

Wellbeing at work, workplace health promotion and employee productivity

A case study of sales representatives

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DEGREE THESIS	
Arcada	
Degree Programme:	International business
Identification number:	11817
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Title:	Wellbeing at work, workplace health promotion and employee productivity
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Commissioned by:	Service company
<p>Abstract:</p> <p>In today's service-based economy, organizations are dependent on their people. Healthy, competent, motivated and productive employees are valuable assets. Hence, wellbeing at work (WBW) is increasingly relevant and has many implications on the competitive advantage. Workplace health promotion supports employees' health and wellbeing at work and includes benefits for both employee and employer. Employee productivity is peoples' ability to work efficiently and effectively and related to both company performance and WBW. It can be seen as a personal feature consisting of work ability, competence and motivation.</p> <p>This thesis was commissioned by a service company that has recognized the importance of WBW and invests in WHP. The aims of the study were to: (1) get insight into how sales representatives in the case company perceive well-being at work, workplace health promotion and employee productivity and (2) investigate if and how the employer can support employee productivity with WHP. The qualitative study is based on semi-structured, individual interviews with seven sales representatives. The discussed themes were WBW, WHP, work ability, competence, motivation and employee productivity. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The material was analysed with qualitative methods.</p> <p>The results indicate that respondents experience wellbeing at work, feel that the employer is concerned for their wellbeing and recognize efforts to support it, referring consistently to affiliation and leadership factors. They experience that WBW, WHP and employee productivity are related and have positive influence on each other. Based on the findings, suggestions on how to support employee productivity were presented: e.g. maintaining a thriving atmosphere, importance of recovery, offering training, considering rewards and recognitions and valuing esteem and affiliation factors.</p>	
Keywords:	wellbeing at work, workplace health promotion, work ability, competence, motivation, employee productivity
Number of pages:	41
Language:	English
Date of acceptance:	21.3.2017

EXAMENSARBETE	
Arcada	
Utbildningsprogram:	International business
Identifikationsnummer:	11817
Författare:	Eva Hagelstam
Arbetets namn:	Wellbeing at work, workplace health promotion and employee productivity
Handledare (Arcada):	Christa Tigerstedt
Uppdragsgivare:	Tjänsteföretag
<p>Sammandrag:</p> <p>I dagens tjänstesamhälle är organisationer beroende av sin personal. Friska, kompetenta, motiverade och produktiva arbetstagare är värdefulla tillgångar. Välmående i arbetet är därmed mer och mer relevant och påverkar konkurrenskraften på många olika sätt. Hälsofrämjande på arbetsplatsen stöder arbetstagarens hälsa och välmående och gynnar både arbetstagaren och arbetsgivaren. Arbetsproduktivitet är människors förmåga att arbeta effektivt och produktivt, och är relaterat till både välmående i arbetet och företags resultat. Det kan ses som en personlig egenskap som består av arbetsförmåga, kompetens och motivation.</p> <p>Uppdragsgivaren för detta examensarbete är ett serviceföretag som är medveten om betydelsen av välmående i arbetet och gör insatser i hälsofrämjande på arbetsplatsen. Studiens syften är att (1) få insikter i hur försäljningsrepresentanter i caseföretaget uppfattar välmående i arbetet, hälsofrämjande på arbetsplatsen och arbetsproduktivitet (2) utreda om och hur arbetsgivaren kan främja arbetsproduktivitet m.h.a. hälsofrämjande på arbetsplatsen. Den kvalitativa studien baserar sig på semi-strukturerade, individuella intervjuer med sju försäljningsrepresentanter. De diskuterade temana var välmående i arbetet, hälsofrämjande på arbetsplatsen, arbetsförmåga, kompetens, motivation och arbetsproduktivitet. Intervjuerna spelades in och transkriberades. Materialet analyserades med kvalitativa metoder.</p> <p>Resultaten tyder på att respondenterna upplever välmående i arbetet, känner att arbetsgivaren är angelägen och beaktar deras välmående och identifierar insatser i att främja den. Respondenterna syftar främst på tillhörighets- och ledarskapsfaktorer. De upplever att välmående i arbetet, hälsofrämjande på arbetsplatsen och arbetsproduktivitet är relaterade och har positiva implikationer på varandra. På basis av fynden presenterades förslag på främjande av arbetsproduktivitet: bl.a. uppehållande av en trivsam atmosfär, vikten av återhämtning och vila, utbildning, belöningar och ersättningar och beaktande av tillhörighets- och uppskattningsfaktorer.</p>	
Nyckelord:	välmående i arbetet, hälsofrämjande på arbetsplatsen, arbetsförmåga, kompetens, motivation, arbetsproduktivitet
Sidantal:	41
Språk:	Engelska
Datum för godkännande:	21.3.2017

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and relevance

In recent decades there has been increasing interest in the health and wellbeing of the workforce. This has partially been driven by increasing healthcare costs, but also due to the awareness that the economy in the developed world has changed significantly. The previously industrialized economy has become predominantly service-based, with far less tangible assets. The business is almost completely reliant on the human capital of the employees. Optimizing this factor has become crucial to meeting business demands. (Mills 2005). In today's economy, companies also face ever increasing competition. Continuous development, improvement and innovation of the business is essential to long-term survival. This trend is dependent on the people and their abilities, competence and synergies in the organizations. Investing in the wellbeing of employees and teams can support this change. Healthy, competent and motivated employees are capable and willing to work for the company objectives. (Aura et al. 2014: 5) The health, safety and welfare of the employee is an important aspect in human resource management and in the relations between the employer and employee. The importance from the employees' perspective is obvious, but also the employer will gain from regarding and supporting employee wellbeing: a healthy and productive personnel is one of its most valuable assets. Wellbeing at work (WBW) means healthy and productive work by competent workers who feel their job is meaningful. WBW has an influence on the organization's competitive advantage, profitability as well as reputation and interventions to support it can give multiple returns (Finnish Institute of Occupational Health 2016).

Workplace health promotion (WHP) "supports the well-being and functional capacity of employees, and advances workplace functions and productivity" (Finnish Institute of Occupational Health 2016). In other words, the objective of WHP is not only to promote the employees' health and well-being to the benefit of the employees', but to gain an engaged and productive workforce. WHP can include diverse activities, interventions and management styles. However, WBW is increasingly related to in-tangible factors:

motivation, competence and atmosphere (Ojala & Ahonen 2003: 22). So should the focus in WHP.

In an overview of current research Miller (2016: 1) concludes that “an organization with well-being at its core will reap productivity gains”. She also points out that the costs of poor wellbeing and the benefits of promoting wellbeing for productivity are significant. However, the mechanism is not clear: “There remain many unanswered questions about both the nature of the link between well-being and productivity and the economic impact of an association.” (Miller 2016) Huoponen & Kesti (see Sinclair 2015) argue that WBW is the key to increased productivity for the whole country. Aura et al. (2015: 5) see a clear link between WBW and employee productivity, defining the latter as an individual feature that consists of work ability, motivation and competence, all influenced by management, atmosphere and organizational culture.

