An investigation into the predictive ability of several variables as antecedent for helping behaviour among frontline employees.

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Place: Amsterdam

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Signature

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1. Introduction

During my internship at the buying department at a chain of high-end department stores in the Netherlands, I witnessed the importance of company culture. A big part of the employees’ wardrobes was from our stores. They believe in their organization and the brands they sell. During my time there a hashtag was created. Employees could put this hashtag on all the social posts that included the organization. Almost all employees were active on Instagram and posted a lot about their travels and new items that came in. Additionally, buyers and managers were mentioned in the magazine with articles such as ‘The best picks from …’.

This strategy is in line with the current shift where consumers become more interested in who a brand is and not just what they sell. Therefore a strong brand identity is of great importance. But what is the role of employees in the realization of the brand identity and brand image? The term ‘organizational commitment’ comes to mind.

“Organizational commitment is, in general terms, the employee’s sense of attachment and loyalty to the work organization with which the employee is associated. […] Employees are said to be committed to the organization when their goals are congruent with those of the organization, when they are willing to exert effort on behalf of the organization, and when they desire to maintain their connection with the organization.” (Kessler 2013, p. 526)

Researchers have raised concerns about the usefulness of the organizational commitment theory as a predictive tool for turnover results and in-role performance of employees. This theory does show high correlations with organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB), also known as extra-role behaviour, and perhaps the real strength of the organizational commitment theory lies therefore in the ability to predict OCB instead of in-role performance. (Kessler 2013, p. 528)

As Ravens (2014, p. 59-61) points out “what constitutes organizational citizenship behaviour varies widely. The definition of organizational citizenship behavior was limited initially by Organ to extra-role behavior; Organ later acknowledged that his definition of extra-role behavior contained items of in-role behavior and was not limited to extra-role behaviors. He broadened the definition of organizational citizenship behavior to "performance that supports the social and psychological environment in which task performance takes place." In later studies the definition was revised to include both in-role and extra-role behavior, and define it as a behavior, "which includes all behaviors that, in sum, strengthen the brand identity." With this definition the term brand citizenship behaviour was constructed. A more recent definition, and the definition that will be the base of this study, is that brand citizenship behaviour is “a global concept that encompasses all brand relevant behavioral performances of internal stakeholders that strengthen the brand identity of the organization.”
Brand citizenship according to Ravens (2014, p. 65-68) has a three-dimension structure, namely brand acceptance, brand advancement and helping behaviour, which includes brand missionary as a type of helping behaviour.

*Brand acceptance:* “The acceptance and compliance with regulations encompassing all behaviors that depict formal rules and requirements of a manufacturer's brand”

*Brand advancement:* “All behaviors that have a proactive influence on the management of the organization's brand in order to further strengthen the brand but also encourages the individual to proactively seek the advancement of their skills and knowledge.”

*Helping behaviour:* "A positive behavior, support, and empathy toward internal and external stakeholders by going above the job."

*Brand missionary:* “The honest loyalty to all aspects of an organization's brand including all behaviors that best represent the organizations brand identity to internal and external stakeholders encompassing extra-initiative, adherence to guidelines and the recommendation of the brand to customers, colleagues, friends, and family.”

In the past few years, the importance of these theories has become clear to numerous professionals, both inside the fashion industry and outside of it, but there is still a lot to gain. A research conducted by the VIM-group, the Brand Performance Study, among well-known Dutch brands shows that only 27% of the investigated brands use the brand, including it's values and culture, as a base or concept for all actions concerning the brand identity of the organization. (Marketing Intelligence, 2017)

While simultaneously there are multiple CEO's advocating the importance of engaged employees. Such as Ines LeBow, CEO Transformation Executive for ETS, who sees the importance of employees that go way beyond punching the time clock and picking up a paycheck. She highlights that engaged employees post 50% more messages, pictures and videos about employers on social media and are 24% more likely to help boost sales than uninvolved employees. (LeBow, 2016)

A phenomenon that Gucci’s CEO Marco Bizzari, the man responsible for the brand’s impressive turnaround over the last few years, also observed: “The most important thing, after identifying the positioning of the brand, is attracting the right people. People are the centre of everything in the fashion industry […] if you stand back and look at it, all these people, young people, proudly dressed in Gucci, are all smiling. Being able to create this sort of energy and
creativity, both in terms of product and business, is fostering success. Other companies can do the right product for the season, but they cannot copy our people. That's the difference." (The Business of Fashion and McKinsey & Company 2017, p. 72)

For the past few years, there has been a rise in the number of fashion companies who appointed their first chief people officer (CPO). “You can't have a strong strategy without having a people person helping to drive the strategy through the organisation." Sara Patterson, CPO of Bonobos, stated. “A CPO is the highest rung of the Human Resources ladder, responsible not only for a company's staff, but also its culture – in other words, its values, ethics, mission, and how it creates a working environment in which employees can thrive." (Abnett, 2015)

Not only professionals in the field see the relevance of behaviour of internal stakeholders for organizational performance, but researchers likewise recently expressed their belief that research attention should be directed towards internal brand management (IBM), the umbrella term that covers brand citizenship behaviour. In a special issue of the Journal of Brand management Piehler, Grace & Burmann (2018, p. 1-2) express the need for closing the existing gap between the relevance of and the research attention to internal brand management. “We would like to bring research attention to this important topic by identifying directions for future research based on a literature review of IBM research in the past decade. We identified five overarching areas for future research. [...] The third area for future research is to deepen the IBM framework by gaining more insights into employee-related IBM outcomes and moderators that affect relationships between outcomes.”

This study will focus on a part of this existing gap. As mentioned before, the relevance of employees as a part of the brand identity is becoming clearer. Employees that are going above the job are becoming more crucial to the organization. “Employees are critical to consumers' perceptions of brand image. The brand experience of customers is exceedingly determined by the moment of their interaction with the firm.” (Henkel et al. 2007, p. 311) This interaction is mostly with frontline employees, since it's these employees who spend most of their time directly with customers. (Karatepe et al. 2006, p. 548) “The attitudes, skills, behaviours, and personalities of frontline employees can influence customer perceptions of service quality and corporate image.” (Ekinci and Dawes 2009 p. 503) The impact of helping behaviour on organizational effectiveness appears stronger and more consistent than other forms of citizenship behaviour. (Podsakoff and MacKenzie 1997, p. 142) This study will therefore focus the predictive ability of several variables as antecedent for helping behaviour among frontline employees. Variables used in this study are price segment, part-time or full-time status, position and years of service. In other words: How do price segment, status, position and years of service relate to the degree that helping behaviour and brand missionary is displayed by frontline employees?
In order to limit the research, a specific industry is chosen: fashion. Within the fashion industry “the corporate brand image directly translates into product image. Studies have shown how attitudes towards a brand transform into monetary values: the better the image of the fashion brand, the more a consumer is willing to spend.” (Kustusz 2017, p. 6) “The lack of significant differences in performance of product categories for the most part suggests that the main driver of sales and profit is the positioning of each brand and the value proposition it communicates to consumers.” (The Business of Fashion and McKinsey & Company 2016, p. 42) Thus, brand image is for this industry of utmost importance. Any flaw or indiscretion directly translates into the brand image and can have big consequences.

Since the fashion industry consists of a broad variety of brands, a categorization has to be made to be able to reach a valid conclusion. The most commonly used categorization is based on price segment. McKinsey and The Business of Fashion created a joint report, The State of Fashion, in which over 450 fashion companies are researched. They refer to six market segments, which have been created using a price index across a wide basket of goods and geographies. The following segments are formulated, going from a low to high price segment: Discount, Value, Mid-Market, Premium/Bridge, Affordable Luxury, Luxury. (The Business of Fashion and McKinsey & Company 2016, p. 38-41)

In 2017 consumers continued to trade away from the mid-price segments towards companies at the higher and lower ends of the industry. Over the last three years affordable luxury has a compound annual growth rate of 9 per cent, which is highest rate for any of the segments since 2013. (The Business of Fashion and McKinsey & Company 2016, p. 42-43) (The Business of Fashion and McKinsey & Company 2017, p. 76-78) This opens up an opportunity to follow the shift from mid-market to affordable luxury and investigate if this increasing performance when comparing segments can be matched to an ascending level of helping behaviour among frontline employees. The choice to solely focus on the upward shift is made because following this shift in two directions, namely towards the lower end of the spectrum and the higher end of the spectrum, would be beyond the scope of one paper.

The thesis is divided as follows: First, previous research will be examined. An explanation of the used theories will be given and the used terms will be defined. Then, helping behaviour will further be elaborated and key components will
be established. The methodology of this study will be described. Next, the results are analysed, summarized and concluded.

Findings from this study could deliver important managerial implications. Through better understanding of the variables, namely price segment, status, position and years of service and how these variables translate to types of helping behaviour, a more effective internal marketing strategy could be developed to effectively convey the brand identity and improve organizational performance from the inside out.

