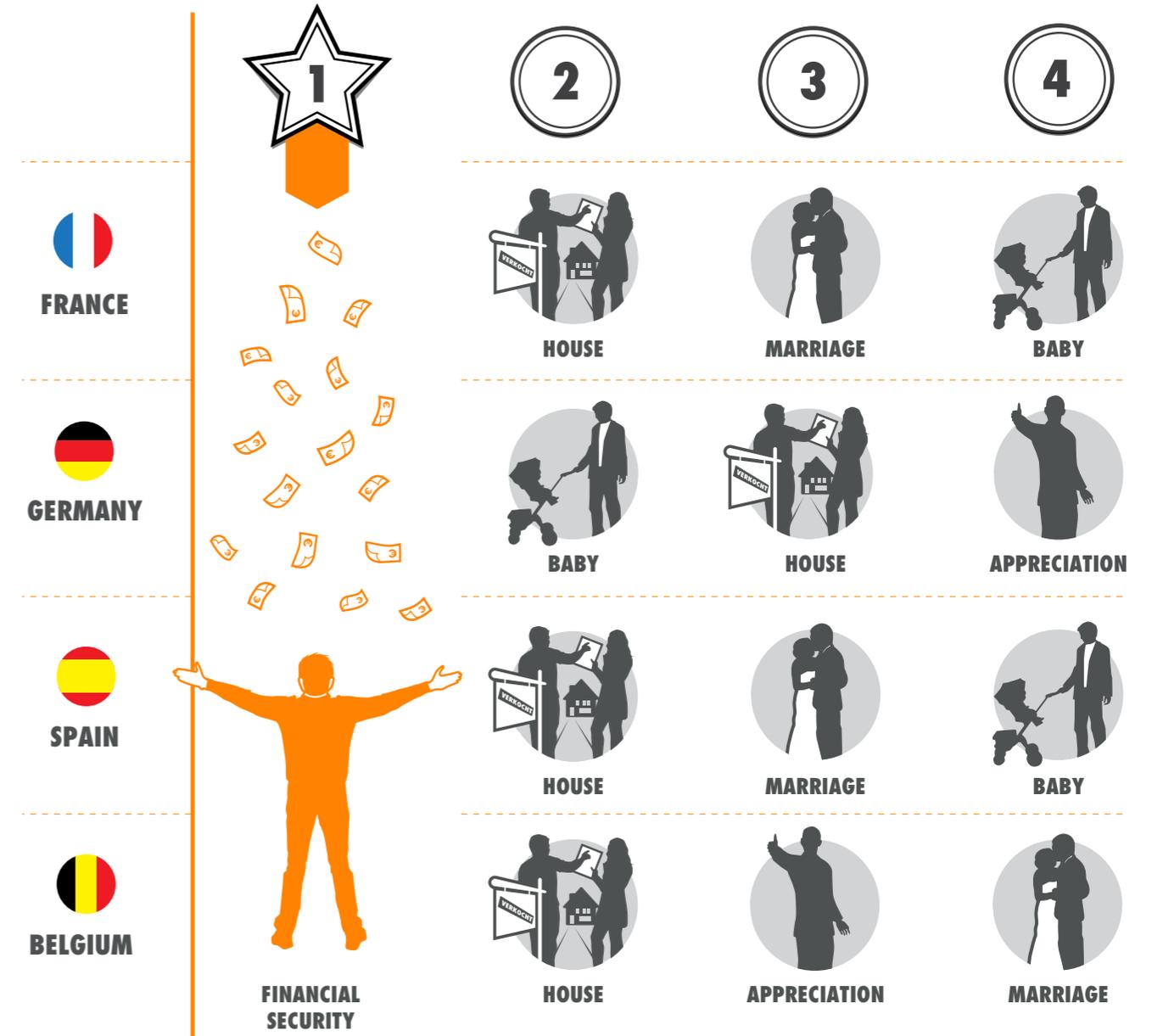
Respondents from all countries point to financial security as the primary reason for wanting a permanent contract. There are some noteworthy differences, though; for example, German people are relatively preoccupied with the desire to have children: 28 per cent of the German respondents claim that to be their main reason for wanting a permanent contract. Compared to other countries, French people mostly want to buy a house (34 per cent), while Spaniards are busy planning their wedding (16 per cent).

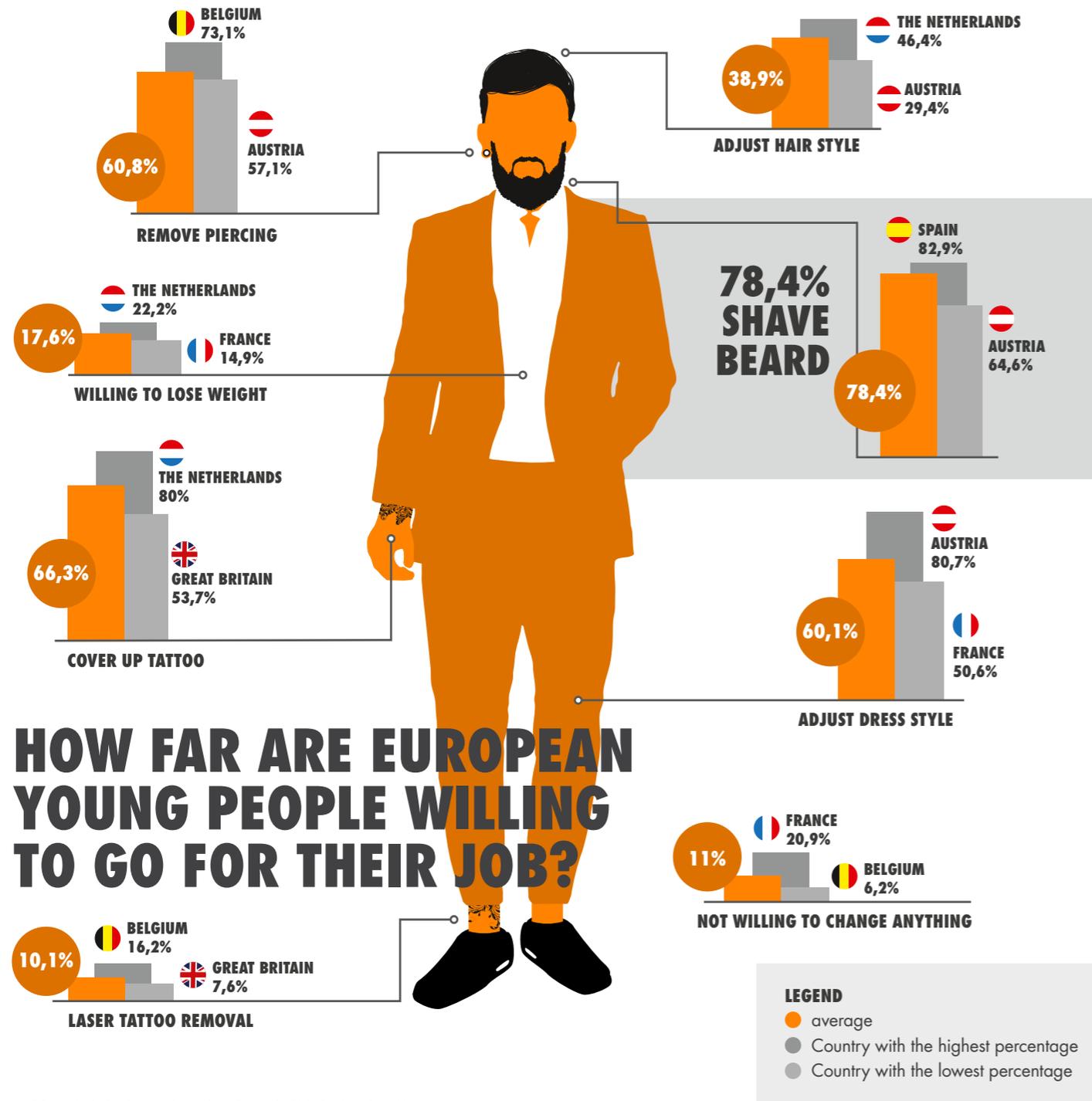
Another remarkable fact is that many Belgians (16.2 per cent) and Germans (21 per cent) value a permanent contract because they see it as an expression of appreciation from their boss. In other European countries, this is much less of a factor "German professional culture is far more hierarchical than ours," says Preenen. "If you look up to your boss, it is very important to you to be rewarded by that person."

Working for money and for contacts

The professional culture of Dutch young people differs quite a lot from that of foreigners in other ways as well. In all seven countries, the majority of young people claim that earning money is their primary reason for working at the moment. With 69 per cent, Dutch people are most vocal about that aspect, far exceeding other countries like France (46 per cent) and Belgium (54 per cent). Dutch people also stand out because of their focus on networking. Far more than respondents in other countries, they claim to work in order to meet people. Finally, Dutch people often cite learning and boosting their resume as reasons for working.

WHY DO EUROPEAN YOUNG PEOPLE WANT A PERMANENT CONTRACT?





Dutch people would shave their beard for their boss

Suppose you are a man with a wonderful hipster beard. The company you are applying at will only hire you if you lose the beard, however. Are we still flexible in that situation? The answer is yes. On average, 78 per cent of young people in the seven countries would take a razor blade to their facial hair. Among Dutch people, that number is one per cent higher still. The only nation scoring higher than the Netherlands in this regard is Spain (83 per cent). Germans are fonder of their beards and are far less likely to shave it off (35 per cent).

