

# Development of a Portal for HR Executives to Enable Digital Personnel Files

## Masterarbeit

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Motivation

The constant trend of globalisation lead to new challenges a company has to manage. Those challenges are maybe threatening, but also offer new opportunities for a company. Now, companies are in a competition with other companies all around the world. In the past companies were only in a competition with national or regional firms, for example. The globalisation changes field of competition.

But simultaneously the globalisation is the reason for increasing acceleration of innovations. Innovations are spread around the world faster and faster and that helps the companies to get and use new technologies much faster then before. Many of the new technologies support processes to get more efficient. One of those helpful technologies can be the digital personnel file.

Today, it is standard for companies, even global players, to conduct paper-based personnel-files. So, the companies need large archives to store all the files. Those files are only stored location-based. For example, if an employee changes the working place within the company and goes to another location of the same company, the personnel file must be send to the new location. Sending the file can take up to 3 days, maybe longer if the new location is in a foreign country. With the support of digital personnel files this process will save a lot of time, because the new location can take a look into the personnel file of the employee electronically. Further, it is possible to enable access for personnel officers to the digital personnel files from anywhere via an employee portal.

For example, when the personnel officer needs to look into the personnel file of an employee when he has a talk with him at the working place of the employee. But that is not all. It is possible to establish an interface between the digital personnel file and the online recruiting system (e-recruiting). Data like address or age can be transferred from the e-recruiting software into the personnel file when a new employee is hired. This also saves time and

minimises errors because possible new employee enters the data into the system, when they fill out the application form online. There is no need for the personnel officer to enter the data again when he opens the files for the new employee.

## 1.2 Objective of the master thesis and research question

The objective of this master thesis is to develop a HR-software for digital personnel files. Because of the change of the business environment, IT-processes become more and more important. The implementation of digital personnel files will help to improve business processes.

The master thesis deals with the questions how digital personnel files are defined. Further, it is clarified how a software development process looks like. The main aspect is to describe the software development for an HR-system from the start to the design phase. There exist many different models for software engineering. But in the end they have quite similar structures what will explain in detail in later chapters.

The master thesis will answer the following research questions:

*RQ1: How are digital personnel files defined and what possible interfaces to other system exist?*