2. **Theoretical background**

2.1 **BRAND IDENTITY AND BRAND IMAGE**

A better understanding of brand identity and brand image gives more insight into the impact of frontline employees on it. According to the American Marketing Association "a brand is a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers." In other words, a brand is formed by the brand image and the brand identity. "According to Kotler et al. (2003), brand image is the set of beliefs held about a particular brand and a true outcome of brand identity. […] Brand identity, supported by communication mechanisms, creates associations in consumers' minds, which result in a brand image (Martinez and de Chernatony, 2004)." (Roy and Banerjee 2014, p. 209) "Associating your product with a strong brand identity is a key factor in competitive advantage and leads to great financial rewards. The smaller is the difference between the perceived brand image and the entity's aimed brand identity; the more efficient was the brand identity strategy. […] It is the overall effort of a brand identity what actually determines the success or failure; and a better understanding of it and its result, namely the brand image, is an important matter." (Mindrut, Manolica and Roman 2015, p. 393-394)

A statement that has also been indicated by Roy and Banerjee (2014, p. 207), when referring to Park et al. (1986), is that in a competitive market a brand’s success depends on the choice of the brand’s identity, the usage of an identity developing image and ensuring that its image adequately transfers to its identity.

Mindrut, Manolica and Roman (2015, p. 395 and p. 401) argue that the brand identity, and thus brand image, is formed by all components that the public comes across. Consumers, when meeting the brand identity, develop an entire overview. This identity is divided into logo, stationary, marketing collaterals, products and packaging, signage,
apparel design, and messages and actions. Their research suggests a certain hierarchy of importance of each of these elements of brand identity for the development of the brand image. The hierarchy is the following, going from most important to least important: (1) products and packaging, (2) marketing collaterals, (3) logo, (4) messages and actions, (5) signage, (6) stationary, (7) apparel. This hierarchy is based on research of Nescafe, a company that operates in a different industry, which could explain the contrast with the above-mentioned findings that for the fashion industry “the main driver of sales and profit is the positioning of each brand and the value proposition it communicates to consumers.” (The Business of Fashion and McKinsey & Company 2016, p. 42) “The brand experience of customers is exceedingly determined by the moment of their interaction with the firm”. (Henkel et al. 2007, p. 311) And this interaction is mostly with frontline employees. Within the fashion industry “the corporate brand image directly translates into product image.” (Kustusz 2017, p. 6)

Mindrut, Manolica and Roman's hierarchy is an idea that is challenged by Marie-Claud Sicard in her book ‘Brand Revolution: Rethinking Brand Identity’. According to Sicard brand identity is a fuzzy concept and nobody really knows what it is. We’re on rather shaky ground when speaking of this concept. Marketing doesn’t like complexity and therefore boils it down to something simpler, since this concept is too rich to be directly usable. "As L. Upshaw notes, a brand isn’t just a name, a logo, or some other symbol, but also the employee who rents you a car at the Avis counter, an overnight delivery truck, or the voice of a spokesperson endorsing a car brand like Ford or Chrysler. It’s the price of a product at Wal-Mart or Costco, a special feature like Clorox’s anti-spill bottle, a warranty, and many other things besides.” (Sicard 2013, p.17)

An entire discipline discusses this concept and nobody can agree. Sicard (2013, p. 18) uses the example of the elephant and the blind men. “I’ve got it!” cries the one who’s grabbed it by the tail. “No, it’s mine!” cries the one who has it by the ears. “Not at all, it’s mine!” says the one who has its trunk. Brand identity is thus pulled in all directions by those who’ve only grasped part of what it is, for lack of a global view.” This enormous concept can be viewed from multiple angles and therefore researchers try to clarify it by dividing it into multiple components. L. Upshaw lists the elements of identity as follows: Product/service performance; Name awareness; Logo/graphic system; Positioning; Strategic personality; Marketing communications; Brand loyalty. (Sicard 2013, p. 34) While Aaker (1996, p. 79) takes this to the next level, and argues that brand identity is made up of twelve elements, organized in four perspectives: the brand as a product, as an organization, as a person, and as a symbol.
Brand as a product relates to the tangible and intangible aspects of the product and how the customer relates to it. The brand as an organization deals with the innovation of the brand and the consumer concern. This is important for building strong brands. Brand as a person focuses on the personality aspects of the brand. And finally brand as a symbol is about the symbolic aspect. This means visual imagery and the heritage. According to Aaker any brand can be defined using these four perspectives.

When dealing with various elements, Sicard rightfully notes it is hard to resist the temptation of hierarchizing these elements, as done by Mindrut, Manolica and Roman (2015). Furthermore, Aaker (1996) divides the brand identity into Brand essence, Core Identity and the Extended Brand Identity and in this way implicitly ascribes more value to the centre than the rest. But “there is no identity “in and of itself”; identity doesn’t exist by itself, it is not a fixed “something” at the heart of another “something” that is capable of change. To put it in philosophical terms, identity is not an immutable “essence” that transcends being and existence. […] An individual’s identity comes from without, and not (or not only) from within. It depends on the context in which the individual lives and develops. It is not innate but acquired through interactions and relationships with others and with the environment. There is no identity without otherness.” (Sicard 2013, p. 45-54)

To my opinion, Sicard rightfully concludes, “that brand identity isn’t defined as a nonmaterial, impalpable “essence”. It is located in the “body” as much as in the “mind” of the brand, without distinction or hierarchy between them. […] In IBM’s identity there is as much blue as power and technology. In McDonald’s identity, there is as much hamburger as happiness. In Chanel’s identity there is a tweed suit, elegance, quilted handbags, the rejection of convention, N° 5, classicism as far as the clothing goes, baroque for the accessories, or sometimes the opposite, navy, beige, black and white, the memory of Coco, Karl Lagerfeld’s insolence, a camellia, the Ritz, a boater, and so forth.” (Sicard 2013, p. 54-55)
Brand identity can be managed to some extent. “First we have what it “really” is—its true identity, for which the company that manages it is responsible; and then we have its image, which is subjected to various distortions by consumers.” (Sicard 2013, p. 34) When efficiently conveying a brand identity to consumers and using strategies for positioning, a positive brand image can be build up. (Janonis, Dovalienė and Virvilaitė 2007, p. 75) “Being at the interface of the internal and the external world of the brand, customer-facing employees exert a certain degree of influence on customers' and other stakeholders' perceptions about the brand and/or the organisation, which determines the success of brand positioning. Their distinctive skills can create a company’s competitive advantage that may be difficult to be matched. […] To ensure that employees behave in ways that support the brand promise, internal branding has become of great importance to academia and practitioners.” (Punjaisri and Wilson 2007, p. 3)

2.2 HELPING BEHAVIOUR

Since brand image is subjected to various distortions by consumers, managing the brand identity and the communications to consumers is vital. And that is where brand citizenship behaviour comes in. As mentioned before, brand citizenship behaviour has a three-dimension structure. In this study the focus is on one part of this structure: helping behaviour. Helping behaviour is accepting and present-oriented (characterized by the phrase ‘it's ok’), and does not concern violation of standards, and therefore will probably occur more commonly in organizations. (Van Dyne and LePine 1998, p. 109) Multiple elements are derived from literature that fit the above-mentioned definition of helping behaviour to clarify the definition.

Ravens (2014, p. 62) refers to Zeplin and Maloney definition of Organizational loyalty and Individual initiative:

- **Brand Endorsement** – recommendation of the brand to others also in non-job-related situations, for example, to friends; passing on the brand identity to newcomers in the organization.

- **Brand Missionary (external)** – honest loyalty to all aspects of a manufacturer’s brand including all behaviors that best represent the manufacturers’ brand identity to outsiders.

- **Brand Enthusiasm** – showing extra initiative while engaging in brand-related behaviors.

Within helping behaviour, a distinction can be made between in-role and extra-role behaviour. Van Dyne and LePine (1998, p. 108) argue the importance of this distinction, since it is frequently made by employees, their peers, and supervisors. In-role behaviour is required or expected and if employees fail to perform, they do not receive
organizational rewards and it can lead to negative consequences. Extra-role behaviour, on the other hand, is positive and discretionary. It is not specified by role prescriptions, not recognized by formal reward systems and not a source of punitive consequences. Nevertheless, both of these behaviours are important to monitor. As previously mentioned, brand image is subjected to various distortions by consumers and thus managing the communications to consumers is vital.

When analysing previously stated definitions, one can identify that helping behaviour consists of multiple components. The four components that can be identified are acceptance, loyalty, extra-initiative and recommendation. The first two components, namely acceptance and loyalty, are essentially considered to be a state of mind or emotion. From this state of mind certain actions follow and certain behaviour is displayed. The other two components, recommendation and extra-initiative, imply a direct effort or action to be taken.