Friso Schous, a – bearded – intern at TNO, claims these remarkable numbers coming out of Spain are the result of the high unemployment rate among Spanish young people. Eurostat data reveals that Spain has the highest unemployment rate among young people in Europe (over 53 per cent in 2014). Schous: “Spanish people are so desperate that they are willing to go to great lengths to get a job.”

Dutch people are easygoing

In general, Dutch people appear to be easygoing. Removing a piercing, covering up a tattoo, adjusting their style of clothing – most are willing to do all that if their boss asks them to. Twenty-two per cent of the Dutch young people are even willing to lose some weight if necessary (the European average is eighteen per cent). In that sense, Dutch people are very much like the Belgians, who are also quite willing to change their appearance. The same cannot be said of the British and the French. Nearly half of the British respondents would not

cover up a tattoo when asked to do so by their boss (in the Netherlands, just two in ten young people would refuse). The French are least willing to change their appearance and score below average in every regard. Twenty-one per cent, in fact, outright refuses to change their appearance for their boss, as opposed to the average of eleven per cent.

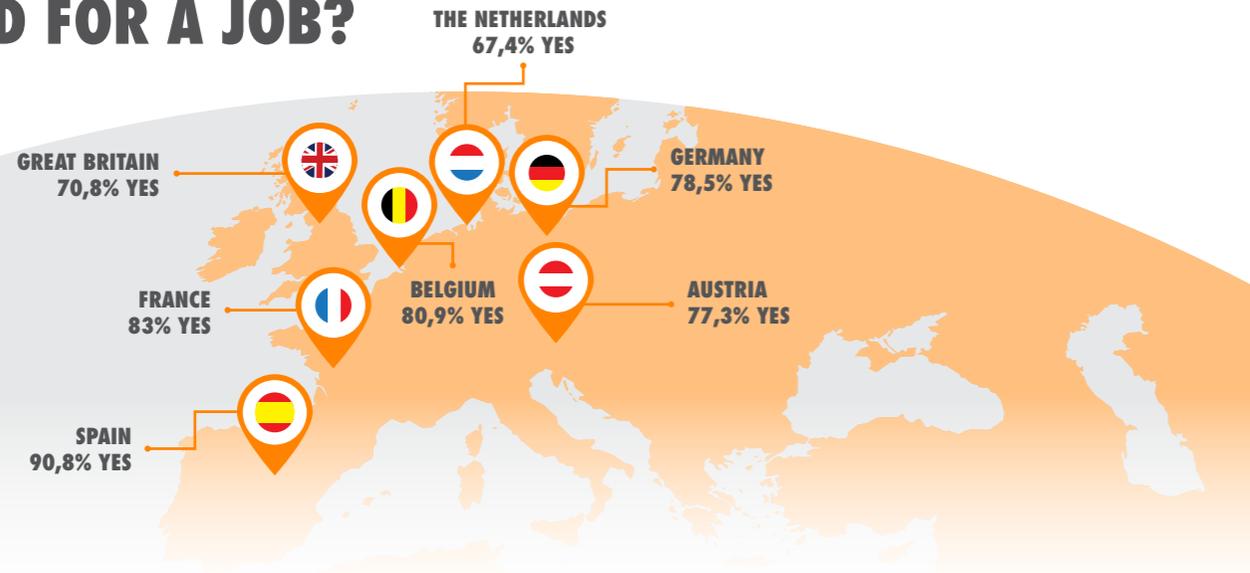
Challenges at work

Most Dutch people (60 per cent) find their work challenging, but many of them also see room for improvement. That is an excellent result according to Preenen. “Challenge is very important to one’s job satisfaction and performance. Compared to other countries, the Netherlands achieve the highest score.” Eighteen per cent of French people do not find their job challenging at all, as opposed to five per cent in the Netherlands, ten per cent in Germany and Belgium and nine per cent in Spain

Dutch people also have slightly more freedom in their work. That is no accident, says Preenen, since freedom is related to challenge. “If you are able to structure your own work and are given certain responsibilities, you feel like you are taken seriously. This tends to make your job far more satisfying.”

People who feel free and challenged tend to work to learn new things and boost their resume, says Schous. “This is quite a telling result for Dutch people. They achieve high scores in challenge and motivation and are therefore more intrinsically motivated.” The more challenging your job is, the more you tend to value a permanent contract.

WOULD YOU MOVE ABROAD FOR A JOB?



SPANIARDS WOULD GET ON A PLANE RIGHT NOW IF THEY COULD

Start tomorrow? Fine!

How far in advance would you like to know that you have to start working? Once again, the differences between countries are remarkable. In the Netherlands, three out of ten young people are fine with one day's notice or less. British, French and Belgian young people are somewhat quicker on their feet: four out of ten can be ready within a day. Germans and Austrians are less flexible in this regard, but the Spanish are the worst: 47 per cent of Spaniards prefers knowing they have to work as far in advance as possible. Preenen: "It is easy to imagine that they are tired of not having job security and want clarity as soon as possible." Thirty per cent of the Spanish young people also claim to feel stressed if they do not know where they will be working in six months' time. This far exceeds the European average of fifteen per cent. Belgian and British young people are least concerned about this.

Dutch people lack the urge to migrate

What if a great job required you to move to a foreign country? In that case, as before, young people show themselves to be flexible. Spaniards in particular hardly have to think twice about it: twenty-seven per cent would get on a plane first thing in the morning if they could. The French are also quite willing to move abroad. Dutch people appear least flexible, as one in three would not consider packing up and moving. This might be because the jobs here offer a relatively high amount of freedom and challenge.

Conclusion

The young talent entering the labour market at the moment has a different work mentality than the baby boomers or members of Generation X. It is characterised by a high degree of professional flexibility, among other things. There are significant differences between various European countries, however. Employers looking to recruit this new generation of employees should familiarise themselves with its mind-set. Many employers do not put in enough effort in that regard, says Preenen. "Employers should engage in a dialogue with the new generation of employees. That is really very important."



**YOUNG
CAPITAL**

A NEW GENERATION AT WORK

A man with short brown hair, wearing a dark grey suit jacket over a light blue shirt, is seated at a desk in a call center. He is wearing a black headset with a microphone and is looking towards the right side of the frame. His right hand is resting on a blue pen over an open notebook. The desk also has a keyboard and some papers. In the background, other call center workers are visible at their desks, and the office has a modern, bright atmosphere with blue and white lighting.

**“LISTENING AND
COMMUNICATING
ARE EVERYTHING
IN THIS JOB”**

Rick Temming,
Customer and Service
staff member

BORN: 1987

DIPLOMA: Bachelor Marketing &
Branding

CURRENT POSITION: full-time secondment at
Florius of the ABN AMRO
Mortgage Group as a
member of Customer and
Service staff

*Rick took part in the Finance traineeship hosted by
YoungCapital Professionals.*

“From an early age, I was fascinated by the business aspects of the fashion industry. After finishing high school, I completed two studies in that sector: one in the Netherlands and one at the Teko Design & Business School in Herring, Denmark. During my studies, I had a number of jobs on the side, but human contact was always my main concern. That is also why I applied at Florius. I earned the necessary Financial Supervision Act certification via YoungCapital Professionals. This job is a wonderful opportunity for me to continue my professional development. I learn something new every day, but I also have to be able to perform under pressure. Not everyone is up to that task, but I can deal with it just fine. My international experience has made me good at listening and communicating. Those are vitally important aspects of this job.”

02

ON THE BARRICADES FOR YOUNG TALENT



It has been looming on the horizon for a long time now: the war for talent. When will it begin in earnest? How can we win it once it starts? Innovative employers reveal their plan of attack.



Geert-Jan
Waasdorp (1975)

is the CEO and founder of Intelligence Group, a data supplier in the labour market and recruitment sector. He is also the founder of the Academy for Labour Market Communication (Academie voor Arbeidsmarktcommunicatie) and the Recruitment College (Hogeschool voor Recruitment).

🐦 @WaasdorpiG1



Elbrich
Batstra (1977)

started working as HR Director at YoungCapital in 2013 and has since focused her attention on creating a “happy, healthy, committed crew”. She is convinced that the proper focus on atmosphere, health management and talent development will have an immediate positive influence on corporate results.



Mark
Vletter (1980)

is the founder and “CEO of fun” of the professional telecom provider Voys, based in Groningen. He founded the organisation in keeping with the Semco philosophy: without managers and positions.

🐦 @MarkV

“THERE IS A GROWING NEED FOR ALL THINGS BETA”

It has been on the verge of breaking out for a decade now: the war for talent. Ever since McKinsey coined the phrase in 1997, it has popped up everywhere. The aging of baby boomers, the knowledge economy and developments on the labour market would all have companies fighting tooth and nail to acquire fresh talent in the future.

Then the recession hit. Unemployment – particularly among young people – increased and the “threat” of a pending fight for talent decreased. Is the war making a comeback these days, as the economy recovers and unemployment rates decline? If so, what can we do to win it?

War for skills

Geert-Jan Waasdorp, the CEO of the Intelligence Group research agency, can laugh about it all. “The war for talent is already happening! If you are studying nanotechnology or

information technology, employers are in a bidding war for your services. Students of technical business administration at the TU in Eindhoven are in fact recruited on their first day.” To put things into perspective, he adds: “Not all types of talent are being fought over. No one is looking for you if you studied journalism. Let’s say that out of every ten people, one-and-a-half person is really being fought over.”

In the years to come, that number will increase to three or maybe even four out of ten, Waasdorp expects. “The war for talent is a small-scale affair right now, but it will broaden. There is a growing need for all things beta and for anyone who knows statistics. The demand for people in creative sectors will also increase again. Graphical designers, for example, will become more popular – that is, if they are good at mobile and social.” Waasdorp suggests “war for skills” might therefore be a better term. “In the past, your education was all that mattered. These days, it is all about skills: can you program, can you analyse?”