This thesis is commissioned by a service company that has recognized the significance of WBW and has engaged in a series of supporting activities. However, the implications of such activities has not been evaluated. It would be valuable for the company to get insight into how employees perceive WBW and WHP and how to support employee productivity. Also, there would be value to shedding light on the association between WHP, WBW and employee productivity. In this thesis, productivity will be approached from the perspective of work ability, competence and motivation. The organizational level factors, such as leadership, atmosphere and organizational culture, are outside the scope of this study and are not discussed in the theoretical framework.

1.2 Aim of the study

The aim of the study is to get insight into how sales representatives in the case company perceive wellbeing at work, workplace health promotion and employee productivity. The aim is also to investigate if and how the employer can support employee productivity with workplace health promotion.

1.3 Research questions

The aim of the study translates into two research questions:

1. How do sales representatives in the case company perceive wellbeing at work, workplace health promotion and employee productivity?
2. Can the employer with workplace health promotion support employee productivity? If so, how?

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter is an overview of the central theories, terms and research which constitute the framework of this study. These include well-being at work, workplace health promotion and employee productivity. The relationship between these are also discussed. In addition, the case company's human resource policy and health promoting activities are presented.

2.1 Wellbeing at work

Wellbeing at work is a topic of ever increasing interest and relevance. However, there is no universal definition to the concept. Also the terminology varies: health and work ability, workplace well-being, employee wellbeing, occupational safety and health, health- and wellbeing at work all referring to the same matter. In this study, the term wellbeing at work is used (WBW).

Traditionally WBW has meant the minimum standards for working conditions considering health and safety. In a rapidly changing working environment however, this approach has become too narrow. Two main developments concerning employee health, safety and welfare are distinguishable. Firstly, instead of focusing on preventing physical injuries there is now emphasis on mental health and work related stress. Secondly, the opinion that employers shouldn't only prevent injuries and unnecessary stress, but also actively promote healthy lifestyles in a more general way is becoming more common. (Torrington et al. 2008: 527-528)

In a project to unify the European understanding of wellbeing, three different definitions emerged, version 1 being the most popular among researchers. These emphasize respectively doing, experience and description of experience. (Anttonen, Räsänen, Aaltonen, Husman, Lindström, Ylikoski, Jokiluoma, Van Den Broek, Harata, Kuhn, Masanotti, Wynne 2008: 17-18) The European consensus definitions are:

1. Well-being at work means safe, healthy, and productive work in a well-led organization by competent workers and work communities who see their job as meaningful and rewarding, and see work as a factor that supports their life management.
2. Well-being at work refers to the experience of the worker that is influenced by how safe, healthy, well-led, and well-organized work is, how effectively the changes in work are managed, the level of community support to the individual, and how meaningful and rewarding a person finds work, accounting for the factors of competence and productivity.
3. Well-being at work describes the worker's experience of the safety and healthiness of work, good leadership, competence, change management and the organization of work, the support of the work community to the individual, and how meaningful and rewarding the person finds work.

The Finnish dictionary of occupational safety on the other hand sees WBW as: “Employees' physical and mental state, resulting from the appropriate balance of work, environment and leisure time. Professional skills and work control are the most important factors which promote well-being at work.” (Anttonen et al. 2008: 17) The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (2016) points out that WBW is supported by i.a. a motivating management style, workplace atmosphere and employee competence and can be improved by developing working conditions and skills. WBW increases coping, commitment to the job and productivity as well as reduces incidents of sick leave.

In discussions about wellbeing at work, the emphasis is often on the employer's responsibility. But employees themselves have a great responsibility for their own wellbeing at work as well. It is important for employees to maintain work ability and competence, but they also have an opportunity to influence the workplace atmosphere. (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2016). Hietalahti & Pusenius (2012) studied the employee responsibility as a factor in wellbeing at work. They found that the role of employee responsibility was most prominent in the area of competence and related work management as practical solutions to cope with the requirements of work: Willingness to learn and find solutions when faced with new challenges, organizing and outlining work as well as ability to schedule and prioritize. Using these resources of work management independently supported employees wellbeing at work, which explains the importance

of own responsibility in WBW and coping in the current hectic work culture. The authors suggest training in work management and self-leadership for employees.

WBW is a complex matter for a number of reasons. A person's wellbeing is a combination of physical, mental as well as social aspects. WBW is not only influenced by working life but also private life. Furthermore, it is in-tangible and individual, having a different meaning to each employee. What is relevant in WBW is how the person is feeling during and about his/her work. (Ojala & Ahonen 2003: 19-20). Clearly, there are many perspectives to employees' health and wellbeing at work. It is a broad and diverse concept that has a strong relevance in working life.

According to Ojala & Ahonen (2003: 49) wellbeing at work influences an organization's competitive advantage in many ways. It decreases costs associated with sick leave, occupational accidents and work disability. This has positive effects on productivity and profitability. WBW also improves motivation and workplace atmosphere, which improves service level and that way also quality and customer satisfaction. In addition, it increases joint competence and organizational learning, which enables the creation of new services and products. Finally, WBW supports engagement and commitment, which improves the company image both as an employer and as a business partner.

2.2 Workplace health promotion

Any activity that supports and promotes employees' health and wellbeing at work is called workplace health promotion. The European Network for Workplace Health Promotion (ENWHP 2017) presents WHP as following:

Workplace Health Promotion (WHP) is the combined efforts of employers, employees and society to improve the health and well-being of people at work. This can be achieved through a combination of:

- improving the work organization and the working environment
- promoting active participation
- encouraging personal development

The areas of activity include: "life-styles, ageing, corporate culture including staff leadership, staff development, work-life balance, mental health and stress, wellness, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), nutrition and health" (ENWHP 2017)

WHP can consist of versatile activities ranging from healthy lifestyle promotion to work organization improvement. It can include informing about the dangers of smoking and helping with quitting, supporting physical activity by offering sports facilities or courses and encouraging employees to exercise and informing about a healthy diet and making it possible for employees to have lunch at the worksite. Furthermore, WHP can be about flexible working hours and remote work, including employees in improving the working environment and allowing participation in organizing the work, as well as promoting mental health by providing stress management courses and psychologist consultation. (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2010)

According to a report by ENWHP (De Greef & Van den Broek 2004:54-57) there is a strong business case to invest in WHP with demonstration of organizational, individual, social and company image related benefits. The arguments for WHP include: “Leads to an improved working situation, improves health-related outcomes, generates an enhanced image, improves human resources management, boosts productivity, increases health awareness and motivation, leads to healthy workers, generates more job satisfaction”. De Greef & Van den Broek also state that WHP is not generally a priority for management and investments in WHP are done to merely improve health. WHP is, on the contrary, successful if it’s integrated and comprehensive and aligned with company goals and strategy. In other words, the value of WHP is not intrinsic, but should contribute to company goals.

Tjäder (2010) states that promoting the health of employees is worthwhile, because a healthy and competent personnel is an advantage for the organization. Like De Greef & Van den Broek, also Tjäder argues that a lasting and permanent impact is not accomplished through sporadic health interventions; health promotion is comprehensive and integrated. The activity can focus on the human resources, the work environment, the work community or the management.