Acceptance is derived from multiple descriptions, such as “Helping behaviour is accepting and present-oriented (characterized by the phrase 'it's ok')” and “Helping behaviour does not concern violation of standards, and therefore will probably occur more commonly in organizations.” (Van Dyne and LePine 1998, p. 109) Ravens (2014, p. 66) highlights the element of adherence to guidelines. A certain degree of accepting the way things work and how things are done is in play with all these descriptions. It's about respecting the norms and values of the brand, accepting it and therefore the willingness to participate. The Cambridge Dictionary defines ‘participant’ as “a person who takes part in or becomes involved in a particular activity.” And therefore, employees that show this behaviour will be referred to as Participants.

The component of loyalty can be found in Raven’s (2014, p. 62) definition of helping behaviour, namely “a positive attitude, support and empathy toward internal and external customers.” Where support and empathy implies a certain level of loyalty to internal and external stakeholders. Furthermore, Raven (2014, p. 65) discusses brand missionary, “the honest loyalty to all aspects of a manufacturer's brand including all behaviors that best represent the manufacturers' brand identity to outsiders. Where the state of mind, that is being loyal, translates into behaviours towards outsiders. When loyal to a certain cause or organization, one does not change their believe in certain principles. (dictionary.cambridge.org) Being devoted or loyal can also be seen as being a believer, that is “a person who has a religious belief or who strongly believes that something is right or good.” (dictionary.cambridge.org). For that reason, employees displaying this kind of devotion will be referred to as Believers.

Extra-initiative can be derived from Ravens (2014, p. 67) definition of helping behaviour, namely “A positive behaviour, support, and empathy toward internal and external stakeholders by going above the job.” The focus on
going above the job is of importance. This component focuses on extra-role behaviour and becomes clearer in the definition of individual initiative by Ravens (2014, p.63) “Voluntary effort beyond job description, enthusiasm, and dedication.” Brand enthusiasm is showing extra initiative while engaging in brand-related behaviours. And therefore employees engaging in this kind of behaviour are referred to as Enthusiasts.

The last component is recommendation, perhaps the most obvious component. When referring to helping behaviour and thus helping the organization succeed by displaying certain behaviour, ones mind quickly goes to recommending to friends and family. This is also emphasized in the definition of brand endorsement: “recommendation of the brand to others also in non-job-related situations, for example, to friends; passing on the brand identity to newcomers in the organization.” (Ravens 2014, p. 62) “Someone who publicly supports something they believe in”, could be named an advocate according to the Cambridge Dictionary. Thus, Advocates are the employees that show the above-mentioned behaviour.

3. **Methodology**

3.1 **Sampling**

This research was conducted among frontline employees at brands from the mid-market, premium and affordable luxury segment. The visited stores were all located in major cities in the Netherlands. When entering the various stores, the store manager was approached and asked if he/she agreed to allow the survey to be conducted. If permission was given, the employees of the stores where asked if they were willing to complete a questionnaire on a tablet which took approximately three minutes. The use of the tablet ensured full privacy for the employee since no names were asked and the completion of the questionnaire happened with no other person present. No brand names will be stated in this study, since this was communicated to the employees to ensure honest and accurate answers. Once the respondents completed the survey, the tablet was returned to the researcher.

3.2 **Survey**

They survey consisted of two sections. First, the respondent was asked about their status, position, number of years of service and the brand they worked for. This was done in order to be able to determine their category at a later stage.
The second section consisted of 20 statements regarding helping behaviour, five statements for each component of helping behaviour. Respondents were asked to rate all statements using a five-point Likert scale. A sample questionnaire can be found in the Appendix 9.1 Survey example.

3.3 **Method of Analysis**

After all data was collected, a categorization was made based on all variables. Data was split by price segment, part-time or full-time status, manager or non-manager position, and the number of years of service. Each price segment was then further divided by status, position and years of service. Example categories that were formed: total sample group, all mid-market employees, full-time employees within the mid-market, part-time employees within the premium segment, all full-time employees, managers in the affordable luxury segment etc. An average score for each statement/aspect was then calculated for all different combinations of variables. The score of the aspects from the categories were then compared to each other, with the purpose of gaining insight in differences between the categories. Above-mentioned labels, namely Participants, Believers and Enthusiasts, are given to a category of employees when the total score of the component is above 20, which implies an average score of 4 out of 5 according to the Likert scale for aspects. This isn’t the case for the Advocates, since recommendation only needs a total score of 18, considering this component includes an aspect where a low score on the Likert scale is favourable.

4. **Results**

The survey that was conducted resulted in 100 respondents, all frontline employees from fashion brands in the mid-market, premium and affordable luxury segments. The sample profile of the respondents is presented in table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
<th>Manager</th>
<th>Non-manager</th>
<th>Less than one year of service</th>
<th>One to four years of service</th>
<th>Five or more years of service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-market</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premium</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aff. Lux.</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A comparison and analysis is made on multiple levels. The first analysis is made on the complete sample group and differences are highlighted for the three segments. Then the total sample group and all segments are analysed on if there is a significant difference in behaviour between full-time and part-time employees and if a distinction can be made between behaviour of managers and non-managers. It is also investigated if a difference in behaviour can be noted for employees with different years of service.

4.1 TOTAL SAMPLE GROUP

Acceptance. When looking at the total sample group, on average all employees indicate to know and agree with the brand’s values, but when asked if they feel well-informed by the headquarters about the brand one thing stands out. Employees within all segments express that they know how they are expected to behave to ensure a positive brand image, but interestingly enough this isn’t corresponding to the degree to which employees feel well-informed because the lower the segment, the less well-informed employees feel by the headquarters. Premium expresses to know least how they are expected to behave to ensure a positive brand image, with the mid-market coming in second and affordable luxury having the strongest knowledge on how to behave. In view of the abovementioned findings, acceptance is most present in affordable luxury and least present in premium.

Loyalty. On average all employees feel they have a positive, friendly and helpful attitude towards customers. However, the rating for positive, friendly and helpful attitude towards co-workers is for all segments slightly lower, which is in line with the statement that not all employees consider their co-workers, also called internal stakeholders, to be their friends. Mid-market employees consider their co-workers to be their friends the least, while employees within premium rate co-workers to be their friends most. Affordable luxury is noticeably more proud of the brand they work for and are somewhat more caring about the future of the brand, than the other two segments. Mid-market and premium rate similarly concerning this topic. All findings that relate to the loyalty component of behaviour show that on average mid-market displays the lowest level of loyal behaviour, with premium not far ahead and affordable luxury being significantly more loyal.

Extra-initiative. Extra-initiative behaviour can be expressed in multiple ways. Affordable luxury significantly takes most responsibility outside of their job description and expresses that they strive to develop expertise most, take most initiative to participate in training and are the biggest developers of ideas for new services and processes in comparison to mid-market and premium. All segments indicate a fairly high level of willingness to work harder than
what is expected to make the brand successful, with a slight upward trend of mid-market being least willing to work harder and affordable luxury being most willing to work harder. Not a surprising outcome since affordable luxury is also most proud of the brand and cares most about the future of the brand. Premium comes in second in almost all of the statements, except for taking responsibility outside of their job description. Mid-market is more willing than premium to go above and beyond the job. A finding that is in line with the fact that mid-market employees feel they have a more positive, friendly and helpful attitude towards both customers and co-workers. Still data suggests that the lower the segment, the lower the level of extra-initiative.

Recommendation. Out of the three segments, premium and mid-market employees reveal they wear the clothing of the brand most in their time-off, while affordable luxury grades this statement on a lower level. While this falls in the category of recommendation and the conclusion could be drawn that lower segments display this behaviour more and rate therefore higher on the recommendation scale, one should not forget that this kind of behaviour could also be influenced by other aspects. Frontline employees generally have a relatively modest income, which could influence their decision to purchase cheaper clothing than the higher priced items within the affordable luxury segment. All segments do recommend the brand and the company they work for to friends and family nearly to the same degree, merely a slight upward trend can be noticed; the lower the segment, the less of recommending to friends and family. When looking at social media behaviour, a high amount of employees express not to post much on social media about the brand. Nevertheless, a significant difference can be found; the lower the segment, the less the employee posts on social media about the brand they work for. Since the upward trend in recommending behaviour can be seen in almost all aspects, it is no surprise that the lower the segment, the less recommendation employees display.

Figure 3: Total sample group – score per component for each segment
Taking into account all above-mentioned findings, for the total sample group the data suggests that the lower the segment, the less helping behaviour is displayed. In figure 3 all the findings are combined for the four components. The red dotted line marks the minimum score that is sufficient to assign the labels as mentioned in 3.3 Method of analysis, namely Participant for ‘acceptance’, Believer for ‘loyalty’, Enthusiast for ‘extra-initiative’ and Advocate for ‘recommendation’. In this way, for each segment it becomes clear at a glance if a satisfactory score is achieved and how the segments compare to one another.

Results show that all segments display acceptance and loyalty to a greater extent than recommendation and extra-initiative. An explanation for this contrast could be that acceptance and loyalty are considered to be a state of mind from which certain actions follow, while recommendation and extra-initiative imply a direct effort and action. Since a state of mind doesn’t directly demand putting in effort, it is easier achieved.