THE WHEEL OF YOUR PROFESSIONAL FUTURE

The "Wheel of your professional future" for recruiters.
YoungCapital invests in the professional and personal development of its employees for a period of at least two years.
The outer ring lists YoungCapital's seven company values.



Fail fast, learn fast, improve fast

How can you win this "battle"? How can you attract the best people and – crucially – how do you make sure they stick around? "Young professionals are characterised by their willingness and eagerness to learn," says Elbrich Batstra, HR Director at YoungCapital. "YoungCapital therefore makes a commitment to them: they will work for us for at least two years, while we offer them the opportunity to learn everything they need to become who they want to be in their professional career."

This model is called the "Wheel of your professional future". "It is like a Wheel of Fortune of courses and training programmes," Batstra explains. "From leadership workshops to time management, online presence, personal effectiveness et cetera. The employees are free to plot their own course. One of our key mottos is: fail fast, learn fast, improve fast. It is okay to make mistakes, but you should come up with a solution yourself – that is how you learn."

We did away with managers

Telecom provider Voys has adopted a completely different approach. As founder Mark Vletter explains, he does not "fight" for talent, because talent voluntarily comes to him. In fact, Voys has been receiving so many open applications recently, that the company could not keep up with the requests. Voys is a company without managers, which appeals to many.

"We discovered that most people actually hate managers," Vletter explains. "Because what do those people do? They interfere without you asking them to. They hijack ideas and present them as their own or they keep you from executing your idea as you intended. In short: there is no autonomy."

Voys concluded that the "ideal manager" on the other hand, is an expert, coach, sparring partner and someone with a critical eye. "But you do not need a manager for that: those qualities are already present in your team. That is why we did away with managers and positions."

"THE NEW GENERATION OF EMPLOYEES WANTS TO BE STIMULATED"

The result: "Happy colleagues who feel free in their jobs. If your organisation is structured properly, talent will actually want to work with you."

Keep it exciting

"A beautiful office, great coffee, a nice place to work – these are all important factors. As are a good salary and flexibility," says Elbrich Batstra. "But the heart of the matter revolves around appreciation and development. The new generation of employees wants to be stimulated. Give them

the opportunity to develop, both in and out of their area of expertise. Keep things exciting for them."

Many companies mostly require a new mentality to win the war for talent, says Batstra. "Recruiting new talent becomes even harder if you hold on to traditional selection criteria such as years of experience. Young people simply do not have that experience yet. At YoungCapital, we therefore select new colleagues primarily for their talents, their fit with our corporate culture and their commitment. After all, we know perfectly well what young people with an entrepreneurial spirit can achieve. YoungCapital is the best proof of that potential."

RECRUITMENT WITH WHATSAPP AND VIRTUAL REALITY

Innovation is one of YoungCapital's core values. This becomes clear even during the application process, to allow potential employees to become familiar with our corporate culture straight away.

Applying via WhatsApp: since April 2015, applicants can send a video of themselves straight to our recruiters via WhatsApp. This is an important addition to the traditional resume and application letter. Elbrich Batstra: "If you are a strong, convincing communicator and that is something the position requires, you should demonstrate it!"



Virtual reality recruitment: In September 2015, YoungCapital launched a virtual reality video that you can view with a smartphone or a Cardboard viewer. Take a peek into the life of a YoungCapital recruiter!

youngcapital.nl/over-yc/werken-bij

“THERE’S NOT ENOUGH MONEY FOR THAT”

This is an often heard argument when it comes to educating and training employees. However, says Elbrich Batstra, those who do not invest in the development of their people will see them leave one by one. “It does not have to cost thousands of euros. The point is to be creative and focus on your people.”

THREE TIPS >

1

USE THE EXPERTISE YOU ALREADY HAVE

Every organisation has people with an exceptional talent for specific aspects of the job process. It would be a waste not to take advantage of those talents. Batstra: “For example, we have people who are very good at sales. We gave them a “train the trainer” course. They were named “champions” and are now hosting courses for colleagues in other departments.”

2

SHARE EXPENSES

“Employees who are eager to continue their development are often quite willing to contribute. You might agree to each pay half of the costs, for example, or let the employee attend the programme during work hours.”

3

THERE ARE FREE OPTIONS AS WELL

Batstra points out that a look behind the scenes of a different department or organisation is highly educational and practically free. “You might, for example, have employees shadow a colleague for a while in order to learn about a certain area of expertise. You could have a junior member of the legal department sit on the public stands during a court hearing. Additionally, some courses hosted by universities or workshops offered by branch organisations are free to attend.”

Rajiv Lachmansingh
Support Engineer

BORN: 1989

DIPLOMA: Master Business &
Information Management

CURRENT POSITION: full-time secondment at
Enable-U as a Support
Engineer

*Rajiv took part in the IT traineeship on Software
Development hosted by YoungCapital Professionals.*

“After completing my studies, it was difficult for me to find something that suited me perfectly. I am fond of puzzles and love solving complicated IT issues. I also greatly enjoy contact with clients. That started at the age of sixteen, when I got a job in a telecom provider’s call centre. During that time, I learned how to get a client to trust you: listening properly, asking questions until the problem is absolutely clear and then carefully explaining what you will do to resolve it. All the better that I now have a job in which human contact and technical expertise are equally important.”

**“I HAVE ALWAYS
ENJOYED ENGAGING
WITH CUSTOMERS”**



03

**“WE ARE A COMPANY
OF FRIENDS”**



Meeting rooms designed to look like a bar or a shrine to Nintendo, crazy television commercials and, of course, 325 specialist web shops: all this contributes to a rock-solid employer brand. We are talking about Coolblue. Director Pieter Zwart explains why everyone wants to work for his company.

Pieter Zwart (1977)

studied Business Administration in Rotterdam. In 1999, he founded a web shop selling MP3 players with two friends. These days, his company has 1,300 employees. Zwart was elected as Leading Online Entrepreneur of the Year in 2012.

🐦 @PieterZwart

Coolblue does “everything for a smile”, whether that means same-day delivery, funny pictures on Facebook or brightly coloured delivery boxes. The recruitment department has reason to smile as well: this successful organisation – with a head office in Rotterdam, two enormous warehouses and five physical stores – receives over 35,000 applications a year. YoungCapital asked director Pieter Zwart about how employers can achieve such successes.

It seems like everyone wants to work at Coolblue. The opening to become your PA – “Pieter manager” – got 250 replies in just 72 hours. What is your secret?

“It absolutely comes down to the corporate culture. We are not a family business, but a company of friends. This company was founded by three friends in college. I think there are certain similarities with YoungCapital. That organisation was also founded by friends who value

friendship on the work floor. Our market position also appeals to people; e-commerce is hot and happening. Coolblue is a customer-friendly organisation, which makes this an appealing place to work.” He pauses to think. “I would like to work at Coolblue myself, actually.”

Your organisation is growing rapidly. Coolblue was founded in 1999 and its current revenue totals at around 500 million euros per year. What does that mean for your team?

“We are a successful company and that offers opportunities. You do not have to wait for your boss to retire: your position, like the company itself, grows about 40 per cent every year, so be prepared. For many of our people, we are their first employer. They start in customer service during college, before moving on to different departments. For such a young organisation, we have a relatively high number of people who have been with us for ten years.”



“I AM SURPRISED THAT WORKING FROM HOME SEEMS LIKE SUCH A GOOD IDEA TO PEOPLE”

What is the biggest challenge for HR?

“Finding good people fast enough. That’s it. In that sense, IT recruitment is the most challenging sector. We employ nine IT recruiters who are constantly at work to recruit new software developers. Our development department now consists of 140 people. Every recruiter has a target of hiring 0.5 developers per month. That may tell you something about the complexity of the process.”

Coolblue has 1,300 employees; how do you manage all those people efficiently?

“I believe that responsibility should be found at the lowest levels of the work floor. I believe in teams; social connections lead people to cooperate in smarter ways. I also believe in taking small steps. That is why we work in many small teams: sixteen software development teams, eighteen commercial

teams. These can be managed as small units, without losing the advantages of a large-scale operation. The team members have mostly shared targets, rather than individual goals. The fact that you are part of a team also means that you must take to the field together.”

Everyone present at the same time – that sounds quite traditional. Do the new ways of working not suit Coolblue?

“We are relatively slow to adopt these ‘new ways of working’ and working from home, precisely because we are such strong believers in teamwork. I am surprised that this seems like such a good idea to people. We don’t need it. Our people simply enjoy working with their friends. Why would you want to sit in a Starbucks all day long and stare at your own MacBook when you could be working in a fun office surrounded by great people? I don’t get it.”





A NEW GENERATION AT WORK



04

**DISRUPT OR BE DISRUPTED,
THAT'S THE QUESTION**



What do you need to be successful in the digital age? What motivates today's top entrepreneurs? To achieve true successes, you must be disruptive, have guts and constantly look to the future. YoungCapital asked five successful entrepreneurs about their golden tip for making it in this new environment.

“THESE DAYS, FLEXIBILITY IS THE MAGIC WORD”

Why book a hotel when you can rent an entire apartment in the heart of Paris at a much lower rate? Why subscribe to a single paper or magazine when you can get the best publications of various media on your smartphone every day?

To achieve true success as an entrepreneur in today's market, you must dare to be disruptive. Famous examples include Uber, Airbnb, Blendle and HelloFresh. These are organisations that turn the industry upside down, because they choose a completely innovative approach. These organisations force others to adapt quickly or risk falling behind.