Torrington et al. (2008: 527-528) point out reasons for an employer to invest in WHP: Work related illness and injuries leads to absence, which can be avoided. Serious injury and illness can, due to safety laws and regulations, lead to legal processes and big com-

pensations paid to the employee by employing organisation. If an organisation has a bad reputation for safety and welfare matters, it's harder to recruit, retain and motivate staff.

The benefits of WHP are often stated by experts, but Nöhammer et al. (2013) studied the employee perceived effects of WHP. The perceived benefits were grouped into four areas: Cognitive (changes in attitude, knowledge, and attention level regarding health as well as feeling better and more productive due to WHP), emotional (feeling more satisfied, motivated, appreciated, engaged, and less stressed), convenience/ pleasure (enjoyment and facilitation of prevention issues) and social realm (improved social relationships at the workplace and company internal changes). The average consent rates per area were almost 48% for the convenience/pleasure component, around 24% for both cognitive and respectively emotional components and only 17% for the social component. However, the consent percentage varied within the areas depending on statement. For the cognitive area, the most significant effect (40%) was giving WHP a try, which might mean high participation rates and completion rates. For the emotional area, employees reported feeling appreciated (57%), which implies that “feeling that the organization values the well-being of the workforce may lead to higher organizational commitment. This, in turn, could affect internal social capital and further promote individual well-being within the organization. In case this relationship proves true, WHP could indirectly improve job satisfaction and motivation”. (Nöhammer 2013: 49) Regarding the convenience/ pleasure area, affordability of prevention (57 %) and enjoyment of participation (47%) were emphasized. About 30% reported feeling effects in the social realm, for example better contact with colleagues.

As indicated in this chapter, workplace health promotion can include a broad scale of varying activities, it can be targeted at different parts in the workplace and it can bring about series of benefits for both the employee and the employer.

2.3 Performance and productivity

There are different definitions on performance and productivity. One of the most commonly accepted theories on work performance is the one by organizational psychologist John Campbell. He sees work performance as employee behavior and differentiates it

from outcomes. Performance naturally affects outcomes, but other factors influence it as well. For instance on a sales job, even if the employee performs his job well, revenues might still be unsatisfactory due to external factors, such as unfavorable economic conditions or changes in customer preferences. Campbell clarifies, that in addition to directly observable actions of an employee, performance can consist of mental productions like answers or decisions. Either way, it needs to be an individual controlled action. Another criterion of work performance is that it needs to be goal relevant. Campbell suggested determinants of performance: declarative knowledge (what to do), procedural knowledge and skill (how to do it), and motivation (why do it) (Landy & Conte, 2003: 175-176). Also Arnold et al. (2010: 310) identify motivation as an important determinant of work performance, but they also include other factors, such as ability, quality of equipment and coordination of team member's efforts affecting performance. In this case the definitions are to some extent contradictory. O'Donnell (2002: 32) refers to employee productivity as output per unit of labor, but also includes the quality of production as an important determinant of productivity. Nicholls (2011:1) clarifies the difference between performance and productivity: "People tend to confuse productivity and performance, with the two often becoming interchangeable. Productivity is the measure of the efficiency of production whereas performance deals with the way in which someone functions to accomplish something successfully". (Nicholls 2011:1)

In a Finnish study a new perspective arises. Aura et al. (2015: 5) use the term employee productivity (=henkilöstötuottavuus) and see it as peoples' ability to work efficiently and effectively. They argue that good employee productivity is related to both company economic performance as well as wellbeing at work. Further, they present employee productivity as a personal feature consisting of *work ability, competence and motivation*. These are affected by leadership, atmosphere and organizational culture. Aura et al. state that employee productivity, supported by competent management, can contribute to increased margins and profits. To promote this, the objectives are to ensure work ability, especially among people with the weakest work ability, develop the competence of employees according to business needs as well as actively support people's motivation and engagement.



Figure 1. Employee productivity. Modified from Aura et al. 2015: 5

The study by Aura et al. is quantitative and the research model cannot be used in a Bachelors degree thesis. However, the theory will be applied. In this thesis, productivity will be approached from the perspective of work ability, competence and motivation. The focus is on motivation, work ability and competence are also discussed briefly. The organizational level factors are outside the scope of this study.

2.3.1 Work ability and competence

There are different definitions on work ability. Traditionally the term has included basic health, competence, motivation as well as organizational elements. To some extent it has represented a synonym to wellbeing at work (Finnish Institute of Occupational Health 2016). Aura et al. (2015:6) on the other hand see it as the basis of working, including physical, psychological and social health. Work ability is task- and job specific, everyone can have work ability at some job.

Competence is the know-how and potential that an individual brings to the organization and uses in the job. It includes skills, capabilities, knowledge and experiences. Competence is based on a good school- and educational system and systematic further studies as well as career related experience. Competence is job-specific and often under continuous change and development. A persons feeling of control and possibility to influence supports the utilization of the competence in the business (Aura et al. 2015:6 & Sydänmaalakka 2001:256)

2.3.2 Motivation

According to Sandri & Bowen (2011: 45) “Motivated employees work harder, produce higher quality and greater quantities of work, are more likely to engage in organizational citizenship behaviors, and are less likely to leave the organization in search of more fulfilling opportunities.” (Sandri & Bowen 2011: 45) Motivation is a psychological feature that drives an individual toward a goal and makes her keep pursuing that goal. It has to do with the factors that push and pull us to behave in a certain way. It is an abstract feature, which cannot be observed directly. Motivation is made up of three elements and described in terms of: direction/choice (what a person is trying to do, choosing one activity over another), intensity/effort (how hard a person is trying) and persistence/duration (how long a person continues trying, even when facing obstacles). There are a number of motivation theories, but one of the fundamental and renowned ones is Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. It is based on the idea that there are psychological needs that lie behind human behavior. When one need is satisfied, the individual strives to progress up the hierarchy, and the next one up becomes the most important in driving the behavior. Maslow proposed five classes of need: (1) Physiological (primitive biological needs like breathing, nutrition, sleep, sex); (2) Safety (physical and psychological safety, need for a predictable and non-threatening environment); (3) Belonging (need for relationships and to feel a sense of attachment to others, like love, intimacy, friendship and family); (4) Esteem (need to feel valued and respected both by self and other people, like self-esteem, confidence, achievement); (5) Self-actualization (need to realize and fulfill one’s potential, develop and express capacities). (Arnold et al. 2010: 310-313 & Sandri & Bowen 2011) Of course, this is a simplified theory, which does not completely explain human behavior, but Sandri & Bowen claim it is a reliable guide to motivating staff. They suggest that it can be used as a “framework to identify the various benefits organizations can offer to satisfy their employees’ needs and, in turn, increase revenues and reduce expenses.” (Sandri & Bowen 2011: 45)

According to Ojala & Ahonen (2003: 20-22) wellbeing at work can be reflected in Maslow’s hierarchy. The first level refers to the essential physical health that forms the base for WBW. Psychological wellbeing forms the second level. It relates to the sense of safety and security the employee needs in terms of the working environment, atmos-

phere and the job itself. Social wellbeing at work, which supports engagement and coping, reflects the third level. The employee needs to experience belonging to the team and work community. The fourth represents the need for esteem. In working life this associates to recognition and valuation of competence and professional skills. The fifth level, self-actualization, relates to creativity, personal development and ambition to reach goals in life. Ojala & Ahonen add one more level on top: spirituality and inner drive, including values and motivation. It guides a person's interests, commitment and engagement.