Mid-market employees can be labelled as Participants and Believers as seen in figure 3, with room for improvement on recommendation and extra-initiative. This segment scores high on knowing and agreeing with the brand values, having a positive attitude towards internal and external stakeholders and being loyal to the brand, but could put more effort into recommending the brand and going the extra mile to succeed.

Premium scores slightly higher than mid-market on three of the four components, namely loyalty, recommendation and extra-initiative. Still premium employees also classify as Participants and Believers. Although recommendation and extra-initiative are already present to a certain extent, there is still room for progress, mostly on the ground of taking initiative in to develop expertise, develop ideas for better processes, participate in training and recommending through social media.

Affordably luxury employees are the strongest Participants, but also great Believers and Enthusiasts. They know the brand and what is expected. They have a positive attitude, are proud of the brand they work for, are willing to develop themselves and will work harder to make the brand successful. When looking at recommendation, there is room for improvement on recommending to friends and family and posting on social media.
4.2 FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME EMPLOYEES

4.2.1 Full-time employees

A comparison of price segments

Acceptance. Among full-time employees, affordable luxury particularly shows high levels of acceptance, such as knowing and agreeing with the brand values and knowing how to behave to ensure customers have a positive brand image. Premium employees express the lowest level of agreement with the brand values and knowledge on how to behave to ensure a positive brand image, which translates into premium having the lowest score on acceptance among all full-time employees. This matches the findings from the total sample group that premium displays least acceptance and affordable luxury displays most acceptance. Full-time employees from all segments do score a higher level of acceptance than the total sample group.

Loyalty. The loyalty component for full-time employees reveals some interesting findings. Full-time employees within all segments consider themselves to have a positive, friendly and helpful attitude towards customers and express a slightly less positive attitude towards co-workers, but it's premium that considers co-workers to be their friends most out of all segments. An upward trend can be discovered when looking at how proud the full-time employee is of the brand they work for; the lower the segment, the less proud the employee is of the brand. All in line with above-mentioned findings for the total sample group. Interestingly, the full-time employees all care for the future of the brand equally, which is in contrast to the total sample group's finding that the lower the segment, the less the employee cared for the future of the brand. And where the affordable luxury displayed significantly more loyalty in the total sample group, within the group of full-time employees merely a slight upward trend can be discovered. Matching acceptance, loyalty is also displayed more among full-time employees than in the total sample group.

Extra-initiative. On average full-time employees display more extra-initiative than the total sample group does. But similar to the total sample group, full-time employees within affordable luxury display most extra-initiative and mid-market displays least extra-initiative. Full-time employees in premium take the least responsibility outside of their job description, which is in line with the total sample group, but they also strive to develop expertise least. This is in contrast with the total sample group, where it is the mid-market employees who strive to develop expertise least. This may be due to the fact that full-time employees in the mid-market strive significantly more to develop expertise than the total of mid-market employees and there is almost no difference in the total of premium employees and the full-time premium employees.
Recommendation. While the total sample group indicates that the lower the segment, the less recommendation is displayed, when looking at full-time employees this is not the case. All segments recommend the brand to friends and family equally, but full-time employees in premium talk most about the brand as a great company to work for. Social media behaviour of full-time employees is consistent with the total sample group, but it doesn’t differ between segments to the extent it did for the total sample group. Full-time employees in mid-market and premium display more recommendation than the total sample group does, while affordable luxury is displaying almost an equal amount, which leads to the finding that for full-time employees it is premium who displays recommendation most, and affordable luxury who displays recommendation least.

All data indicates that full-time employees on average show a higher level of helping behaviour than the total sample group.

Figure 4: Full-time employees – score per component for each segment

4.2.2 Part-time employees
A comparison of price segments

Acceptance. No significant differences between the segments could be identified for acceptance of part-time employees compared to the total sample group. Consistent with the total sample group, acceptance is most present in affordable luxury and least present in premium. Part-time employees do on average score lower on acceptance than the total sample group.

Loyalty. Where premium considers their co-workers to be their friends most in the total sample group, it is affordable luxury that considers their co-workers to be their friends most in the part-time group. Among part-time employees premium cares significantly less about the future of the brand. The conclusion of the total sample group that the lower
the segment, the less loyal employees are, is therefore not true for the part-time group. The least loyal is premium, while affordable luxury is most loyal. Within the group of part-time employees, mid-market and premium display a lower level of loyalty than the total sample group does, while affordable luxury displays a higher level of loyalty than the total sample group.

**Extra-initiative.** In line with the findings for the total sample group, the segment that displays extra-initiative most is affordable luxury, while mid-market displays extra-initiative least. For the total sample group an upward trend is discovered in the willingness to work harder to make the brand successful, namely that the higher the segment, the more willing employees are to work harder to make the brand successful. For part-time employees this is not the case, since premium employees are the least willing to work harder to make the brand successful. This could be explained by the fact that part-time employees in the premium segment express they care significantly less about the future of the brand. In line with a lower score of acceptance and loyalty, part-time employees score lower on extra-initiative than the total sample group.

**Recommendation.** The lower the segment, the less recommending behaviour employees display holds true for the part-time group. Premium stands out most, due to a significant drop in recommendation, largely influenced by the lower score in talking to friends and family about the brand as a great company to work for and posting less on social media. However, this does not influence the fact that the finding from the total sample group that the lower the segment, the lower the recommendation holds true for part-time employees. Part-time employees score lower on this component than the total sample group, as expected from results of the other components.

Part-time employees score lower on helping behaviour than the total sample group.

*Figure 5: Part-time employees – score per component for each segment*
### 4.2.3 Comparison of full-time and part-time employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceptance</th>
<th>Mid-market</th>
<th>Premium</th>
<th>Affordable luxury</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Both, part-time and full-time employees know and agree with the brand’s values. Part-time employees feel particularly less well-informed.</td>
<td>All findings from the total sample group hold true for mid-market, but full-time employees score significantly lower than in the total sample group on all aspects.</td>
<td>All findings from the total sample group hold true, but full-time and part-time employees differ to a lesser extent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full-time employees score slightly higher on all aspects of acceptance.</td>
<td>There is a negligible difference in acceptance of full-time and part-time employees.</td>
<td>Full-time employees score slightly higher on all aspects of acceptance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>Both have a positive and friendly attitude towards customers and co-workers alike. Part-time employees use co-workers less as their friends. Full-time employees are prouder of the brand and care more about the future of the brand.</td>
<td>Full-time and part-time employees consider co-worker to be their friends to an equal degree. Differences between full-time and part-time employees are less significant.</td>
<td>Part-time employees consider coworkers to be their friends more than full-time employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believers</td>
<td>Full-time employees have a higher level of loyalty.</td>
<td>Full-time employees have a higher level of loyalty.</td>
<td>Full-time employees still show a higher level of loyalty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra-initiative</td>
<td>Full-time employees are more likely to take responsibility outside of their job description. Full-time employees are eager to develop their expertise, take initiative in training and develop new ideas or process improvements. Full-time employees are more willing to work harder to make the brand successful.</td>
<td>Part-time employees are significantly less willing to develop expertise than full-time employees do.</td>
<td>All findings from the total sample group hold true.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasts</td>
<td>Full-time employees show significantly more extra-initiative than part-time employees do.</td>
<td>Full-time employees show significantly more extra-initiative than part-time employees do.</td>
<td>Full-time employees show more extra-initiative than part-time employees do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>Part-time employees wear clothing less in their time off. Full-time employees recommend the brand more to external stakeholders. Part-time employees post significantly less on social media.</td>
<td>There is a bigger gap in level of recommending the brand to friends and family and wearing the clothing in their time off.</td>
<td>All findings from the total sample group hold true, but full-time and part-time employees differ to a greater extent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocates</td>
<td>Full-time employees display more recommendation than part-time employees.</td>
<td>Full-time employees display more recommendation than part-time employees.</td>
<td>Full-time employees display more recommendation than part-time employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labels</td>
<td>Full-time employees: Participants, Believers</td>
<td>Full-time employees: Participants, Believers</td>
<td>Full-time employees: Participants, Believers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time employees: Participants, Believers</td>
<td>Part-time employees: Advocates</td>
<td>Part-time employees: Participants, Believers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2: Main findings for differences between full-time and part-time employees and inconsistencies for each segment.
**Total sample group.** As shown in Table 2, the full-time employees rank slightly higher on acceptance than the part-time employees do. This difference is influenced particularly by the level to which employees feel well-informed about the brand. It is also mentioned that part-time employees consider co-workers to be their friends less than full-time employees do. This could be due to the fact that full-time employees simply spend more time at work and thus with their co-workers, which in turn means a stronger bond can be established. Furthermore, a link can be found between full-time employees who are more willing to work harder to make the brand successful and the fact that these employees express to be prouder of the brand they work for and care more about the future of the brand. This is in line with the higher score on all aspects of extra-initiative. The level of prouderness of the brand the employees work for could be linked to the fact that part-time employees claim to wear clothing of the brand less in their time off than full-time employees do. And therefore it is also no surprise considering the lower level of loyalty and extra-initiative that part-time employees post significantly less about the brand on social media. Full-time and part-time employees can both be labelled as Participants and Believers, with full-time employees achieving a higher score on all components. Full-time employees score fairly high on extra-initiative and are close to being classified as Enthusiasts, but there if room for improvement in striving to develop expertise, initiative to participate in training and developing ideas for improvement of services and processes. Part-time employees show low levels of recommendation and extra-initiative. This could mostly be improved by focussing on recommending to family and friends, increasing posting on social media and striving to develop expertise and processes. (Figure 6)