“These days, flexibility is the magic word,” says famous business woman Heleen Dura-van Oord in this chapter. YoungCapital asked five successful entrepreneurs about their golden tip for making it in the digital age. They all emphasize that today's entrepreneurs should constantly look to the future. They should never believe the race to be over. Above all, they should surround themselves with the right people: not “yes men”, but a varied group of employees who dare to think for themselves and who feel enormous responsibility for the success of their organisation at the same time.

Kalo Bagijn (1971) Brand New Day



He started in the kitchen baking pancakes, before joining Van der Valk and serving as a gas station attendant. He invested all his income from these jobs in shares. After graduating college, he became a stock broker. In 2001, he founds BinckBank together with Thierry Schaap. In 2008, he leaves Binck to found the pension insurance company Brand New Day.

“I want to overturn the established order”

“You need a healthy dose of naivety to start an organisation like BinckBank. During the first few years, we did not stop to think about certain consequences: start a bank, why not?”

In 2001, I started the online investment bank BinckBank together with Thierry Schaap – who is also my partner at Brand New Day. Our extremely low costs allowed us to compete with banks such as ABN AMRO and ING. As a result, BinckBank's share of the securities transactions market grew to about seventy per cent. By the time we quit, Binck employed around 700 people. The entire market had changed in a decade; for us, the challenge was done.

The choice to found Brand New Day was – in retrospect – perhaps a bit impulsive. I heard on the radio that seven million usurious insurance policies had been sold to consumers.

My first thought was to create the exact opposite.

My goal for Brand New Day is to turn the insurance world upside down. Once again, the formula involves offering clients extremely low rates. That meant we had to compensate with sheer numbers and bring in as many new clients as possible. That is quite difficult, because you are moving in an industry in which the other players will do whatever they can to maintain the status quo. For me, however, it is a challenge to overturn the established order. Our products force them – in an ethical manner – to truly change.

At Brand New Day, we therefore like to work together with a bunch of young people. It does not matter to us whether you are fresh out of college or have years of professional experience under your belt. We want to blow our clients away with the quality of our services.”

“YOU NEED A HEALTHY DOSE OF NAIVETY AS A DISRUPTIVE ENTREPRENEUR”



@heleenvanoord

Heleen Dura-van Oord (1972) DQ&A Media Group

As the daughter of the owner of a dredging company, Dura-van Oord came face-to-face with entrepreneurship at an early age. In 2001, right after the .com crisis, she founded the DQ&A Media Group. This online marketing agency is currently active in seven countries, employs 130 people and earns between 30 and 40 million euros in revenue every year. She is also a partner at the investment firm Peak Capital.

“It is fatal to think that everything will be fine”

“In the past fifteen years, we have had to reinvent ourselves at the DQ&A Media Group at least three times. So much happens in the world of online marketing; you must be able to detect those signals quickly.

‘Flexibility’ is the magic word. All around me, I saw plenty of entrepreneurs who believed that everything would be fine when it comes to changes in the market. You can see those companies struggling because they do not go with the flow. That is truly fatal. If you do not have a vision of the future, your days are quickly numbered. To make your organisation future-proof, it is vital that you work together with people who believe in the future. You have to tie those people to you.

Young entrepreneurs are the identification of a completely new form of consumerism. The new generation has become unreachable for many advertisers. Ten years

ago, it was possible to stick your commercial to a popular children’s show on a Wednesday afternoon, so to speak. That time is long gone. Young people know exactly how they can be found, which means they possess an abundance of valuable knowledge.

There are still organisations that consist of just one type of employee. That is shocking to me. Entrepreneurs should surround themselves with as many different kinds of people as possible. They keep you fresh. Once you start believing you know best, something is definitely wrong.”

“SURROUND YOURSELF WITH AS MANY DIFFERENT KINDS OF PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE”



Hugo de Koning (1980) YoungCapital

He has held jobs as a car washer, golf ball retriever, a mechanic fixing Honda 4-stroke mopeds and a hotdog salesman. When he was twenty, he founded StudentenWerk with two friends. These days, his company is the Netherlands’ largest employment agency for young professionals.

“Listen to young people for true innovation”

“Within a few years, there will be an app that young people can use at breakfast in the morning to sign up for a new job that starts the same day. Mark my words! The digitalisation of our world is moving so quickly that the only thing an organisation can do is respond to all these changes to the best of its abilities.

In 2000, I founded StudentenWerk with Rogier Thewessen and Bram Bosveld. At the time, it was the first online job application website for young professionals in the Netherlands. We also set up a number of other websites on the side: bijbaan.nl, stage.nl et cetera. The idea paid off: every query that has anything to do with young people and work still directs users straight to our website.

The new generation is more important than ever. We should know. At 23, many young people know more about the latest

technological developments than us thirty-somethings. You should pay attention to what this group has to say: they are the source of true innovation.

Practice what you preach; it goes without saying that we employ many young people fresh out of college at YoungCapital. They are our target audience. We give them a lot of responsibility from day one. We teach you to think and act like an entrepreneur, which is something that many young professionals find highly appealing.

In order to remain aware of exactly what today’s young people want, YoungCapital also conducts continuous studies among this target audience. That is also why we were able to integrate WhatsApp in the application process, for example. A step like that requires the input from young people.”

“OUR EMPLOYEES ARE OUR TARGET AUDIENCE”



@dklompalberts

Dennis Klompalberts (1979) Travelbird

In 2010, Dennis Klompalberts – together with his friend and business partner Symen Jansma – wrote a half-page business plan for the online travel agency Travelbird. The company was supposed to turn the travel industry upside down. That it did: six years on, Travelbird is active in twelve countries and earned 95 million euros in revenue in 2014.

“We are not interested in competition”

“The average traveller visits 22 websites before booking a holiday. There has to be a better way, my business partner and I thought. Our site lists the trips that Dutch people want to book right now. That sounds easy and our strategy is certainly not unique anymore. The execution is what counts, however. You have to do it right. Each and every single day, we try to understand the customer better.

No matter how good your product is, if your corporate culture is not right, you will fail. That is why we at Travelbird focus so much attention on the people. We have a restaurant that offers good food, we serve great coffee, regularly host parties and we continue to invest in our employees’ education. You do not have to be a specialist to work for us; we are mostly looking for people who are eager, clever and young. We give people the freedom and trust needed to be their own entrepre-

neurs. That is why it is essential for the people who work for you to have an enormous sense of responsibility and – equally important – to be happy. A happy employee is five times as productive as an average employee.

We are not very interested in competition. Our main goal is to be an inspiration for people who are not quite sure where they want to spend their holiday just yet. We are also proud of the fact that we give people new ideas for their trips, from unforgettable road trips to fun day trips.”

“IF YOUR CORPORATE CULTURE IS NOT RIGHT, YOU WILL FAIL”



@PieterZwart

Pieter Zwart (1977) Coolblue

A student of business administration, he founded a web shop for MP3 players in 1999 with two friends. He is now the director of Coolblue, a company with over 325 web shops, five physical stores, 1,300 employees and an annual revenue growth rate of 40-45 per cent.

“Make sure not to become a boiled frog”

“The shift from offline to online is what drives our growth. That shift continues year in, year out. If you do not act properly, you will become a boiled frog. I mean, how do you boil a frog? If you throw it in a pot of boiling water, it will jump out as if nothing happened. If you put it in a pot of cold water and light a fire underneath, it will be cooked in fifteen minutes. How come? Gradual change is not seen as dramatic. It kills the urgency of taking action.

In the years to come, countless more organisations will go under as a result of the digitilisation of our society. Suppose you own a shop, a bank or a job agency. If you focus on your branch offices, you can easily lose up to 8 per cent in revenue every year. If you do that five years in a row, you are done for. Many organisations still work for today’s customer, the one they are familiar with.

The point is to be making something for the client of tomorrow.

Consider the food retail sector, for example: an industry worth 30 billion euros, of which only 1 per cent is earned online – often with online supermarkets. That is simply the old business model translated to an online model. I do not want to add sixty products to my digital shopping cart one at a time; I want my fridge to be stocked with fresh food. That is why I admire an idea like HelloFresh: simply deliver fresh products to my door. If you can guarantee that my groceries will be delivered to my door at 18:15, I will never set foot in a regular supermarket again.”

“YOU SHOULD BE WORKING FOR THE CLIENT OF TOMORROW”



**“AS A SEA SPECIALIST,
I MANAGE THOUSANDS
OF ADVERTISEMENTS”**

Kim Wissink SEA Specialist

BORN: 1990

DIPLOMA: Master Communication Studies

CURRENT POSITION: SEA Specialist at Vergelijk.nl

Kim works full-time as a staffing employee via YoungCapital.

“Working at Vergelijk.nl is awesome, but also a constant challenge. As a SEA Specialist, I manage thousands of advertisements that have to perform optimally every single day. How you can do that? By conducting continuous analyses and implementing improvements wherever possible. It helps that I am good with numbers, though it is also important to be curious and eager to learn new things. There is so much more in this industry I want to learn and do! Fortunately, this company encourages that attitude. If you put in the effort, the sky is the limit.”

05

**“GOOD E-RECRUITMENT
IS LIKE RUNNING
A WEB SHOP”**

BY ROGIER THEWESSEN

If you are only now beginning to use online recruitment, you have some catching up to do! Although the labour market might appear to be standing still, e-recruitment is moving ahead at full steam. Rogier Thewessen, co-founder and DGA of YoungCapital, explains the digital trends you can use to make your recruitment process more effective.



Rogier Thewessen

founded StudentenWerk in 2000, together with Hugo de Koning and Bram Bosveld. He specialises in online marketing; in 2013, he won the title of Leading Online Entrepreneur of the Year.