*RQ2: How can such a HR-software be developed?*

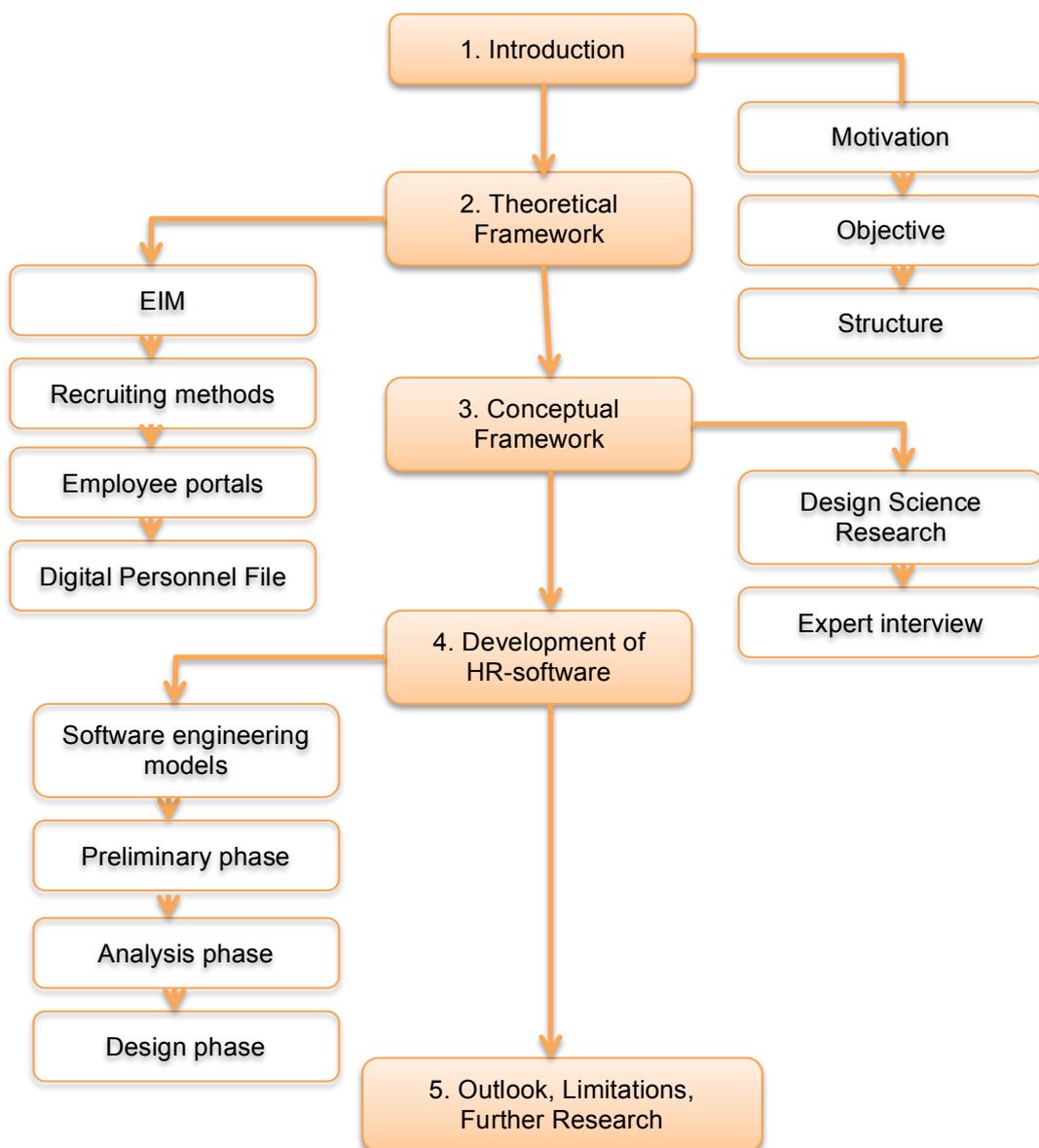
The answers of these questions will be given theoretically through a literature review and practically with the support of experts through a questionnaire.

## 1.3 Structure of the thesis

The master thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter explains the motivation, objective and structure of this master thesis. Chapter two provides the theoretical framework for this thesis. It deals with a definition of information management and goes on to define employee portals, the e-

recruiting process and of course personnel and especially digital personnel files.

In the third chapter the conceptual framework is provided. In this chapter a basic understanding of expert interviews is given because the expert interviews are a helpful tool to understand the process of software engineering and the use of digital personnel files. The fourth chapter describes the software engineering process and how a HR-software can be developed. Chapter five summarises the results, discusses the limitations of the thesis and recommends further studies. Figure 1 shows the structure graphically.



**Figure 1: Structure of the Master Thesis**

Source: Own illustration

In that case user acceptance of new IT-systems could also be an interesting topic for additional studies.<sup>216</sup> Finally, the end users have to work with the system every day. But if they do not accept the new software, they are not happy. And if the employees are unhappy with the system, the job performance will be very low.

## 5.2 Conclusions

Eventually, it can be said that IT-system will play a more and more important in business life. The digital personnel file is only part of that development but the relevance will increase. Today, the most of the companies using paper-based personnel files, yet. But in times of globalisation companies need more efficient and economically solutions to improve their business process. IT-systems are able to offer such solutions.

The technical standards for the implementation of digital personnel files exist already. From the technical point of view there are no barriers. But there are still some uncertainties concerning legal regulations. Maybe if the laws are more simple and clearer, more firms are willing to implement digital personnel files. At the moment, there is a long way to go to establish digital personnel files as a standard and substitute paper-based files. The preconditions are available.

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<sup>216</sup> Cf. Appendix, expert interview C, question 1.3