*Figure 6:* Total sample group - score per component for full-time and part-time employees

**Mid-market.** Similar to the total sample group, full-time and part-time employees can both be labelled Participants and Believers, since they show acceptance and loyalty to a greater extent than recommendation and extra-initiative. Compared to the total sample group, full-time employees in mid-market display in the lower level of acceptance and loyalty, while expressing the similar level of recommendation and extra-initiative. Part-time employees on the other hand show acceptance and loyalty almost similarly to the total sample group, but the recommendation and extra-
initiative is remarkably less performed. Both could mostly improve on taking initiative to participate in training, developing ideas for improvement of services and processes and posting on social media. (Figure 7)

**Premium.** When comparing the total sample group to premium the following stands out. For both acceptance and extra-initiative, there is a smaller noticeable difference between full-time and part-time employees. On the other hand, when looking at loyalty and recommendation, the gap between full-time and part-time employees is remarkably bigger. Full-time can be labelled as Participants, Believers, and Advocates and could improve mostly on striving to develop expertise and taking initiative to develop services and processes. Part-time employee can only be labelled Participants and Believers, and could improve on the willingness to work harder to make the brand successful, taking initiative to develop services and processes and posting on social media. (Figure 8)

**Affordable luxury.** Part-time employees in affordable luxury can be labelled Participants and Believers. Improvements could be mostly on striving to develop expertise and taking initiative to develop services and processes and wearing the clothing in their time off. Full-time employees on the other hand can be labelled Participants,
Believers and Enthusiasts, due to a higher score on all segments compared to the total sample group and can mostly improve on wearing the clothing in their time off and posting in social media. (Figure 9)

Figure 9: Affordable luxury – score per component for full-time and part-time employees

4.3 MANAGERS AND NON-MANAGERS

4.3.1 Managers

A comparison of price segments

Acceptance. Observation of the results of acceptance of managers compared to the total sample group reveals that especially managers within mid-market display acceptance to a higher degree than the total sample group. This is mostly due to the fact that managers of mid-market feel more well-informed than the total sample of mid-market employees do. This influences the possibility of adopting the conclusion made for the total sample group regarding the feeling of being well-informed; the lower the segment, the less well-informed employees feel by the headquarters, is not correct for managers. This does not affect the notion that acceptance is most present in affordable luxury and least present in premium.

Loyalty. Managers from all segments consider themselves to have a positive, friendly and helpful attitude towards customers and co-workers, with managers from premium rating their behaviour somewhat less positive, friendly and helpful. Managers consider co-workers to be friends less than the total sample group does. This is particularly noticeable for mid-market managers, who consider their co-workers to be their friends to a significantly lower degree. The conclusion of the total sample group that the lower the segment, the less proud of the brand employee is, is also observed in the group of managers. Though managers of all segments feel slightly more proud to work at a brand than the total sample group does. A significant difference in loyalty of managers lays in the fact that they care for the
future of the brand to a much greater extent than the total sample group. This translates to a higher level of loyalty expressed by managers from all segments, with affordable luxury scoring highest and premium scoring lowest.

**Extra-initiative.** Where extra-initiative is only displayed by affordable luxury employees in the total sample group, this behaviour is displayed within all segments of the group of managers. A major rise in displaying extra-initiative behaviour is seen when comparing the total sample group and the managers. This could be influenced by the fact that managers care to a much greater extent about the future of the brand and will therefore take more responsibility outside of their job description and will work harder than expected to make the brand successful. Managers within mid-market show the largest difference with the total sample group and therefore the conclusion of the total sample group that the lower the segment, the less extra-initiative doesn't hold true for managers. Affordable luxury does show the highest amount of extra-initiative, but premium shows the lowest amount of extra-initiative when analysing managers. Which could be linked to the fact that managers in premium also show the lowest level of loyalty and acceptance.

**Recommendation.** The conclusion that the lower the segment, the less the employee displays recommendation is not only true for the total sample group, but also for the group of managers. Managers do display a higher level of recommendation within all segments than the total sample group does. A striking conclusion from the data is that the lower the segment, the more managers talk to friends and family about the brand as a great company to work for. This could be linked to the fact that mid-market managers feel more well-informed, which makes them more accepting compared to the total sample group. The lower the segment, the less the employee posts on social media about the brand they work for holds true for the group of managers. This is most likely influenced by the fact that the lower the segment, the less proud managers are of the brand they work for.

All data indicates that managers on average show a higher level of helping behaviour than the total sample group.

*Figure 10: Managers – score per component for each segment*
4.3.2 Non-manager

A comparison of price segments

Acceptance. No significant differences can be found for acceptance when comparing the total sample group to the non-managers. Non-managers do display a slightly lower level of acceptance than the total sample group.

Loyalty. When comparing non-managers on the component of loyalty, all conclusions from the total sample group hold true. All findings that relate to the loyalty component of behaviour show that on average mid-market displays the lowest level of loyalty, with premium not far ahead and affordable luxury being significantly more loyal. Non-managers in affordable luxury are not as proud and concerned with the future of the brand as non-managers within the total sample group. Which brings the levels of loyalty displayed by the three segments slightly closer together.

Extra-initiative. The lower the segment, the less extra-initiative employees display. This conclusion from the total sample group can also be applied to non-managers and no significant differences could be found. Non-managers do display a lower level of extra-initiative on all aspects, consistent with the aforementioned conclusion.

Recommendation. In the total sample group the premium and mid-market employees reveal they wear the clothing of the brand most in their time-off, while affordable luxury grades this statement on a lower level. This is also true for non-managers, except that affordable luxury expresses to wear the clothing of the brand to an even significantly lower level. In the non-managers group it is not affordable luxury that recommends the brand to friends and family most but premium, which makes the finding of the total sample group incorrect for non-managers as it states that the higher the segment, the more of recommending to friends and family. A finding that does hold true is that the lower the segment, the less the employee posts on social media about the brand they work for. In contrast to the total sample group, data suggests that mid-market displays least recommendation, but premium displays most recommendation.

In contrast to managers, non-managers score lower on helping behaviour than the total sample group.

Figure 11: Non-managers – score per component for each segment
### 4.3.3 Comparison of managers and non-managers