🐦 @Rogierthe

In recent years, e-recruitment has not exactly been a top priority for most organisations. The high unemployment rate meant applicants were lining up anyway. Companies focused little on their online visibility and their “work at” pages were sparse at best.

However, those who are only now beginning to adopt online recruitment are already behind. The labour market might appear to be standing still – the world of e-recruitment most certainly is not. E-recruitment is developing at a rapid pace: online marketing is becoming increasingly important, the smartphone will become a vital tool and applications sent by video are on the rise. In this chapter, I will demonstrate how e-recruitment is becoming more and more complex, goal-oriented, professional and effective.

FIVE TIPS ➤

1 A specialist for every channel

A good recruitment system is, in my eyes, becoming more and more like running a web shop. Online marketing is vitally important: you have to be visible.

There are many channels you can use to increase your online visibility and each of these is getting more and more options over time. In terms of conversion rate, Google AdWords works best in my experience, with Facebook as a close second. It has become quite a hassle to make effective use of all those individual channels, though. The same goes for Twitter and Instagram. You can only get the most out of all these channels if you appoint performance specialists who are intimately familiar with each individual channel – just like you would for a web shop.

I also see that retargeting is becoming more popular for recruitment: after someone has viewed a certain vacancy, he will then encounter it again at different places. First in the sidebar on YouTube, next on Facebook. Eventually, he will think that he might as well apply. Be careful not to become annoying, though – for example, by using a frequency cap that limits the number of times a vacancy is displayed.

SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS FOR RECRUITERS

A personal approach is becoming increasingly important. You want your picture of the applicants to be as comprehensive as possible. What better way to find out more about someone online than by using social media? These plugins for Chrome that collect all of a person's social media information – often including contact information (useful for hunting candidates) – are invaluable tools for every recruiter. I have three personal favourites:

- 1 **360social** analyses around 200 social networks in real time via your browser and compiles all of a person's accounts into a list: 360social.me
- 2 **Prophet** is better for finding e-mail addresses and other contact information, but less suitable for social networks: recruitingtools.com/prophet
- 3 **Connectifier** was specifically designed for recruiters, but signing up is mandatory: connectifier.com

2 Data, data, data

From the number of viewed vacancies per application to the search terms entered into Google. We know more every day. How do people find our vacancy? How often does the average person apply for a position and how often does he actually get the job? Linking all that data can lead to interesting insights. Analyse and adjust your strategy accordingly.

Here is an example: if we know that a position in IT will bring in more candidates via Google than Facebook, we invest more in Google AdWords. If it turns out that people searching for the word "work" are less likely to be hired than those searching for "vacancy", we can modify our advertising to reflect that. In that sense, hard data leads to cost benefits as well.

3 Google and LinkedIn are changing. Be flexible

In the past, we brought in a relatively high amount of traffic via Google's organic (not paid for) search results. Clever search engine optimisation (SEO) often put us at the top of Google's search results. Google has changed, however. The difference between advertisements and organic search results is far less obvious as a result of changes to the layout.

You have to adjust your methods accordingly: we now invest more in AdWords. The costs have increased as a result, as has the necessity of the investment paying off in the end. Return on investment can only be achieved when the entire application process – from beginning to end – can be measured, so you know exactly what the results of each step are.

LinkedIn has changed as well. Last year, recruiters were still able to link the LinkedIn profiles of candidates to their own

databases. Whenever a candidate changed something in their LinkedIn profile, our own information was automatically updated. Unfortunately, LinkedIn has put a stop to this synchronisation. LinkedIn is still the biggest database of latent job seekers, but personal contact has become even more important in order to benefit from it. Recruiters must approach potential candidates deliberately and individually in order to develop a network of contacts. That takes time: start today, because you will not reap the benefits until a few months from now.

4 Use mobile to attract

Traditional application methods do not go well with mobile. Writing your resume or motivation letter is not something you should do on your smartphone while you are on the train. On the other hand, mobile devices are ideal tools with which to browse through vacancies. Mobile therefore calls for an accessible approach.

Some employers do not want to receive applications without an attached resume. That is far too rigid in my eyes; it means you miss out on people. Those people might not be very interesting to you right now, but in two years those young people might be top-of-the-line programmers. Mobile is the perfect tool to attract precisely that audience.

We have updated our YoungCapital app to reflect this development. Everyone, whether they have signed up with us or not, can use the app to look for and apply to vacancies. You can even record a video of yourself and include it as your motivation – see the next tip for more on this subject.

Another useful feature is that the app remembers your queries. If, for example, you search for "administrative position Amsterdam," you will receive a push notification on your smartphone whenever such a position opens up.

5 Elevator pitch, code or video – to each their own application

To me, application letters have always been boring. I am not the only one, it seems. Video applications are becoming increasingly popular. Candidates can show more of themselves and organisations get a better impression of them. A video is easy to create with a smartphone and sending it becomes a breeze with WhatsApp or Skype.

Granted, it has to suit the position. It is less suitable for a programmer, for example. Tailor-made application processes are therefore becoming a trend. Using video makes sense when the position is for a hostess or a member of the promotional staff: you can instantly see how someone presents themselves. You can ask a programmer to submit a piece of code and have someone applying to the position of salesman call in with their pitch. Companies are wise to adopt these creative application methods.

A woman with long blonde hair, wearing a white blazer, a patterned skirt, and white high-heeled shoes, is walking on a red running track. She is carrying a blue handbag and smiling. The track has white lane markings.

**“I DO NOT WANT
TO OPERATE ON
AUTOPILOT”**

Sara van den Berg
Account manager

BORN: 1986

DIPLOMA: Bachelor Hospitality
Management

CURRENT POSITION: Account manager at
Interbest

*Sara works full-time at Interbest after being recruited
and selected by YoungCapital.*

*“My ambition? To work in a coordinating position
at an international organisation, for example in the
travel industry. A job that allows me to develop new
(tourism-related) products, maintain an international
network and organise events. Until that time, I am
looking to gain experience by working at various
organisations. I am not one to work on autopilot;
regularly changing my environment keeps me
energised!”*



INNOVATIVE EMPLOYERSHIP

●

To make your organisation a success, you have to innovate. Not just as an entrepreneur, but also as an employer. What should you do as an organisation to stay relevant for the new generation? Three completely unique employers share their views.

THE NEW GENERATION DEMANDS DIFFERENT THINGS OF THEIR JOBS

Spending an hour in the gym during lunch, working from home and taking part in talent development programmes: the new generation demands all this and more of their jobs. To attract young talent, employers have to be innovative. How can you keep employees involved in your organisation? What should you invest in today to be successful in the future?

YoungCapital asked three completely different organisations about their challenges as employers. How can telecom giant KPN, with its 14,000 employees in multiple areas of expertise and age categories, retain its flexibility? How can the 3D-printing company Shapeways, which is growing at an explosive rate and – with 180 employees – can hardly be

called a start-up anymore, hold on to its start-up mind-set? How does Docdata, the e-commerce service provider behind some of the Netherlands' most popular web shops, structure its workforce to deal with the ever-changing number of online orders?

Once again, "flexibility" is the keyword. You must continue to react to the dynamics that are inherent in the organisation's core business. KPN's Chief HR Officer Janine Vos says: "Young people bring in energy and innovation. As a company, you must always react to that dynamic environment. These people are your future."



Janine Vos (1972)
KPN

POSITION: Chief HR Officer

KPN: A Dutch telecom operator

FOUNDED IN: 1850

ACTIVE IN: The Netherlands

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 14,000

AVERAGE AGE: 43 years

HARDEST TO FIND: Qualified Dutch technical staff

The essence of young talent

"We are a major Dutch organisation and our employees are a representation of the Netherlands. We are always looking for good people, although that is sometimes quite a challenge. I see ambitious and highly trained competition for Dutch students coming in from across the border. Sometimes, I would like to say to our Dutch students that they would be wise to put in a little more effort."

Young talents are essential to us: they inspire and energise, which is why we include them in all aspects of our company and allow them to have true influence on every layer of the organisation. Every year, for example, we bring some of them along on the Board of Directors' road shows. The young people working at KPN also need a purpose. They ask questions like "Who am I?" and "What do I want?" We focus on those issues in talent programmes.

At KPN, we have employees of all ages. That makes the organisation dynamic. It is very important to us to connect young and old. Older people often believe young people to

be impulsive, while young people think old people are stuck in their ways. That is why we strive to bring them together – in teams, but also during connection sessions. They end up understanding each other better and learning from each other.

A good example is our digital coaching programme, which has Young Talent coaching a high-level manager on the use of social media, while the manager in turn helps the young people by discussing his or her ambitions and career. My own coach is in Groningen and advises me on how I come across on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and our own internal online communication platform Team KPN and what I can do to improve that. This system works great!"

**"YOUNG TALENTS
INSPIRE AND ENERGISE"**



Hugo Ploegmakers (1977) SHAPEWAYS

POSITION: Director of Operations

SHAPEWAYS: 3D printing service and community (a kind of Gumtree/Craigslist for 3D printing)

FOUNDED IN: 2007

ACTIVE IN: The Netherlands and the United States

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 180

AVERAGE AGE: 30 years

HARDEST TO FIND: People with knowledge of manufacturing and a start-up mind-set

Revolutionary growth

"We are growing rapidly, so finding good employees is a challenge for us. Just four years ago, I came in as the fifteenth employee; these days, we have 180 people.

People who work at Shapeways have to have a start-up mind-set, be a bit impatient and quite flexible. You will not be working in the comfortable environment of a major organisation that has been around for decades. Personality is more important to us than education and experience, but that is sometimes hard to gauge from a resume or letter of application. We therefore interview a tonne of applicants for each vacancy. It is a lot of work, but there is no better way of finding out about someone's character.