According to Kesti (see Sinclair 2015), the highest level in Maslow's hierarchy of needs (self-actualization) has the most impact on productivity. This applies to all employees, white- and blue collars. Motivational and productivity factors are often missing in personnel surveys in Finland. Kesti argues, that employees should be inquired on development and improvement ideas, since they are experts on their own jobs.

Torrington et al. (2008: 262-263) presented some key concepts covered in motivation theories and gave suggestions to how these can be applied to HR policies and practice to influence motivation and potentially performance. Firstly, they recognize the importance of the work itself as a motivational factor. It has to do with individuals seeking and eventually achieving satisfaction through their work, which provides the opportunities for achievement, recognition, responsibility, autonomy, challenging tasks and development. In this area, there are many possibilities to influence motivation and potentially performance through HR policies and practice. This would include for instance job design, empowerment, training and development and career development. The importance of social needs is also considered, with an emphasis on the need for affiliation as a motivational factor. These needs can be met by incorporating teamwork and general involvement to the job. Torrington et al. point out that reward and pay have motivational value for most employees. Finally, the role of the manager is seen as increasingly important. One theory suggests that people will act as they are treated to be. When people are expected to be responsible and self-motivated, they will act as such, but when they are treated as irresponsible and lazy, they will act like that.

Aura et al. (2015: 6) point out that a motivated person does his/her job better and a motivated personnel performs better. Internal motivation is set off by the job and the satisfaction it gives. External motivation is supported by salary and other incentives. A motivated employee is more committed to the employer.

2.4 The relationship between wellbeing, workplace health promotion and productivity

Knowledge work is dependent on people’s ability and willingness to think, make decision and produce new information. Wellbeing at work is increasingly related to intangible factors such as motivation, competence and atmosphere. Health is also important as it affects people’s ability to utilize their competence. Hence, good performance requires work related, suitable know-how, attitude and values. A person’s physical and mental wellbeing (health) and social abilities in turn impact the degree of competence utilization. (Ojala & Ahonen 2003: 22) The relationship between these are best described with the picture below.

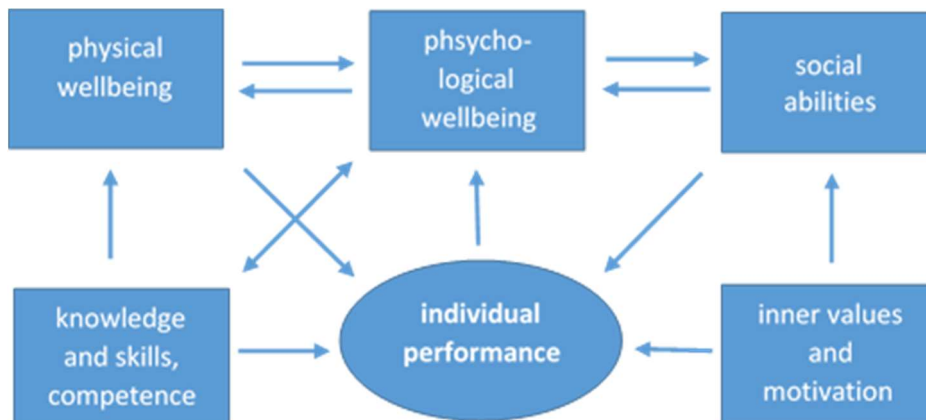


Figure 2. Factors affecting performance. Modified from Ojala & Ahonen 2003: 22

In 2002 O’Donnell (2002: 32-33) claimed that WHP enhances productivity, but that there was limited research measuring this impact. He stated that human performance is higher when people are physically and emotionally able to work and want to work. Higher human performance means higher productivity and can lead to higher profits. According to O’Donnell workplace health promotion plays an important role. It can

contribute to health improvements, which can lead to improved physical and emotional work ability. Health promotion programs can also improve organization climate, which directly enhances productivity through increasing peoples' desire to work. This implies that when aiming at improving work productivity through WHP, the focus should not be on physical health, as much as on psychological and emotional well-being. O'Donnell claims that an employee who has little control over his/her work, like a factory worker or a clerk, might be able to increase productivity by 5-30%. On the other hand a knowledge worker, like a lawyer, scientist, writer or manager might be able to increase productivity by 50-100%. If this is the case, then increased productivity holds great potential for sales representatives. This fact is even more relevant and has more potential to business than one might at first think of. The potential savings reduced health care expenses and absence levels can generate are limited to what they cost: if they are zero, costs are zero. But the potential that increased productivity holds is not reducing expenses, but eventually increasing revenues. The opportunity here is therefore much greater.

Miller (2016) found that wellbeing is rising up agendas on both company and national level. It's essential that people to perform at their best in a sustainable way. In line with ENWHP's finding (p.12) that WHP should be comprehensive and aligned with company goals and strategy and Tjäder's statement (p.12) that a lasting and permanent impact is not accomplished through sporadic health interventions, Miller argues that "an organization with well-being at its core will reap productivity gains" (Miller 2016: 1). Well-being should be made a "business priority and a fundamental part of how the organization operates" (Miller 2016:1). However, few organizations actually do this. Also, there is on ongoing challenge of assessing the return on wellbeing investments as well as demonstrating the business benefits of employee wellbeing. (Miller 2016: 1)

Engage for Success (MacLeod & Clarke 2015: 2-6) approaches this relationship from an engagement perspective. Positive employee engagement is related to a higher level task performance, sense of achievement and ability to participate in workplace decisions. MacLeod & Clarke compiled research on the linkages between wellbeing and engagement and how they impact performance in organizations. It is stated that there is a strong correlation between high wellbeing and engagement levels. Engaged employees with high wellbeing are more attached to their organizations than those with lower

wellbeing. Also, high psychological wellbeing leads to positive individual outcomes, which in turn lead to improvements in organizational performance. It seems these states are mutually reinforcing: healthy employees are more committed and committed employees are healthier.

Aura et al. (2014: 4-6) studied strategic wellness, which they define as the part of well-being at work that supports organizational performance and as activities that aim at including health promotion as part of the business strategy. They point out that human resources should be supported and developed in line with business needs. In 2014, Finnish employers made strategic wellness investments of 726€ per employee. (2014: 4) This is less than previous years and according to Aura et al. minor considering work disability risks and wellbeing related benefits.

There are many dimensions to the relationship between WHP and employee performance. O'Donnell (2002: 32) raises an interesting question: "How much more productive will employees be who are physically and emotionally able to work because they feel their employer is concerned about their well-being?" (O'Donnell 2002: 32) In the UK, WHP programs are often seen as an employee benefit in themselves, according to Torrington et al. (2008: 539). Clearly, the relationship is not only a question of whether employees are affected by WHP, but how receptive they are to the programs.