#### Table 3: Main findings for differences between managers and non-managers and inconsistencies for each segment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Total sample group</th>
<th>Mid-market Inconsistencies with total sample group</th>
<th>Premium Inconsistencies with total sample group</th>
<th>Affordable luxury Inconsistencies with total sample group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acceptance</strong></td>
<td>Managers know and agree slightly more with brand’s values. Managers feel slightly more well-informed. Managers know better how to behave to ensure positive brand image.</td>
<td>Non-managers feel significantly less well-informed.</td>
<td>Managers feel significantly less well-informed than non-managers.</td>
<td>All findings form the total sample group hold true, but managers and non-managers differ to a lesser extent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasts</td>
<td>Managers display slightly more acceptance than non-managers.</td>
<td>Managers display more acceptance than non-managers.</td>
<td>Non-managers display slightly more acceptance than managers.</td>
<td>Managers display slightly more acceptance than non-managers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Loyalty</strong></td>
<td>Managers consider co-workers less to be their friends. Both show highly positive attitude towards customers. Managers show less positive behaviour towards co-workers. Managers score significantly higher on proactiveness and caring about the future of the brand.</td>
<td>Managers are more loyal than non-managers.</td>
<td>Managers are more loyal than non-managers.</td>
<td>Managers are more loyal than non-managers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believers</td>
<td>Managers are more loyal than non-managers.</td>
<td>Managers are more loyal than non-managers.</td>
<td>Managers are more loyal than non-managers.</td>
<td>Managers are more loyal than non-managers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extra-initiative</strong></td>
<td>Managers indicate a higher level of willingness to work harder to make the brand successful. Managers score significantly higher on taking responsibility outside of the job description, striving to develop expertise, initiative to participate in training and developing new processes and services.</td>
<td>Managers display significantly more extra-initiative than non-managers.</td>
<td>Managers display significantly more extra-initiative than non-managers.</td>
<td>Managers display more extra-initiative than non-managers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasts</td>
<td>Managers display significantly more extra-initiative than non-managers.</td>
<td>Managers display significantly more extra-initiative than non-managers.</td>
<td>Managers display significantly more extra-initiative than non-managers.</td>
<td>Managers display more extra-initiative than non-managers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation</strong></td>
<td>Managers wear the clothing of the brand more often. Managers recommend the brand to friends and family more and post more on social media about the brand.</td>
<td>Managers display more recommendation than non-managers.</td>
<td>Managers display more recommendation than non-managers.</td>
<td>Managers display more recommendation than non-managers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocates</td>
<td>Managers display more recommendation than non-managers.</td>
<td>Managers display more recommendation than non-managers.</td>
<td>Managers display more recommendation than non-managers.</td>
<td>Managers display more recommendation than non-managers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Labels</strong></td>
<td>Managers: Participants, Believers, Enthusiasts, Advocates Non-managers: Participants, Believers</td>
<td>Managers: Participants, Believers, Enthusiasts Non-managers: Participants, Believers</td>
<td>Managers: Participants, Believers, Advocates Non-managers: Participants, Believers</td>
<td>Managers: Participants, Believers, Enthusiasts, Advocates Non-managers: Participants, Believers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Total sample group.** On average, employees at a manager level consider their co-workers less to be friends than non-managers do. This could explain why both types of employees feel they have a highly positive, friendly and helpful attitude towards customers but when it comes to their attitude towards co-workers, managers score their behaviour slightly less positive, friendly and helpful. One could therefore say that managers display a lower level of loyalty, but since they rate significantly higher on proudness of the brand they work for and care significantly more about the future of the brand, managers are still considered to be more loyal than non-managers. Therefore no surprise managers are more willing to work harder and display extra-initiative to a significantly higher level than non-managers. An explanation could be that these are all behaviours that are more expected from managers than from non-managers. The higher level of loyalty also translates into behaviour in their time off and especially recommendation. Managers on average display all aforementioned components frequently. Therefore managers could be classified as Participants, Believers, Advocates and Enthusiasts. Non-managers on the other hand can only be classified as Participants and Believers, since on average most non-managers do have the right state of mind but don’t put in the effort to actively help the brand succeed. (Figure 12)

*Figure 12: Total sample group – score per component for managers and non-managers*

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**Mid-market.** In contrast to the total sample group, managers within mid-market can’t be labelled Advocates because of the lower level of recommendation, which could mostly be improved by posting more on social media about the brand. Managers in mid-market are therefore Participants, Believers and Enthusiasts. Non-managers on the other hand can only be classified as Participants and Believers. Non-managers can mostly improve on striving to develop expertise, develop ideas for improvement of services and processes, talking to friends and family about the brand and posting more on social media. (Figure 13)
Premium. The striking difference between the total sample group and premium is that on average for the four behavioural components managers and non-managers differ less in premium than in the total sample group, and non-managers actually display more acceptance and loyalty than managers do. Non-managers can still only be classified as Participants and Believers and could improve most on taking initiative to participate in training, developing ideas for improvement of services and processes and posting on social media. In contrast to the total sample group, managers within premium can’t be labelled Enthusiasts due to the lower level of extra-initiative and are therefore only Participants, Believers and Advocates. Managers could improve most on taking initiative to participate in training and developing ideas for improvement of services and processes. (Figure 14)

Affordable luxury. Managers in affordable luxury show all above-mentioned components and could therefore be classified as Participants, Believers, Advocates and Enthusiasts. Non-managers can only be classified as Participants and Believers. Non-managers can improve on striving to develop expertise, develop ideas for improvement of services and processes, wearing the clothing in their time off and posting more on social media. (Figure 15)
4.4 YEARS OF SERVICE

4.4.1 Less than one year of service

A comparison of price segments

Acceptance. When looking at the first component, acceptance, these employees express a slightly lower level in comparison to the total sample group. Consistent with the total sample group, all employees indicate to know and agree with the brand’s values and the lower the segment, the less well-informed employees feel by the headquarters holds true. Similar to the total sample group, premium knows least how they are expected to behave to ensure a positive brand image, while affordable luxury knows this best. Considering these findings, acceptance is most present in affordable luxury and least present in premium.

Loyalty. In contrast to the total sample group, when looking at employees who work at a brand for less than a year, the data suggests that the lower the segment, the less employees consider their co-workers to be friends. Matching the total sample group, affordable luxury is noticeably more proud of the brand they work for and are more caring about the future of the brand than the other two segments. Mid-market and premium score similar concerning proudness of the brand. In contrast to the total sample group, the data suggests that the lower the segment, the less employees care about the future of the brand. Therefore on average mid-market displays the lowest level of loyalty, with premium not far ahead and affordable luxury being significantly more loyal. Employee who work for less than one year at a brand have a lower score on loyalty on all aspects compared to the total sample group.

Extra-initiative. Unlike the total sample group, the data indicates that the lower the segment, the less responsibility employees take outside of their job description. But employees that work for less than a year at a brand also reveal that
the lower the segment, the less extra-initiative is displayed, which is consistent with the total sample group. This group of employees does score lower on this component than the total sample group does.

**Recommendation.** Employees of all segments that work at a brand for a shorter period than one year, express a lower level of recommending behaviour than the total sample group does. Similar to the total sample group, the data indicates that the lower the segment, the less employees recommend the brand to friends and family, the less they talk about the brand as a great company to work for and the less they post on social media. Affordable luxury wears the clothing significantly less in their time off than the other segments, which corresponds to the total sample group. Which results in mid-market scoring lowest on recommendation and premium scoring highest on recommendation.

Employees that work at a brand for less than a year, show on average a lower level of helping behaviour than the total sample group.

![Figure 16: Less than one year of service – score per component for each segment](image)

**4.4.2 One to four years of service**

*A comparison of price segments*

**Acceptance.** The lower the segment, the less well-informed employees feel by the headquarters holds true for this group of employees. Premium employees display a slightly higher level of acceptance on all aspects within this group than the premium employees do in the total sample group. For that reason the conclusion of the total sample group changes to the lower the segment, the less acceptance employees display. Acceptance of this group is corresponding to the total sample group.

**Loyalty.** This group of employees scores lower on loyalty than the total sample group. Within the total sample group, loyalty is highest for affordable luxury en lowest for mid-market. While this holds true for the employees that work
between one to four years at a brand, a noticeable difference is present for affordable luxury. Affordable luxury is significantly more loyal than other segments in the total sample group, but this difference isn’t as apparent for the employees who work at a brand between one to four years. This is mostly influenced by the fact that affordable luxury in this group considers their co-workers to be their friends much less than in the total sample group. There is no significant difference between segments when looking at the level to which employees express they care about the future of the brand, in contrast to the total sample group.

**Extra-initiative.** Extra-initiative is slightly more displayed in this group of employees than in the total sample group. The conclusion that lower the segment, the less extra-initiative holds true for all aspects of extra-initiative except for the statement that the employee takes responsibility outside of their job description. This is consistent with the total sample group, since it’s premium that considers themselves to take least responsibility outside of their job description. Still the lower the segment, the less extra-initiative is true for this group of employees.

**Recommendation.** Employees who work at a brand for one to four years display a slightly higher level of recommendation, but all conclusions from the total sample group hold true. On average, the lower the segment, the less recommending to friends and family and the less employees post on social media.

Employees who work at a brand for one to four years in mid-market and affordable luxury on average display a slightly lower level of helping behaviour than the total sample group, while premium displays a higher level of helping behaviour.

*Figure 17: One to four years of service – score per component for each segment*
4.4.3 Five or more years of service
A comparison of price segments

This chapter will refrain from drawing any conclusions regarding employees with five or more years of service in the premium segment, as a result of the low amount of respondents in this group.

Acceptance. Acceptance is significantly higher for employees who work for five or more years at a brand than for the total sample group. Employees from both mid-market and affordable luxury know and agree with the brand’s values to a high level and know how they are expected to behave. Mid-market employees do feel less well-informed than affordable luxury does, consistent with the total sample group. Acceptance is therefore less displayed in mid-market than in affordable luxury.

Loyalty. Mid-market and affordable luxury in this group are also significantly more loyal to the brand than the total sample group is. They consider themselves to have a highly positive, friendly and helpful attitude towards customers, are proud of the brand and care about the future of the brand. Mid-market scores slightly lower on all these aspects. Mid-market considers co-workers to be friends less than affordable luxury, and does this to a significantly lesser extent. But to a great extent that within the total sample group. Data therefore suggests that, when looking at the mid-market and affordable luxury, the lower the segment, the less loyal employees are.

Extra-initiative. When comparing extra-initiative of employees who work at a brand for five or more years, both mid-market and affordable luxury show a higher level of extra-initiative than the total sample group. Mid-market reveals the biggest significant difference. Mid-market employees show a striking higher level of extra-initiative compared to the total sample group, which is mostly due to the higher level of striving to develop expertise and taking more initiative to participate in training. The higher level of extra-initiative of employees that work for longer than five years at a brand within affordable luxury is mostly due to the degree to which employee take responsibility outside of their job description. Nevertheless, it is still mid-market that shows least extra-initiative and affordable luxury that shows most extra-initiative.