We also have trial days: everyone who makes it through the initial application process joins us at work for a day. This allows us to see if the applicant truly fits into our organisation and whether he or she even really likes the job.

It's like spending a day with your feet in the dirt, only in our case it's more with your hands in the powder, because our objects come out of the 3D printers covered in powder.

Luckily enough, we get a lot of responses to our vacancies. 3D printing is attractive to young people and we are an energetic and ambitious organisation. We give our people room to develop their own ideas. They have the freedom to experiment, as long as the client is not affected. They have to learn to take risks and verify their own work. We teach our people those qualities on the job."

"PEOPLE WHO WORK FOR US HAVE TO HAVE A START-UP MIND-SET"

Jos Goedhart (1969) DOCDATA

POSITION: HRM Manager

DOCDATA: The Netherlands' largest e-commerce service provider and distributor of products – such as toys, electronics and books – that are ordered online

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 500 to 3,000 in the Netherlands; 1,000 to 5,000 internationally

ALWAYS LOOKING FOR: People who can bring structure to the large dynamic whole, while realising that this structure is only temporary



Anticipating unpredictability

"Companies promise customers that any product they order before 11 pm will be delivered to their door the next day. Docdata packages all those orders and gets them on the trucks in time. Our challenge is getting the right number of people working at the right times. It is often hard to predict how much manpower we will need.

If, for example, the Dutch national football team has an important match, hardly anyone will buy something online during the game. If we are behind by three goals, however, we flood to the Internet to shop. When the Netherlands lost to the Czech Republic last year, we suddenly needed to bring in a lot more people that very night!

Via a broker, we work with six different staffing agencies that help us tackle this logistical challenge. People who work for us love flexibility. Seventy-five per cent of the work is done outside office hours. They can go shopping or take their kids to a

theme park during the day and work in the evening. That attracts a wide range of different people.

The best thing about working here is that people are given freedom, space and enough supervision to keep them from drowning. When you work for us, you should feel happy and proud at the end of the day when your team has managed to get the trucks out the door on time once again."

"WHEN THE DUTCH NATIONAL FOOTBALL TEAM IS BEHIND BY THREE GOALS, WE FLOOD TO THE INTERNET TO SHOP"



“I WANT TO PUT ALL MY ENERGY AND CREATIVITY INTO MY WORK”

Hanneke Dekkers 3D Printing Engineer

BORN: 1991

EDUCATION: Master Engineering, Building Physics & Services

CURRENT POSITION: 3D Printing Engineer at Shapeways

Hanneke works sixteen hours a week via YoungCapital.

“When I came home after spending some time abroad, I was looking for a fun job in Eindhoven that I could combine with my full-time Masters programme. During the TU/e industry days, I talked to some of Shapeways’ people and immediately decided to apply there. I had some experience with 3D design through my studies and I loved the idea of working in that sector. Another aspect that appealed to me was that Shapeways values its remarkable atmosphere and carefully considers the personalities of applicants. To me, the atmosphere on the work floor is extremely important as well. I am at my best when I can put all my energy and creativity into my work. Luckily, there is plenty of opportunity to do so here.”

WANTED: FAILED START-UPS

The essential entrepreneurship of the new generation



Foto: © Floris Hever

Remy Gieling (1988)

is editor-in-chief of Sprout, the network for innovative entrepreneurs. He started as an intern and quickly made a name for himself as a video reporter and presenter. He is also the co-founder of companies in the fields of software development and new media.

🐦 @RLGieling

In Silicon Valley, I recently met with Aaron Levie. Levie is the 30-year-old founder and CEO of Box, the alternative to Dropbox that services major businesses like General Electric and Coca-Cola. In the Netherlands, he is not that famous, but in the United States he is a rock star. He is a quintessential product of the Valley: young, charismatic and, yes, he too managed to take his company out of his garage and turn it into a major listed organisation.

I asked Levie how he has protected his company's quality and culture during this tumultuous period of growth. His answer was as simple as it was fitting: 'Remy, when your organisation grows, there are two options: either you become removed from your core values over the years – which happens when you hire new staff and do not give them the proper training or explain these core values to them – or your new people reinforce and strengthen your values. Fortunately, the latter is happening for us.'

Today, Levie has 1,500 employees and 40 million users all over the world. 'It's all about people.' But where can you find these people? In the Valley, you do not have to look far: every year, the smartest people on the planet migrate to an area the size of the dutch province of Utrecht to market their talent. Renowned universities like Berkeley and Stanford also supply batches of graduates to Google, Facebook and the rest. It goes without saying that these giant organisations fight tooth and nail in the war for talent. However, even though the major tech companies can offer enormous salaries and buy start-ups just to acquire the best people, the talent pool is at its most concentrated in California. Even smaller companies flourish like never before. A little competition on the labour market can't hurt, right?

“THAT BOGEYMAN FROM LIMBURG IS NOT EXACTLY INCREASING OUR COUNTRY’S INTERNATIONAL APPEAL EITHER”

Back to the Netherlands. We occasionally manage to trick a few Spanish programmers to come here and develop software in the cold, but our country is nowhere near as appealing as the Californian sun. The pay is a lot lower, English is not the first language and that bogeyman from Limburg is not exactly increasing our country’s international appeal either.

When it comes to graduates, we are also losing the battle with the States. The waiting line of highly talented people extends to the Mexican border, full of people waiting to pay 60,000 dollars a year to get the best education available. Until recently, we paid students in the Netherlands and gave everyone access to subsidised education.

Is young talent unattainable for Dutch organisations? Fortunately, no: at the moment, there is a fundamental shift in mind-set taking place among Dutch young people. For the first time in a long time, this generation is growing up susceptible to the chances that entrepreneurship can offer.

This is a generation that no longer sits in class, spends six years in bars and then decides to look for a job. This generation believes that you can make your own future. It focuses on innovation and looks for opportunities. These people bring innovation to major organisations or – as you see happening a lot right now – they start their own businesses.

Benefit from failures; strengthen your company!

Success stories like Levie’s in the United States also serve to fuel the start-up fire in the Netherlands. Everyone knows someone with a great idea for a new app. The swimming instructor next door might be working on a start-up that lets you practice the butterfly stroke in your own bath via e-learning, so to say. A great development, but not every new entrepreneur should expect to achieve the same level of success as Mark Zuckerberg has with Facebook.

For other businesses, these failures are perhaps even more important than the successes. Even if entrepreneurs fail to make it big with their own company, they can strengthen another organisation elsewhere: they have shown to put innovation first, to be willing to work hard and to keep both the product and the costs in mind. Good luck trying to distil such qualities from the resume of a recent graduate of business administration.”

“THIS GENERATION BELIEVES THAT YOU CAN MAKE YOUR OWN FUTURE”

Ricardo Burger Cooperating Foreman

BORN: 1989

EDUCATION: Secondary vocational education (MBO) Food Technology

CURRENT POSITION: Cooperating foreman at Rentoclean

Ricardo works thirty hours a week as a staffing employee via YoungCapital.

“When I applied for this position, I was just looking for a fun, flexible job next to my Food Technology studies. I believe that every job deserves your full attention. You might say I am a perfectionist; I cannot rest until everything has been taken care of. I immediately hit it off with my boss at Rentoclean. He is a true entrepreneur in a growing organisation. We share a vision: all the details have to be just right. That is probably the reason why I was promoted to cooperating foreman after just three months.”



**“I CANNOT REST
UNTIL EVERYTHING
HAS BEEN TAKEN
CARE OF”**

07

OLD WAYS OF THINKING IN THE LABOUR MARKET

BAD NEWS FOR STARTERS



In spite of the economy's recovery, the Netherlands is still facing an unprecedented unemployment rate. To offer employees more securities, measures designed to fundamentally change the labour market were taken last year. The result? These changes are mostly bad news for starters on the labour market.



Bram
Bosveld (1981)

founded StudentenWerk in 2000, together with Hugo de Koning and Rogier Thewessen. Bosveld is the financial brain behind YoungCapital and pleads for the improvement of young people's position on the labour market whenever he can. He is a board member of the Algemene Bond Uitzendondernemingen (ABU).

🐦 @BosveldBram



Fabian
Dekker (1978)

earned his PhD at the Erasmus University with a study of the consequences of flexible labour for the legitimisation of the welfare state. He has published articles about self-employed people and unemployment among young people and is, in addition to being a researcher, also a scientific staff member of the scientific Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid (Council for Government Policy). In that capacity, he focuses on the future of employment.

🐦 @FabianDekker



Esther
Crabbendam (1990)

studied history at Utrecht University. She became the chairwoman of FNV Jong – the youth department of the FNV union – in August of 2015. Before that time, she worked as a board member of the student union ASVA in Amsterdam.

🐦 @Ezsther

“THE DANGER IS THAT YOUNG PEOPLE MIGHT BECOME TOO EXPENSIVE FOR EMPLOYERS”

“The chances of an employer offering a young person a permanent contract have only grown smaller in the past year,” says Bram Bosveld, co-founder of YoungCapital. His outlook is bleak, especially in the light of the Employment and Security Act which came into force in 2015. “Minister Asscher claims to want to improve the position of young people on the labour market. Instead, the options for an employer to work with young talent relatively cheaply are being limited more and more.”