3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

This thesis is commissioned by a service company. The aim of the study is to provide the employer with insight into how employees perceive wellbeing at work, workplace health promotion and employee productivity as well as if and how to support the latter. The objective is to generate qualitative data, that is, study attitudes, behaviour and experiences. To gain deeper understanding in the subject area and to get answers to the questions "what", "how" and "why", the suitable method is interview. (Saunders et al. 2003: 245-248). Interview as a method is discussed further in chapter 3.2.

3.1 Wellbeing activities and HRM plans at case company

Based on the discussion with the company representative it is clear that the case company considers WBW matters thoroughly and has engaged in a number of health promoting activities and HRM plans and to promote these features. This makes the company a suitable partner for a study with the current subject. The plan includes:

- ✓ an occupational wellbeing day once a month with a business part, a team activity and dinner
- ✓ gym to use for free in the office building
- ✓ occupational health care
- ✓ joint breakfast once a week
- ✓ exercise during office hour once a week
- ✓ awards and acknowledgements at the end of the year with the possibility to vote for each other
- ✓ commission-based salary
- ✓ management style: easily available, approachable and supportive managers
- ✓ development discussion/performance review with manager twice a year

3.2 Interview as a method

An interview is defined as a “purposeful discussion between two people” (Saunders et al. 2003: 245). Interviews can be used in both collecting research material as well as formulating research questions. As a research method it can give valid and reliable data that is relevant with regards to the objective. There are different types of interviews and they can be categorized in different ways. Interviews can be formal and structured, asking same questions to each interviewee, or they can be informal unstructured discussions. There is however overlap between the different types. A structured interview is based on a predetermined set of questions that are asked in a specific order and with a neutral tone of voice to avoid bias. It can be used in survey research to gather quantitative data. A semi-structured interview is based on a set of topics and questions to be covered, but the order can change depending on the flow of the conversation. Additional questions can also be asked to get a more comprehensive answer. This method is used to

collect qualitative data, to get answers to and understand the questions “what”, “how” and “why” (Saunders et al. 2003: 245-248). The aim of the study is to gain understanding in employee’s perceptions of the current topics. Hence, the suitable method is semi-structured interview, as it allows descriptive answers, additional questions and informal discussion.

3.2.1 Sample selection

The commissioning company has under 20 employees. Upon request of the commissioner, the respondents were limited to sales representatives only. When all respondents have the same role, incentives and objectives, it also simplifies comparison and composition of results. All eight sales representatives in the case company were invited to take part in the study. Seven participated.

3.2.2 Conducting the interviews

The following themes are covered in the interviews: wellbeing at work on a general level and additionally the areas of wellbeing that are most relevant to employee productivity– work ability, competence, motivation - workplace health promotion in the case company as well employee productivity. The discussions with the respondents were based on an interview guide (Appendix). One pilot interview was made to test the structure, flow and timing of the set of questions. The pilot respondent is not a representative of the case company, so some questions were not applicable. The pilot interview was satisfactory and no modifications were needed.

The seven interviews were conducted individually and anonymously due to the fact that the topics were personal and sensitive. Interviews were in Finnish, since that is the mother tongue of the respondents. The duration of each interview was approximately 30 minutes. Three respondents based in the Helsinki metropolitan area were interviewed face-to-face. The remaining four were interviewed by telephone. All interviews were recorded. There were no notable differences between the face-to-face versus telephone interviews, e.g. the durations were about the same and the descriptions similar.

Interview questions were in minor parts too theoretical for the respondents. Some had difficulties in grasping the content and meaning of specific questions. It would make sense to believe that this relates to how aware the respondent is of these matters, as this problem did not come up in the pilot interview. This was dealt with by explaining the concepts when needed during the interview.

3.3 Ethical considerations

Taking part in the interview was voluntary and required informed consent. All respondents interviewed face-to-face signed an informed consent form and the rest responded to an informed consent letter sent by email. The respondents stay anonymous in the thesis and can at any time withdraw from the study. All material is treated as confidential. Only the student and the thesis supervisor have access to the recorded interviews. The company name also stays anonymous.

4 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The aim of the study is to get insight into how sales representatives in the case company perceive wellbeing at work, workplace health promotion and employee productivity. The aim is also to investigate if and how the employer can support employee productivity with workplace health promotion.

The results are presented in accordance with the research questions and in line with the themes that were addressed in the interviews: wellbeing at work, workplace health promotion, work ability, competence, motivation and employee productivity. All these themes are discussed from the point of view of both research questions:

1. How do sales representatives in the case company perceive wellbeing at work, workplace health promotion and employee productivity?
2. Can the employer with workplace health promotion support employee productivity? If so, how?

The results and analysis contain quotations to best describe the areas of interest. Quotations are marked with letters within brackets. The letter indicates which respondent is

quoted. The interviews were conducted in Finnish, so the quotations have been translated.

4.1 Data analysis

In this thesis, data analysis was not only a specific phase, but went on throughout the writing process; e.g. pondering research questions, which form the starting point for analysis. There are many theories, recommendations and guidelines on qualitative analysis processes, but no standardized procedures. It's always a question of personal choices and creativity, the analysis is tailored for the study. In this thesis, the introduction book on qualitative research methods by Malterud (2003) was used as support to conducting the analysis.

The qualitative research process turns conversations and observations to text and comprehension. After fieldwork, primary data is organized and summarized to a manageable format accessible for analysis. Hence, the seven interviews were transcribed. The time-consuming work gave a good overview of the material along the actual interview occasion and an additional read-through after transcription. Analysis of qualitative material can give descriptions, which help to create concepts and further to develop models. All of these don't necessarily need to be aspired in one project, but it's important to be aware of the logic between these levels. The aim in this study is to deduce *descriptions* of the chosen topics, not to develop new concepts or models. The analysis is based on asking a set of questions from the material. Hence, the answers don't only depend on the material, but the questions. The material should be read in the light of these questions and answers presented in a systematic and relevant manner. In this study, the research questions act as a guide and the logical way to present results is in accordance with the discussed themes. Qualitative data often include big volumes of unstructured information. The material needs to be reduced and filtered. Hence, the transcribed material was summarized. At this point, the first outlines of categories became visible. The researcher's job is to summarize and present the patterns that emerge from the analysis. The most recommendations on qualitative analysis are based on the principles on decontextualization and recontextualization. Decontextualization involves highlighting parts of the material and examining them with similar elements – finding categories. In other

words, pointing out areas of interest that concern more than one respondent. This phase was carried out with a slightly quantitative approach: if multiple respondents pointed out something, this area of interest was highlighted in the presentation of the results. Recontextualization, in turn, is making the categories visible in the material. It's important that the interpretations correspond with the context. Central themes, opinions and views were presented and the results also include quotations that best describe the phenomena. (Malterud 2003: 77-96)

4.2 Respondents perceptions of wellbeing at work, workplace health promotion and employee productivity

The respondents in this study are young men, aged around 30 years. They have been employed at the company between two years to a few months. The case company has ongoing recruitment and some respondents had quite recently started working for the company. However, it was decided together with the thesis commissioner that these employees also should be invited to take part. Limited experience in the company made it challenging for these respondents to reflect on and answer some interview questions. However, they were instructed to answer these questions on a general level and utilize previous experience. This might leave the results vague at some parts. On the other hand, new employees often have a fresh perspective and might be able to more objectively evaluate the discussed topics. Some for instance compared current WHP activities to those offered by previous employers.