Recommendation. In contrast to the total sample group, it is affordable luxury that wears the clothing of the brand most in their time off. Mid-market and the affordable luxury recommend the brand to friends and family to the same degree, which is also not consistent with the total sample group. Both segments post more on social media about the brand, but affordable luxury does this still to a higher degree than mid-market. Which results in the same conclusion as for the total sample group, that mid-market shows a lower level of recommendation than affordable luxury.
Helping behaviour is more displayed among employees that work for five or more years at a brand than in the total sample group.

*Figure 18: Five or more years of service – score per component for each segment*
### Comparison on number of years of service

**Table 4: Main findings for differences between years of service and inconsistencies for each segment.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Total sample group Main findings</th>
<th>Mid-market Inconsistencies with total sample group</th>
<th>Premium Inconsistencies with total sample group</th>
<th>Affordable luxury Inconsistencies with total sample group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acceptance</strong></td>
<td>The more years of service, the more knowledge about the brand’s values and about how to convey a positive brand image. All employees feel they have a positive attitude towards customers. The less years of service, the less well-informed employees feel. The shorter an employees works at a brand, the lower level of acceptance is displayed.</td>
<td>No significant difference can be found in how well-informed employees feel.</td>
<td>All finding from the total sample group hold true. Employees with one to four years of service feel least well-informed. Employees with one to four years of service know best how to convey a positive brand image.</td>
<td>One to four years of service shows lowest acceptance, while five or more years show most.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Loyalty</strong></td>
<td>Employees who work at a brand for less than one year consider co-workers to be friends most, while employees with one to four years of service consider co-workers to be friends least. The longer an employee works at a brand, the more they care about the future. No significant difference can be found in how proud employees are of the brand. The longer an employees works at a brand, the more loyal they are.</td>
<td>The less years of service, the more employees consider co-workers to be their friends.</td>
<td>No significant difference can be found for the level to which employees consider co-workers to be their friends.</td>
<td>Employees with one to four years of service feel they have the least positive friendly and helpful attitude towards customer and co-workers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extra-initiative</strong></td>
<td>The more years of service, the more responsibility they take outside of their job description and the more they are willing to work harder to make the brand successful. The more years of service, the more employees strive to develop expertise and participate in training. The longer an employees works at a brand, the higher level of extra-initiative.</td>
<td>All findings from the total sample group hold true, but the score on all aspects differs to a greater extent between the three groups.</td>
<td>All findings from the total sample group hold true, but the groups differ to a lesser extent.</td>
<td>All findings form the total sample group hold true.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation</strong></td>
<td>All employees talk equally positive about the brand. The more years of service, the more they recommend the brand to friends and family and post on social media. The longer an employees works at a brand, the more recommendation they display.</td>
<td>The less years of service, the less employees talk about the brand to friends and family. Groups differ to a greater extent regarding recommendation.</td>
<td>The longer an employees works at a brand, the more recommendation they display.</td>
<td>The longer an employees works at a brand, the more recommendation they display.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Labels</strong></td>
<td>Less than a year of service: Participants, Believers One to four years of service: Participants, Believers Five or more years of service: Participants, Believers, Enthusiasts, Advocates</td>
<td>Less than a year of service: Participants, Believers One to four years of service: Participants, Believers Five or more years of service: Participants, Believers, Enthusiasts, Advocates</td>
<td>Less than a year of service: Participants, Believers One to four years of service: Participants, Believers Five or more years of service: Participants, Believers, Enthusiasts, Advocates</td>
<td>Less than a year of service: Participants, Believers One to four years of service: Participants, Believers, Enthusiasts Five or more years of service: Participants, Believers, Enthusiasts, Advocates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Total sample group.** When comparing years of service, loyalty to the brand mostly manifests itself in the amount that employees care about the future of the brand. This could explain why the longer an employees works at a brand, the more responsibility they take outside of their job description and the more they are willing to work harder to make the brand successful. Employees who are working at a brand for less than a year display all behaviours least, but can be classified as Participants and Believers since they display a satisfactory amount of acceptance and loyalty. They know and agree with brand values, know how they are expected to behave and show loyalty towards the brand, and internal and external stakeholders. Improvements could be made in striving to develop expertise, take initiative to develop improvement of services or processes, and posting on social media. Employees who work one to four years at a brand score higher on all components than employees who work at the brand for less than one year, but these employees still also classify as Participants and Believers. Although recommendation and extra-initiative are already present to a certain extent, there is still a lot to gain, mostly on the ground of taking initiative in to develop expertise, develop ideas for better processes, participate in training and recommending through social media. Employees with five or more years of service particularly display a high amount of acceptance, but are also considered to be very loyal, show extra-initiative to a satisfactory level and have the highest level of recommendation of the various groups that were divided by years of service. That is why these employees can be labelled as Participants, Believers, Enthusiasts and Advocates. (Figure 19)

*Figure 19: Total sample group - score per component for years of service*

![Figure 19: Total sample group - score per component for years of service](image)

**Mid-market.** All components score lower within this segment than in the total sample group. But although recommendation and extra-initiative are within mid-market exceptionally lower than within the total sample group, mid-market employees make bigger progress in displaying this kind of behaviour when the employee works for a longer period at a brand. Similar to the total sample group, mid-market employees who are working at a brand for less than a year display all behaviours least, but can still be classified as Participants and Believers. They could improve on striving to develop expertise, take initiative to develop improvement of services or processes, recommending the
brand to friends and family and posting on social media. Employees who work for one to four years at a brand score higher than employees who work at the brand for less than one year on all components, but still also classify as Participants and Believers. Improvements for this group are similar to the total sample group. Employees with five or more years of service display acceptance most, but are also considered being very loyal and displaying recommendation a fair amount. These employees can therefore be labelled as Participants, Believers and Advocates.

Employees with five or more years of service aren’t labelled Enthusiasts as they did in the total sample group due to the lower score on this component. This could mostly be improved by encouraging to take initiative to develop ideas for new services or process improvements. (Figure 20)

**Figure 20: Mid-market – score per component for years of service**

- **Acceptance**
- **Loyalty**
- **Extra-initiative**
- **Recommendation**

*Consistent with the total sample group, it’s employees who are working at a brand for less than a year that display all components least, but can also be classified as Participants and Believers. Employees with one to four years of service score higher on all components than employees who work at the brand for less than one year, but these employees still also classify as Participants and Believers. Both could mostly improve on initiative to develop improvements of services and processes and posting on social media. (Figure 21)*

**Premium.** When comparing results regarding years of service of the total sample group with premium, the employees of premium who work for the brand for five or more years cannot be taken into account because of the low amount of respondents. Findings will therefore only be based on the employees with less than one year of service and employees with one to four years of service.

Consistent with the total sample group, it’s employees who are working at a brand for less than a year that display all components least, but can also be classified as Participants and Believers. Employees with one to four years of service score higher on all components than employees who work at the brand for less than one year, but these employees still also classify as Participants and Believers. Both could mostly improve on initiative to develop improvements of services and processes and posting on social media. (Figure 21)
Affordable luxury. Although employees within affordable luxury do display higher levels of all components of behaviour, employees who are working at a brand for less than a year display all behaviours least and can only be classified as Participants and Believers. Improvements for this group of employees are similar to the total sample group. In contrast to the total sample group, employees who work for one to four years at a brand can’t only be labelled Participants and Believers, but can also be labelled Enthusiasts. Improvements can mostly be made by encouraging to wear the clothing in their time off and posting on social media. The higher level of all components of behaviour in this segment influences the labels for the employees who work five or more years at a brand. They can be classified as Participants, Believers and Enthusiasts, but additionally be classified as Advocates. (Figure 22)
5. **Conclusion**

The major contribution of this thesis is the multiple insights into the predictive ability of price segment, status, position and years of service on the level to which employees display helping behaviour. These findings can be used to predict helping behaviour of specific employees and with this knowledge a more effective internal branding strategy can be developed to effectively convey the brand identity to consumers.

For the total sample group, the data indicates that the lower the segment, the less helping behaviour that is displayed by frontline employees. In general full time employees show a higher score than part-time employees on all components of helping behaviour. The same is true for managers, since they expressed to display all components more than non-managers. Years of service also affects the level of helping behaviour displayed since the more years of service, the more the employees display all components of helping behaviour.