The introduction of the new Employment and Security Act has resulted in some significant changes. For example, employers used to be able to offer their employees three fixed-term contracts in three years; that has now been changed to three contracts in two years. “Additionally, the employer has to pay the employee a transition fee if said employee gets fired and has their contract terminated at the employer’s initiative after at least two years of service.” Bosveld: “This has resulted in more and more people only working for a certain employer for 23 months. As soon as an employer feels a shred of doubt, he or she will cut the employee loose. That is disastrous for the position of young people on the market. It would perhaps be better to call it the Employment and Insecurity Act.”

Fabian Dekker, labour sociologist at the Erasmus University in Rotterdam, acknowledges the problem. He has focused on the flexibilisation of the labour market for years. Dekker: “The philosophy behind the measure is sympathetic: you want to offer a large group of people more security. The execution is fairly naïve, though. In this case, young people – the ones with the least amount of professional experience – are the losers.”

Abolishing the minimum wage for young people

Another point of contention is the abolition of payment scales for young people. The unions are in favour of this measure. Esther Crabbendam, chairperson of FNV Jong, explains why: “At eighteen, you are legally an adult. You can get married, take out health insurance and pay rent. Why, then, does the legal minimum wage only apply when you are 23 years old?” She emphasises that this is particularly disadvantageous to the large group of people with a secondary vocational education who, at eighteen, are already at the start of their professional

lives. Crabbendam: "Why should they earn less for the same type of work? The labour market would be a fairer place if your skills are what matter, instead of your age."

Labour sociologist Fabian Dekker fears that young people are getting in their own way. He responds: "Young people have less experience and a lot to learn. Why raise their salaries? The danger is that young people might become too expensive for employers. For the same amount of money, they can hire someone more experienced. Who could blame them?" Last year, the Bijenkorf retail chain took the first steps towards abolishing payment scales for its young employees, in exchange for a fifty-per-cent reduction of Sunday bonuses. "That might be a clever solution for some retailers," says Bram Bosveld. "But it is not a viable solution for all sectors. The minimum youth wage should be seen as a starting wage; an opportunity for young people to gain a lot of experience and knowledge."

Looking for a new economic model

You can talk about minimum youth wages, more securities for flexible labour and about the importance of a permanent

contract; but are those really the issues that are going to bring about fundamental changes? The labour sociologist doubts it: "I believe we are getting bogged down in short-term solutions. We should be thinking about a new economic model." YoungCapital's Bosveld agrees with him wholeheartedly. "Many of the people who are currently in charge are, in my opinion, old-thinkers. This "old-thinking" has a significant influence on the labour market, both now and in the future. An example: their picture of our economic reality is wrong; it is not a pyramid but a funnel. If you want to maintain all the provisions for today's baby boomers, the much smaller group of younger employees will have to pay the price. It is therefore important to bring more young people into the labour market quickly. Increasing labour costs and reducing flexible deployability are not helping at all."

"IT IS RIDICULOUS THAT 21-YEAR-OLDS ARE ALREADY SAVING FOR THEIR RETIREMENT"

The economy is growing faster than the unemployment rate is decreasing

The Dutch economy is growing faster than the unemployment rate is decreasing. The Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (CBS) even detected a slight increase in unemployment among young people in late 2015. Labour sociologist Fabian Dekker: "The economy is growing. Unfortunately, things are moving slowly. To prevent this kind of problem in the long run, we will have to start thinking about an investment agenda that transcends political fads. One would wish for an innovation council, like they have in Germany, which protects long-term interests. Their main task is to think about and stimulate economic growth and employment opportunities. In the end, creating more jobs is the best way to combat youth unemployment."

A collective labour agreement for young people

Real changes are necessary. FNV Jong's Esther Crabbendam agrees: "We focus more on securities for young people on the labour market. It would be helpful if more young people were given the opportunity to weigh in on the changes. That is why we started the ReFlexlab. This is where, for example, young people came up with the idea to let people have more say in their own labour conditions. Collective labour agreements should allow people to choose what they find important, such as fewer days off and more education."

YoungCapital wants to take things one step further, says Bosveld. He pleads for a collective labour agreement for young people: "This should include a number of important advantages for young people. It is ridiculous that 21-year-olds are already saving for their retirement, especially if you consider the state of many pension funds today. It would be far better if young people get the money intended for their retirement in the form of pay. They might use this to, for example, pay for their education." Yet he remains sceptical about the feasibility of these plans: "True innovation is not happening right now."

The policy is to slow things down

It is obvious that the position of young people on the labour market has to improve. Policy makers are just not sure how to deal with this yet, says Dekker. "The political discussion at the moment focuses mostly on slowing down the flexibilisation." This attitude is easy to explain, he says: "There are interests at stake. The members of the unions – mostly older people – have a strong need for security: a pension, a permanent contract. They want to hang on to what they have." Change engenders feelings of fear, but Bosveld claims the genie is definitely out of the bottle: "These days, people want to be in charge of their own professional lives. It is time to introduce a new policy that suits the new generation of employees. If the policy makers need any fresh ideas, we would like to welcome them at our office in Hoofddorp."

Demi Langeraad
Member of the Returns
department

BORN: 1991

EDUCATION: Bachelor Social Work

CURRENT POSITION: Member of the Returns
department at Docdata

*Demi works full-time as a staffing employee via
YoungCapital.*

“After I graduated, I wanted to start working right away. Jobs are scarce in my own field at the moment. You might sit around and mope, but that is not me. The best thing to do is to get a job and acquire professional experience. I applied to all kinds of vacancies, including the one for my current position. Working in logistics is not at all related to social work, but I get a lot of satisfaction out of this job. The biggest web shop in the Netherlands can only stay in business if we handle every order perfectly. That’s really cool, when you think about it.”

“THE BIGGEST WEBSHOP
IN THE NETHERLANDS CAN
ONLY STAY IN BUSINESS IF
I HANDLE EVERY ORDER
PERFECTLY”





THE ENTREPRENEURIAL DREAM

SIXTEEN YEARS OF YOUNGCAPITAL:
FROM THE ATTIC TO THE BOARDROOM

It all started with three clever students in an attic room in Alphen aan den Rijn. In 2016, the three run a successful, award-winning organisation with around 350 employees. Explore the turbulent history of an entrepreneurial ambition that is not even close to being fulfilled yet.

"THE FIRST THING WE DO IN THE MORNING IS CHECK HOW MANY NEW REGISTRATIONS WE HAVE"

It is the year 2000 when three students – Bram Bosveld (1981), Rogier Thewessen (1976) and Hugo de Koning (1980) – register the domain name of www.studentenwerk.nl. Sixteen years later, they own a multi-million corporation with a steep growth curve. At the end of 2015, their organisation had 25 offices in the Netherlands, 350 employees and eight international job banks. In 2016, the organisation continues to grow with new locations in the Netherlands and Germany. That has brought them one step closer to the ultimate dream: turning YoungCapital into the world's biggest staffing agency for young talent.

Entrepreneurial DNA

Ambitious? Yes, but that was there from the start. De Koning and Bosveld have known each other since kindergarten in Alphen aan den Rijn and have been setting up companies for as long as they can remember. At the age of seven, for example, they collected hundreds of beer and soda bottles a

day. "My mother had to turn those in at the supermarket. She was terribly embarrassed," says Hugo de Koning laughing. "We couldn't be prouder, however. We were earning money!"

'Hugo! Telephone!'

Bosveld and De Koning enrolled in the business programme in Haarlem, where they met Rogier Thewessen. They hit it off and Thewessen quickly grew from a friend from college into a full-blown business partner. The three budding entrepreneurs were looking for jobs to support their studies when they discovered that a useful online platform for students did not exist yet. So they started their own. StudentenWerk.nl turned out to be a golden idea and started out as a job bank. Based in the attic of De Koning's parents' house, they scoured newspapers for vacancies and called and faxed the companies (De Koning: "Spamming someone via fax is no longer allowed...") to tell them that they should put their ads online. "That is where young people first start their search,"

says De Koning. His parents' phone started ringing more and more. "Whenever new clients were on the phone, my mother was shouting at the foot of the stairs: 'Hugo! Telephone!'"

AltaVista

They registered a lot of domain names, including bijbaan.nl, stage.nl and vakantiewerk.nl, and were good at manipulating the most popular search engine of the time: AltaVista. "We had all kinds of tricks for that; search engines were easy to fool back then," says Rogier Thewessen. Every query that had even a little to do with looking for a job and students led to one of their websites. Thewessen: "You could not avoid us online."

Owing to this network, the number of registrations in their database quickly grew. "We are still obsessed with that. The first thing we do in the morning is check how many new registrations we have. We were incredibly proud when we first hit 10,000 profiles."

In no time, everyone was advertising on StudentenWerk.nl, even major staffing agencies like Randstad and Manpower. Thewessen: "We were onto something that nobody else was doing. Traditional staffing agencies were located in shop fronts with posters on the windows, while we offered vacancies for young talent online and had a database with all their information that allowed us to create suitable matches very quickly."

Sandwiches and black coffee

They moved into an office building in Hoofddorp, right next to a McDonald's. A loan from their parents paid for a couple of second-hand desks, computers, a coffee machine and a round "meeting table" with a toaster on it. They did not have to pay rent for a year. That was the time they had to turn this idea into a success.



“THAT’S WHEN WE BECAME REALLY COMPETITIVE”

Even during that first year, they got an offer from a major competitor to ‘hand over’ StudentenWerk.nl to them. “For free, that is,” says Bram Bosveld. “We would not succeed anyway. In exchange, they offered us jobs with low salaries.” He smiles: “That’s when we became really competitive.”

‘Of course we do that’

The job board was doing so well that their clients found the right people to fill their vacancies in no time. Most of it involved typical student jobs in retail, catering and call centres. It was not long before they were asked: “Do you do secondment as well?” Bosveld can still remember that crucial phone call. “Of course we do, I said. I hung up and said to Hugo and Rogier: we are now in the secondment business as well. I just don’t know how it works yet.”