4.2.1 Wellbeing at work

Respondents describe wellbeing at work as "nice to go to work in the morning" (F), "work contribution matters" (C), "good working environment" (E) and "ability to let go of work stress during free time" (G). The importance of good atmosphere is mentioned by many respondents. All experience wellbeing at work, but respondents clearly value different things. Some mostly appreciate the social aspects: colleagues, team spirit, great welcoming atmosphere, positive energy and being part of a bigger picture. Others emphasize the management style: issues and worries can always be expressed and the manager can easily be contacted. Respondents also enjoy the nature of the work: flexi-

ble schedule that you create yourself and success is rewarded. This relates to the point made by Ojala & Ahonen (2003: 19-20) that WBW is individual, having a different meaning to each employee. But what is important is that the person is feeling good about his/her work.

4.2.2 Workplace health promotion

The employer engages in an number of wellbeing activities, the most prominent ones being: regular occupational wellbeing days, gym to use for free in the office building, joint breakfast + exercise during office hours once a week. In addition, the management style is attentive: management is easily approachable and supportive.

Respondents perceive workplace health promotion as the employers' efforts to support the employees. Encouragement and supportive attitude towards exercise, good nutrition and generally taking care of yourself are brought up. Contact and discussions with manager, emphasis on atmosphere and team activities are mentioned. "Employees are taken into consideration, everyone is comfortable and people can thrive" (F) Two respondents identify the mutually beneficial aspect: "Make the employee feel good, so that things work better and the company is successful" (D) and "I see it as both the employers and the working community's responsibility to improve and develop the work so that it's efficient and productive" (C).

All respondents feel that the employer is concerned for their wellbeing. Two main reasonings come up: team activities and trips and respectively close connection to manager and support always when needed. This has a deeper meaning to some respondents: "It does matter so, that you rather work here than somewhere else. You also think about what's best for the company and not just for yourself" (A), "It makes you feel that the employer actually cares for you, that you're not just an employee" (E) and "I'm not comfortable in the kind of atmosphere where I feel no one cares about my work" (C). This reflects the findings by Nöhammer et al. (2013), studying the perceived benefits of WHP, where 57% of employees reported feeling appreciated. Feeling that the organization values the well-being of the workforce may lead to higher organizational commitment. Nöhammer et al. suppose that this might in turn affect internal social capital and

further promote wellbeing. If this relationship is true, WHP may indirectly improve job satisfaction and motivation.

All respondents feel that the activities the company offers have positive influence on wellbeing at work. The majority refers to the social aspect: "They (the activities) maintain the good atmosphere that we have here"(G), "This kind of job requires that the team is tight. Everyone does his own part, but when the team is behind you and supportive, you can get the best result"(C) and "You feel as a part of the work community"(B). In addition, all respondents feel that the activities have positive implications on the work itself. One respondent describes that the activities create a good vibe, which encourages to perform better. "Team events improve cooperation, you learn things and can give others new ideas"(A), "If you are feeling good about your work, you want to show your full competence and show that you deserve to be there"(B). Also these descriptions are related to the social aspect. This deviates from the findings of Nöhammer et al. (2013), where only 17% of employees perceived effects in social realm. One respondent says he can trust the employer and talk about any problems and issues. In the study by Nöhammer et al. only 5% felt they had better basis for conversation with supervisors. On the other hand, how employees perceive the benefits of WHP probably is affected by the type of WHP offered by the employer as well as the demography of the group.

Respondents are generally very happy with the current situation and have few suggestions on how to best support and develop wellbeing at work. Most prompt to continue with similar teamspirit and atmosphere related activities. One suggests sport events and one sales training.

4.2.3 Work ability

All respondents experience they have a good work-life balance and that they have an opportunity for recovery and relaxation. This is mainly due to flexible working hours. However, the nature of the job also includes great responsibility and independency: "As a sales representative it's constantly in the back of your mind where to go next and where the next customer will come from" (E), "You do have the opportunity (to relax), but it's up to you if you use it" (A) and "Sales is always so ruthless. Everyone in sales

knows that nothing is served to you and you have to work really hard for everything. But the company supports that issued are solved.” (E). However, generally respondents feel that sales objectives are reasonable and it’s up to yourself how much you work.

All respondents express that their work is a factor that supports their life management. This is in accordance with the European definition of wellbeing at work: “Well-being at work means safe, healthy, and productive work in a well-led organization by competent workers and work communities who see their job as meaningful and rewarding, and see work as a factor that supports their life management”. The majority reports that achievements, success and closed deals are the supportive factors. They give positive energy, boost confidence and are well rewarded. Also fellowship within the team and the work being generally social gives energy outside work. One respondent emphasizes good feedback and that the job is meaningful. All respondents are happy with how the employer supports work ability. They refer to “great sports minded atmosphere” and “keys to the gym”. One suggests sports coupons.

4.2.4 Competence

The case company doesn’t require a specific education for employees. Management is looking for great attitude, potential and ability to learn. Hence, a lot of the competence among employees comes from experience and training conducted by the employer. This involves sales, product and market related training. One of the new employees thinks his competence doesn’t meet job requirements yet, but is moving in the right direction. The majority describes how the job is challenging and stimulating in a good way, and that constant development is present and needed. “I’ve been in sales for a long time, but you’re never ready, theres always room to grow” (E) Progress happens on the job: “I’ve learned by doing” (G).

All respondents feel that they receive adequate and sufficient training and coaching from the employer. A few mention that they would appreciate more sales training. One reports that the sales representatives have done independent visits to colleague’s customer meetings to learn from each other. Respondents also report that new suggestions and development ideas are highly welcome. “Very positive and welcoming atmosphere,

all ideas are welcome and considered" (C) Kesti (see Sinclair 2015) argues, that employees should be inquired on development and improvement ideas, since they are experts on their own jobs. This thought is clearly fulfilled in the case company.

Training and guidance from manager stands out as the most important method in supporting employee competence. Respondents say that they appreciate or would appreciate: manager coming to sales visits and giving feedback on performance, one-on-one discussions with manager, training in sales, products, product reformations, competitors and what's happening in the market.

4.2.5 Motivation

All respondents enjoy their work and report similar reasonings. Colleagues, welcoming atmosphere and flexible schedule are mentioned most frequently. Commission based salary is also an important factor. Rewarding, challenging work, personal development and sense of achievement (closed deals) are mentioned as well. One respondent makes a point that might explain the homogenous answers in the group: "I think the team is built so that the colleagues are like-minded" (G)

All respondents report that they are committed to their job and employer and that company values are in line with own views and visions. MacLeod & Clarke (2015) argued that positive employee engagement is related to a higher level task performance. In this group, these are supportive factors of productivity.

The majority of the respondents are mainly motivated by salary. Also closed deals and success arise as big motivational factors. "Success fosters success" (D) and "feeling of flow that spreads to other meetings" (A) is how respondents describe the positive snowball effect of closing a deal. Some are also motivated by personal development and objectives, some by the good team spirit and team objectives. This competitive and result driven attitude is reflected in how the respondents feel their employer best can motivate them: by bonus systems and competitions. There is a minor social aspect too: team objectives and reward trips together with team are mentioned. What decreases motivation varies among respondents and much is out of reach of the employer: broken promises

from customers, tiredness, issues outside work and private life. But also some demotivators come up, that in theory are in the hands of the employer: office work, sales obstacles, issues with the sold product, key customers taken away and “dry seasons” (when sales is slower than usual).