**Mid-market.** When zooming in on the separate segments, the conclusion can be drawn that mid-market displays the least helping behaviour of the three segments. In regard to the first component, in general employees within mid-market display a satisfactory level of acceptance and can therefore be labelled as Participants. Full-time and part-time employees display this behaviour equally, but when comparing managers en non-managers, there is a noticeable higher level of acceptance among managers. Although all employees in mid-market show a satisfactory level of acceptance and can all be labelled Participants, years of services influences the level to which the behaviour is shown because the less years of services, the less acceptance. Mid-market employees score lowest on loyalty of all segments, but still all groups of employees within mid-market can be labelled Believers. Full-time employees do show loyalty to a higher degree than part-time employees and managers within mid-market are more loyal than non-managers. How long an employee works at a brand also affects loyalty, since the more years of service, the more loyal employees are. In general mid-market employees can't be labelled Enthusiasts, considering the low score on extra-initiative. Full-time employees do show more extra-initiative than part-time employees, but not to a satisfactory level. Managers on the other hand show a high level of extra-initiative and therefore can be labelled Enthusiasts, in contrast to non-managers. Extra-initiative does increase with the years employees work for a brand. It's no surprise with the lowest score on loyalty and extra-initiative, that recommendation is also lowest for the mid-market. Recommendation is higher for full-time employees than for part-time employees and is more displayed among managers than among non-managers, but not to a satisfactory level. The longer an employees works at a brand, the more recommendation is displayed in the mid-market, which makes employees who work for five or more years at a brand the only Advocates in this segment.
**Premium.** Premium shows more helping behaviour than mid-market, but less than affordable luxury. However, when looking at the first component, premium scores lowest on acceptance. Nevertheless all employees can be labelled Participants. Full-time employees show acceptance slightly more than part-time employees in this segment, but premium is the only segment where non-managers display more acceptance than managers. Acceptance does increase with the years people work at the brand. All employees in this segment are also considered to be Believers, with premium scoring slightly higher on loyalty than mid-market. Full-time employees are considered to be more loyal than part-time employees, but in line with acceptance, it’s the non-managers who are more loyal than managers. This loyalty does increase with the years an employee works at a brand. The employees within premium cannot be labelled Enthusiasts, since all groups of employees in this segment reach an unsatisfactory level of extra-initiative. The data does indicate that full-time employees display more extra-initiative than part-time employees. Inconsistent with the results of acceptance and loyalty in this segment, the managers do display more extra-initiative than non-managers. Within this segment the more years of service, the more extra-initiative holds true. Recommendation is also slightly more displayed by premium than mid-market, but on average premium employees can’t be labelled Advocates. Nevertheless, when looking at status, the full-time employees display a significantly higher level of recommendation than part-time employees, resulting in full-time employees being labelled as Advocates. Likewise, managers can be classified as Advocates as opposed to non-managers and recommendation in the premium segment increases with the years an employee works for a brand.

**Affordable luxury.** The most helping behaviour is displayed by affordable luxury. This segment shows significantly more acceptance than the other two segments and therefore all employees in this segment can be labelled Participants. Full-time employees display a higher level of acceptance than part-time employees and managers in affordable luxury are slightly more accepting than non-managers. Acceptance is most present among employees who work at a brand for longer than five years and least present among employees who work for one to four years at a brand. The findings for acceptance in affordable luxury can be adopted for the loyalty component. Affordable luxury is significantly more loyal than the other segments and all employees in this segment can be labelled Believers. They can also be labelled Enthusiasts due to the high level of extra-initiative, this in contrast to premium and mid-market. Full-time employees show more extra-initiative than part-time employees and display a satisfactory level of extra-initiative which classifies them as Enthusiasts. Managers can also be classified as Enthusiasts and these employees display a higher level of extra-initiative than non-managers. Extra-initiative grows with the years, which results in employees that work for one to four years and five or more years at a brand to be considered Enthusiasts. In spite of the highest level of recommendation, employees in affordable luxury in general can’t be labelled Advocates. Full-time and part-time employees both don’t display a satisfactory level of recommendation, while full-time employees show
this behaviour slightly more. Managers on the other hand can be labelled Advocates and these employees show more recommendation than non-managers. Lastly, the more years of service, the more recommendation is displayed, which leads to employees that work for five or more years at a brand to be labelled Advocates.

In the introduction the opportunity arose to follow the shift of consumers from mid-market to affordable luxury and investigate if this increasing performance when comparing segments can be matched to an ascending level of helping behaviour among frontline employees. Taking into account all aforementioned results and conclusions, one could argue that in fact there is a link between the increasing performance, going from mid-market to affordable luxury, and the ascending level of helping behaviour.

6. Limitations and future research

Common method bias must be considered when discussing limitations, since the Likert scale was used as an instrument to gather data. An effort has been made to keep the likeliness of common method bias to a minimum. Questions were carefully formulated to a level that respondents could easily comprehend, respondents were instructed to answer the questions as accurately as possible and that their responses would not be revealed to anybody else, anonymity was guaranteed and the survey was kept as short as possible to avoid respondents to get fatigued. (MacKenzie and Podsakoff, 2012)

Geography is also considered to be a limitation, since this study was conducted in the Netherlands. It could be relevant to conduct additional research in other countries.

Lastly, it must be acknowledged that the use of just three segments limits the usability of the findings on a broader scale. Additional research within other segments and with a larger group of respondents should be conducted to validate the generalizability of the results.

After validating the generalizability of the results, future research could direct their attention to research into techniques to improve helping behaviour among frontline employees.
8. References


Questionnaire frontline employees

Thank you for your participation! For my thesis I'm researching frontline employee behavior within different price segments. This questionnaire will take approximately 5 minutes of your time and will ask you to rate certain statements.

All information provided will not be used for any other purpose than the aforementioned research. When processing the results, privacy and confidentiality are of the utmost importance.

*Required

Let's get started!
First a few basic questions

1. Which brand do you work for? *

2. Are you a full-time or part-time employee? *
   Mark only one oval.
   - Full-time
   - Part-time

3. How long have you been working for this brand? *
   in years

4. What is your position? *
   Mark only one oval.
   - Manager
   - Non-manager

5. How frequent do you have customer contact? *
   Mark only one oval.
   - Frequent (more than 20 times a day)
   - Infrequent (less than 20 times a day)

The statements
Please rate the following statements.

I would like to remind you that any individual data collected in this survey will not be disclosed to any third party including the management team in your organisation. Your answer will always be kept confidential and no one will have access to these except for the researcher. The results will only be used in aggregate and not to individual persons identifiable form.
6. 1. I know what the brand’s values are. *
   Mark only one oval.

   |   |   |   |   |   |
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
   | Strongly disagree | | | | |
   | Strongly agree    | | | | |

7. 2. I agree with the brand’s values *
   Mark only one oval.

   |   |   |   |   |   |
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
   | Strongly disagree | | | | |
   | Strongly agree    | | | | |

8. 3. I feel well informed by our headquarters about the brand. *
   Mark only one oval.

   |   |   |   |   |   |
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
   | Strongly disagree | | | | |
   | Strongly agree    | | | | |

9. 4. I know how I am expected to behave to ensure customers have a positive brand image. *
   Mark only one oval.

   |   |   |   |   |   |
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
   | Strongly disagree | | | | |
   | Strongly agree    | | | | |

10. 5. I agree with the way I’m expected to behave, and behave accordingly. *
    Mark only one oval.

   |   |   |   |   |   |
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
   | Strongly disagree | | | | |
   | Strongly agree    | | | | |

11. 6. I have a positive, friendly and helpful attitude towards customers. *
    Mark only one oval.

   |   |   |   |   |   |
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
   | Strongly disagree | | | | |
   | Strongly agree    | | | | |

12. 7. I have a positive, friendly and helpful attitude towards coworkers. *
    Mark only one oval.

   |   |   |   |   |   |
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
   | Strongly disagree | | | | |
   | Strongly agree    | | | | |
13. **8. I consider coworkers to be my friends.**

Mark only one oval.

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<th>4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
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**You are on a roll!**

14. **9. I often take responsibility outside of my job description.**

Mark only one oval.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
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15. **10. I strive to develop expertise by reading the internal website or procedure guides.**

Mark only one oval.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
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16. **11. I regularly take initiative to participate in training.**

Mark only one oval.

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<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
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17. **12. I take initiative to develop ideas for new services of process improvements.**

Mark only one oval.

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<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
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18. **13. I will work harder than I am expected to make the brand successful.**

Mark only one oval.

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<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
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19. **14. I'm proud to work for this brand.**

Mark only one oval.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
20. **15. I care about the future of this brand.** *
Mark only one oval.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strongly disagree</strong></td>
<td></td>
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Almost there, only a few to go!

21. **16. I wear the clothing of the brand in my time off.** *
Mark only one oval.

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<tr>
<td><strong>Strongly disagree</strong></td>
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22. **17. I recommend the brand to friends and family.** *
Mark only one oval.

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<tr>
<td><strong>Strongly disagree</strong></td>
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23. **18. I have expressed negative comments about the brand.** *
Mark only one oval.

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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Strongly disagree</strong></td>
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</table>

24. **19. I talk to my friends and family about the brand as a great company to work for.** *
Mark only one oval.

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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Strongly disagree</strong></td>
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</table>

25. **20. I post on social media about the brand.** *
Mark only one oval.

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<td><strong>Strongly disagree</strong></td>
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