Now that they had entered into the secondment business, they had to recruit and select people as well. During the first few years, that was a non-stop activity. They all spent all their time on the phone, recruiting new staffing employees and bringing in new clients. They quickly discovered that just talking to people on the phone was not enough; they also had to meet

every new candidate. “When you can look someone in the eye, the conversation will be more honest,” says De Koning. “You can also overlook things sometimes, like the fact that someone is too short to see over the top of the service counter.” From that time on, the staffing employees also came by the office in Hoofddorp.

Nothing but opportunities

That period quickly revealed everyone’s strong suits. Thewessen’s creativity made him perfect to handle online marketing. Bosveld, the man who loves processes, became responsible for the back office and the finances. De Koning, with his positive attitude and known for seeing “nothing but opportunities,” handled sales.

The staffing agency grew steadily. Things got so busy that they hired their first full-time employee in 2003: Hugo’s brother-in-law. In the years that followed, the number of clients – and with it, the number of employees – grew quickly. All their new employees were – like them – young people bursting with energy and ambition. The group photo of the 2007 StudentenWerk skiing trip shows around eighty cheering people with beers and ski poles in hand. The three “bosses” are hardly distinguishable from their team. “Our people were just as old or even older than us,” says Bosveld. “That was weirder for them than for us, because we did not feel like bosses at all.”

“A GOOD ENTREPRENEUR IS NOT NECESSARILY A GOOD MANAGER”

Born entrepreneurs

Young bosses or not, they had a finger in all the pies, says Thewessen. “We knew everything that happened, everyone’s names. If something did not work the first time, we tried it ourselves. When you have eighty people, that approach is still possible.” As the company continued to grow, it became more and more difficult to run the business and manage the staff with just three people. As De Koning puts it: “I am a born entrepreneur, but a good entrepreneur is not necessarily a good manager.”

The three men decided to hire a woman to lead everyone – including themselves: CEO Ineke Kooistra. “We always joke that we hired our own boss,” says De Koning. “Ineke is an excellent manager with over twenty years of experience in the staffing industry. She is the right person in the right place.”

Kooistra immediately implemented several important reforms in the distribution policy, focused management and streamlined the financial processes. After this initial focus on corporate

processes, she shifted her focus to innovation, IT and new business. She reinvigorated the secondment label for young professionals, investing in a large-scale marketing campaign and – crucially – empowered the steadily growing number of YoungCapital employees. De Koning: “I am truly proud of our corporate culture. We work hard, but we also take the time to celebrate successes together. That is important, because our people are our most valuable assets.” Since Ineke’s arrival, the company has quieted down some, giving the three founders time to do what they do best: coming up with and trying out new ideas.

From the attic to the boardroom

Although they moved from the attic to a boardroom, they are still coming up with new ideas regularly. The changing landscape of flexible labour offers plentiful opportunities for innovation, says Bosveld, who has been a board member of the branch organisation ABU since 2012. “In ten years, staffing as we know it today will no longer exist. We will no longer be filling vacancies – putting out fires, so to say. Instead, we will be directing the deployment of employees for organisations. Thewessen, who won an award in 2013 for his visionary online entrepreneurship, adds: “We will be using big data to respond to their future workforce needs.” To achieve their ultimate entrepreneurial dream – to turn YoungCapital into the world’s biggest staffing agency for young people – the three need to stay a few steps ahead of reality. “You must always want to do things better, faster, smarter,” says De Koning, who supervises various innovative start-ups. “We are testing new technologies all the time. If you have a good idea, do not stop to think about it for too long. Think in opportunities and just do it.”

“WE THINK IN OPPORTUNITIES AND JUST DO IT”

16 YEARS

YOUNG CAPITAL™

FROM THE ATTIC TO THE BOARDROOM

"HUGO!! TELEPHONE!"

Founding of www.studentenwerk.nl as the first online job bank for young people

2000



10,000 candidates

2001

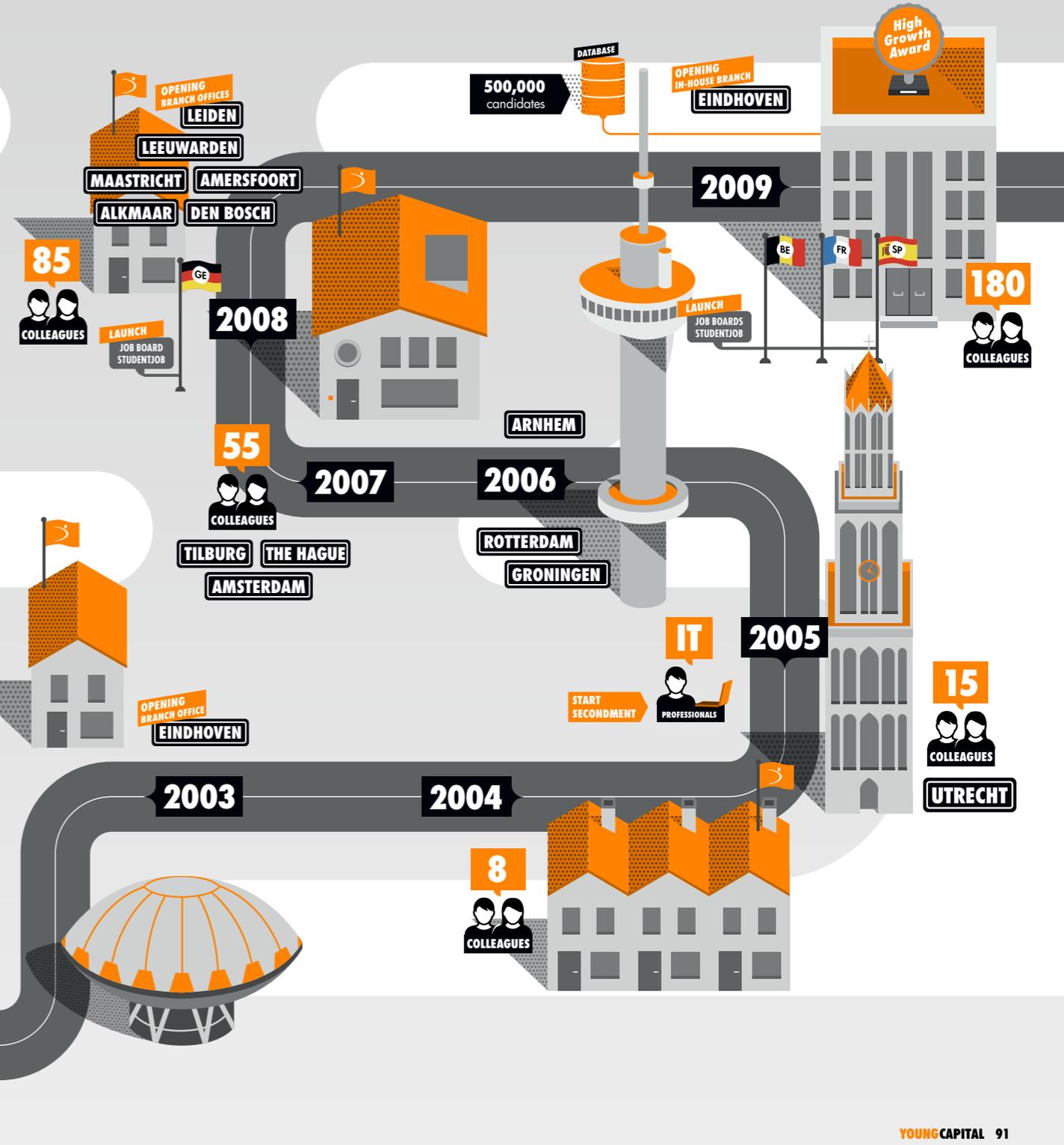
HOOFDDORP



1



2002



2010

208

COLLEAGUES

BREDA

THE HAGUE

FOUNDATION

YOUNG CAPITAL FUND

Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award

NOMINATED

LAUNCH JOB BOARDS STUDENTJOB



OPENING BRANCH OFFICES

AMSTERDAM

ENSCHEDÉ

UTRECHT

2011

62 MILLION

Revenue

270

COLLEAGUES

DATABASE

1,000,000 candidates

2012

ZWOLLE

AMSTERDAM

HAARLEM

Best Managed Company

FLEX SPECIALIST OF THE YEAR

ALMERE

Best Managed Company

LOYD Award

2013

CEO

Ineke Kooistra

STARTS

290

COLLEAGUES

2014

FINANCE

START SECONDMENT

PROFESSIONALS

LAUNCH JOB BOARD STUDENTJOB

High Growth Award

Erasmus Innovative Award

RUNNER-UP ON THE LIST OF MOST INNOVATIVE COMPANIES IN THE NETHERLANDS

Best Managed Company

LAUNCH OF THE OPTION TO APPLY FOR A JOB VIA WHATSAPP AND VIRTUAL REALITY RECRUITMENT

2015

350

COLLEAGUES

LAUNCH OF THE YOUNGCAPITAL APP

NATIONAL CHAMPION

EUROPEAN BUSINESS AWARDS

NEW CHAMPION

FINANCIËL DAGBLAD AUDIENCE AWARD

100 MILLION

Revenue

YOUNG CAPITAL

LAUNCH OF YOUNGCAPITAL AS A HOLDING FOR SUBJACENT LABELS

"READY FOR TAKE-OFF!"

2016

OPENING BRANCH OFFICE



A NEW GENERATION AT WORK

COLOPHON

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