4.2.6 Performance and productivity

Surprisingly, almost half of the respondents express that they are far from optimal performance and see this as an area for development. “Not always. It’s actually my biggest weakness now. There can be days when it feels you did a lot but actually you did nothing”(G). The respondents report issues with time and task management and product knowledge. Four reported their performance level between 70% and 80%. “You should always be able to be more productive. You demand more and more from yourself. In the beginning a basic performance could be enough, but then you want to develop yourself. See how others operate, you can combine things and get better.”(F)

Respondents identify that being organized and managing time, product and industry knowledge, wellbeing, commission based salary, feeling of pressure and hurry improves their productivity. One respondent notes that he needs to utilize the energy he gets from achievements: “When you close a deal, you should nurture that feeling of success. Not settle and take it easy a couple of days, but keep that confidence up.”(G) Some respondents have a hard time recognizing factors that decrease their productivity. Half report time and task management issues (doing too many things at the same time, “messing around” and not being systematic). A too passive job (on a general level, not this job), lack in product knowledge and many complaints are mentioned as well.

Respondents express that the employer can support their productivity by offering market related- and time management training, decreasing office work, keeping flexible working hours and providing follow-up and support from manager.

Many respondents get thoughtful and a little confused when asked how they themselves can influence their wellbeing at work. However, they recognize that own contribution matters: improve energy levels by exercising, innovation, time management, staying

healthy, being part of creating good atmosphere and separating work and free time. Hietalahti & Pusenius (2012) studied the employee responsibility as a factor in wellbeing at work and found that the most relevant area is competence and related work management skills (presented in chapter 2.1). These included areas that the respondents feel they have issues with: organizing and outlining work as well as ability to schedule and prioritize. Hietalahti & Pusenius point out that “Self-responsibility for making use of these means helped employees to better cope with their work, which demonstrated the importance of self-responsibility for occupational well-being” and suggest work management training for employees. One respondent mentioned that the employer already has provided some type of time management lecture, but it was not clear what areas were addressed.

4.2.7 The relationship between wellbeing, workplace health promotion and productivity

All respondents feel that there is a connection between wellbeing at work and productivity, but reasoning varies: “Both physical and mental wellbeing, I know from experience that if these pieces fall apart, performance decreases fast. I’ve noticed that this kind of atmosphere in the company, that you can share your worries, it’s a supportive factor.”(C), “If you feel your employer doesn’t care about you, that you’re just an employee, makes you feel you’re just working here, let’s do what is required and nothing more.”(E) and “If you feel good about your work you want to show you deserve to be part of that team.”(B). Based on these comments it seems wellbeing at work and especially feeling appreciated has positive implications on respondents attitude towards work and the employer. It appears to improve commitment and engagement to the employer and willingness to “go the extra mile”.

Respondents feel that activities that the employer offers to support wellbeing have indirect positive implications on productivity, mainly through improved energy levels from exercise, and atmosphere and cooperation between colleagues. These are reflected in the business. “They (activities) have a huge influence. Fellowship and atmosphere, you get to know the others and discuss how they are doing. It’s like pushing and encouraging each other. You get new ideas, can relax and all that has a very positive impact.”(B)

4.3 Suggestions on how to support employee productivity

4.3.1 Wellbeing at work

As presented in chapter 2 in this thesis, wellbeing at work has an influence on employee productivity. The two most prominent contributors of wellbeing at work for respondents are affiliation and leadership. The atmosphere, team spirit and positive energy that respondents experience are worth cherishing and fostering. Close connection with manager including coaching, support and discussions are important to respondents as well. Also the fact that there seems to be low or no threshold in requesting help or asking questions matters. Based on these observations, maintaining an open and supportive atmosphere in the workplace is worthwhile.

4.3.2 Workplace health promotion

Workplace health promotion can have significant organizational, individual and social benefits, as stated in chapter 2. Respondents recognize the employers' efforts to support employee wellbeing and some even mention the mutually beneficial aspect. All respondents feel that the employer is concerned for their wellbeing and the main reasons appear, consistently, the same as for wellbeing at work: affiliation and leadership. Feeling appreciated seems important and meaningful to respondents. This might be beneficial for the employer, as it may lead to higher organizational commitment (proposition by Nöhammer et al.). Commitment, in turn, is relevant from the performance point of view (proposition by MacLeod & Clarke 2015).

Respondents experience that the activities the company offers have positive influence on both wellbeing at work and the work itself, referring again mainly to social, team spirit, work community and cooperation factors. The physical wellbeing perspective is brought up during the workplace health promotion discussion as well - respondents appreciate the encouragement to healthy lifestyles. Based on these observations, investing in WHP appears to be valuable for the case company.

4.3.3 Work ability

In addition to competence and motivation, work ability is one of the three individual features in employee productivity (according to the model by Aura et al.). Respondents feel they have a good work-life balance and that work is a factor that supports their life management. They appreciate flexible working hours and respectively the sense of achievement related to closed deals. However, paradoxically, these factors might also risk decreasing work ability. As there are no official working hours, there is potential risk of not limiting the working time to reasonable hours. This is also associated with second risk: excess stress. As the nature of the job is described as “ruthless” there is clearly some pressure to do good sales involved. Luckily, respondents generally seem to think that sales objectives are reasonable and it’s up to yourself how much you push yourself. In addition, the supportive atmosphere where issues are solved together helps. Physical work ability does not stand out as an issue among respondents, probably because the group consists of young men with few or no health issues. Respondents still value the sports-minded atmosphere and think that is a good way of supporting their work ability. Even though respondents don’t bring up any concerns about their work ability, based on these propositions it could be reasonable to discuss the importance of rest and recovery with employees.

4.3.4 Competence

As the case company doesn’t require specific training or even vast experience from new employees, the role of training and coaching offered by the employer is great considering employee’s competence. Hence, the importance of training is crucial when optimizing employee productivity in this group. However, respondents seem to have an open minded attitude and inner drive to learn and develop and it appears common to “learn by doing” as well. Openness to new ideas and suggestions from employees is a resource, both from the WBW perspective, but evidently also because the ideas are potentially valuable. Respondents appreciate training and coaching and presumably to want to have rather too much information than too little. Training and guidance from manager, who is experienced in the field, stands out as the most important method in supporting employee competence and, comparing to the other discussed features, also the most important method in supporting employee productivity in this group. Professional devel-

opment, esteem and sense of achievement associated with competence might also be relevant from the motivation point of view. Respondents say that they appreciate or would appreciate: manager coming to sales visits and giving feedback on performance, one-on-one discussions with manager, training in sales, products, product reformations, competitors and what's happening in the market.

4.3.5 Motivation

According to respondents, company values are line with their own, they enjoy their work and are committed to their job and employer. These are supportive factors of productivity. Salary stands out as the main motivator in this group. The work itself as a motivator is not high on the list, but the sense of achievement after a closed deal is! There seems to be a positive, self-reinforcing loop when it comes to closing deals. The management is probably aware of this and hopefully considers it as an important motivational factor and utilizes it. Respondents think their employer can best motivate them by bonus systems and competitions. Team objectives and reward trips are mentioned as well. Some de-motivators are brought up, that at least in theory, are in the hands of the employer: office work, sales obstacles, issues with the sold product, key customers taken away and "dry seasons". No clear suggestions can be given on if and how to deal with these, but it is good for the employer to be aware of these opinions. Addressing these points might improve motivation and in turn productivity.

4.3.6 Performance and productivity

Almost half of the respondents feel they are far from optimal performance and see it as an area for development. Time and task management issues stands out as the main factor that decreases respondent's productivity. Based on this information and the findings by Hietalahti & Pusenius (2012), work management skills training, including e.g. organizing and outlining work as well as ability to schedule and prioritize, is recommended for the respondents. It might have positive implications on both wellbeing at work and productivity.

Respondents perceive that there is a connection between wellbeing at work and productivity, and that activities that the employer offers to support wellbeing have indirect positive implications on productivity. The main drivers seem to be esteem and affiliation: fellowship, atmosphere, cooperation, feeling appreciated, encouragement and sharing worries. It appears that the most important thing is not what the activities and methods are, but the fact that they are being offered.

5 DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Productivity, performance and motivation are interesting concepts considering sales representatives, who often are result driven. For instance, the work itself was not among the most important motivators in this group. This kind of setting is potentially risky from the motivation and WBW point of view. Even if the employee performs his job well, the result might still be unsatisfactory due to external factors, such as unfavorable economic, political or market related conditions. For instance, the sales representative is a professional and excellent at his job, but there is currently low demand on the product he sells. This might mean that sales are low even if the performance is high. Even if this kind of situation only would be temporary, this could have great impact on motivation. Further, it would probably have implications also on WBW, as the needs for esteem and self-actualization would not be fulfilled (model by Ojala & Ahonen 2003).

In further research, it would be interesting to have the discussion on WBW, WHP and employee productivity also with other professional groups, such as knowledge workers with a fixed salary or blue-collar workers. Further, these could then be compared. Depending on which group is being studied and interviewed, it is likely that the opinions and experiences vary widely: e.g. the significance of promotion possibilities or occupational safety. The interview guide used in this study has received great feedback and could easily be applied to other groups as well.

The employee productivity model by Aura et al. (2015) includes the personal features work ability, competence and motivation as well as the leadership, atmosphere and organizational culture. The focus in this thesis was on the individual features, and organizational level phenomena were outside the scope of this study. However, wellbeing at

work and employee productivity are wide and complex concepts and many factors influence them. Leadership, atmosphere and culture related themes were often brought up during the interviews as important contributors of WBW, performance and productivity. This is presented in the results, but as these have not been addressed in the theory chapters, comparisons and connections to theory and research has not been expressed.

In retrospect, it can be noted that the thesis subject was quite ambitious. The relationship between wellbeing at work, workplace health promotion and employee performance/productivity is highly relevant and current but very complex. Making limitations and formulating research questions was challenging. Hence, keeping a consistent theme and line of argument was not perfectly managed. Limiting the productivity discussion to individual features may be commented on, but a broader setting would be beyond the requirements of a bachelor's thesis. On the other hand, a more confined setting in the interviews (limiting discussion to specific elements only and leaving no space for general opinions), could have left the results too scarce.

The main findings and implications will be presented in the following paragraphs. Suggestions on how the employer can utilize these results to support employee productivity are presented at the end of each paragraph.

Respondents experience wellbeing at work and the most prominent contributors of WBW appear to be affiliation and leadership. Hence, maintaining an open and supportive atmosphere in the workplace is worthwhile.

Respondents feel that the employer is concerned for their wellbeing and they recognize efforts to support it, referring consistently to the same factors as for WBW: affiliation and leadership. Respondents experience that the activities the company offers have positive influence on both wellbeing at work and the work itself. Respondents seem to feel appreciated and this might have positive implications on productivity. Based on these observations, investing in WHP appears to be valuable for the case company.

Respondents don't bring up any concerns about their work ability. However, the nature of the job includes some stress factors. At the moment these don't seem critical, but it could be reasonable to discuss the importance of rest and recovery with employees.

Training and guidance from manager stands out as the most important method in supporting employee competence and, comparing to the other discussed features, currently also the most important method in supporting employee productivity.

The main motivational factor for respondents is salary and the competitive and result driven attitude is reflected in how the respondents feel their employer best can motivate them: by bonus systems and competitions. The second motivator is the sense of achievement after a closed deal. There seems to be a positive, self-reinforcing loop associated with closing deals, which holds great potential for further sales and motivation.

Generally respondents seem to think there's always room for enhancing productivity and almost half feel they are far from optimal performance. The issue seems to be time and task management. Hence, work management skills training is recommended, as it might have positive implications on both wellbeing at work and productivity.

Respondents feel that there is a connection between wellbeing at work and productivity, and that activities that the employer offers to support wellbeing have indirect positive implications on productivity. It appears that the most important thing is not what the activities and methods are, but the feeling of esteem and affiliation they bring about in this group.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Wellbeing at work and workplace health promotion

- Please tell me a little bit about yourself: your age, job description and how long you've been employed at the company?
- What does WBW mean to you?
- Do you experience WBW? Yes/no, why?
- What do you think is meant by workplace health promotion?
- Do you feel your employer is concerned for your wellbeing? Yes/no, what does it mean to you?
- Your employers supports WBW in many ways. Can you identify these activities?
- Do feel these activities influence your WBW? If yes, how? If no, why?
- Do feel these activities influence your work? If yes, how? If no, why?
- How could your employer best support your WBW? Is that done in your company?
- Should any WBW matters be developed at your workplace? Should something be done differently?

Work ability

- How would you describe your work ability/resources with respect to the demands of your work? Do you feel they are balanced?
- How would you describe your work/life balance? Do you have opportunities for sufficient rest and recovery?
- Does your work support your life management?
- How could your employer best support your work ability? Is that done in your company?

Competence

- Do you feel your competence is in line with the demands of your job?
- Do you feel you receive enough job specific training and coaching?
- Are development ideas welcome in your company?
- How could your employer best support your competence? Is that done in your company?

Values and motivation

- Do you enjoy your job?
- Are you committed to your job/employer?
- Are company values in line with your own?
- How would you describe your job motivation? Which factors increase/decrease?
- Could your employer increase your job motivation? If so, how?
- Is that done in your company?

Employee productivity

- How would you describe your performance? Do you feel you are effective and efficient?
- Assuming your full potential would be 100%, on which level would you feel you are at the moment?
- Do you recognize the factors that increase/decrease your performance?
- Could your employer increase your performance? If so, how?
- Is that done in your company?

Finally

- How would you describe the role of WBW considering your performance? Is it relevant?
- Do you feel the activities the company offers to support WBW influence your performance? If so, how?
- Do you think that company success in turn influences your WBW? If so, how?
- How do you or could you influence your WBW yourself?

Thank you!