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Manager's Influence on Work Wellbeing and Motivation Through Good Relations

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis was made with the intention to research the effects that the relationship between a manager and team member can have on motivation and wellbeing at the workplace. It was chosen due to observations of similar situations at one of the author's workplaces. Both authors were also interested to develop an understanding of how to best manage relations in a workplace.

The thesis has been organised to start with two sections of theoretical framework. The first studies leadership in expert organisations. The second covers motivation and work wellbeing. Following this is the explanation of the methodology. This will explain the research techniques used, and the reasoning behind using them. Next, there is a description of the results from the interviews which leads to the conclusions the authors drew from both primary and secondary research. Lastly a discussion of the effectiveness of the research.

The theoretical research was conducted using a variety of sources of information. This included academic books, journals, other theses and online articles. An attempt was made to find a wide range of references, to keep the sources of information varied.

The research suggested that leaders should ensure their team members feel valued and have opportunities for feedback. This could be achieved through open discussion, allowing the employee to have an impact on managerial decisions. The importance of positive relations was also highlighted. Additionally, open and off-topic discussion can be used to have a positive benefit, on individual attitudes as well as the overall workplace atmosphere.

The research showed significant connections with both Leader-Member Exchange Theory and Situational Leadership. This was through the suggested requirement of leaders having strong two-way relationships with team members and through accepting that each employee and each situation should be approached differently.

Keywords:
Motivation, Leadership, Workplace Relationships, Work Wellbeing, Management

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1 INTRODUCTION

The first ideas for this thesis started when one of the authors was working in a small workplace. In this business the overall atmosphere was very relaxed and friendly, with very little evidence of a hierarchy. During his time the author noted that while the team generally worked well, there were times that all members would be very distracted. Sometimes this was due to conversation between the team, other times it might be individuals watching videos or reading news. Individually he noted that his own motivation would be high while performing interesting and challenging tasks but could easily drop when performing monotonous tasks.

This started the idea of researching how effective these friendly and relaxed atmospheres could be. When initially looking into the topic finding relevant and specific research seemed difficult, suggesting that it could be an area suited to further study. Therefore, the idea to research the effects of positive and friendly relations in a small business was created. Initially this was to be a thesis written individually. However, the thesis instructor, Anne Poutiainen noted similarities with another student's intended thesis, and recommended a collaboration.

The consensus of the initial discussions was that positive and friendly atmospheres are the best for a workplace. Numerous articles were found praising the success of tech giants in particular, with open and modern styled offices. However, only little was found that would go into depth of what effects these have, beyond a few basic points. No mention of potential drawbacks relating to a relaxed workplace were found.

It was clear that qualitative research would be most suitable for the primary research, as the focus was to look for in depth reasons behind what was happening. It would also give the opportunity to find unforeseen answers, rather than limiting the answers to direct responses to questions that were initially believed important. Semi-structured interviews as the main source of primary research was decided, however initially other options were considered before ruling them out for various reasons.

The research questions developed from the start of the thesis. Initially the research questions was, how should a company effectively manage the relationships between senior management and other employees, to ensure strong levels of productivity? However, working around productivity was flawed, as there would be numerous factors impacting it, as well as it being very difficult to measure or quantify.

The last research question was, how do relaxed working atmospheres and friendly relations affect employee motivation? Additionally, the subquestions were, can positive and friendly relations have a negative impact on productivity? As well as, how much impact does a manager have on employee job satisfaction and motivation? Overall, the focus was on the primary question, and allowed the additional direction of the research to be adjusted based on the responses to the interview questions.

From the view of personal development, we were both interested in a Human Resources based topic. For Philip Sleath this was due to having only had limited opportunities to study the subject during the degree. While for Mikko Greus it was his program’s focus, with which he wanted to continue.

2 LEADERSHIP IN EXPERT ORGANISATIONS

This part of the theoretical framework will cover some of the most used and central abbreviations and leadership theory. In the thesis, the research will be conducted on leaders of expert organisations. The focus is therefore on leadership theory that is relevant to these types of organisations, as well as being suitable for small and medium sized companies. The two key theories studied were the situational leadership and leader-member exchange theory.

The initial discussion of leadership theory involved multiple theories that have since been left out. Although many of these theories are popular and well regarded, their focus was on the organisational side of management. Due to the lack of relevance that these would provide, they were left out to ensure focus on areas that focused on the human side of leadership.

2.1 Expert Organisations

Organisation refers to a system formed by people whose main purpose is to achieve a certain goal. It is typical for an organisation that there are predefined and repeated tasks. (Juuti 2006, 204.) All organisations have common features such as coordination, common goals, division of labour and chain of command. These factors are also known as the organisation's structure. The organisation's main focus is achieving a goal, resource acquisition, internal processes, and strategic choices. (Kreitner & Kinicki 2009, 528–529.)

In the current information society, the competitive advantage of organisations is generated by know-how; those organisations are called expert organisations. The expertise of these professionals is acquired through learning and training. They utilise existing information and further transfer it to the present situation to achieve the common goal. In addition, decentralization of decision-making, customer orientation, adaptability, transparency, and the importance of information flow are decisive and emphasized in expert organisations. (Kolari 2010, 19.)

2.2 Small and Medium Size Enterprise and Teams

The main focus for the thesis is to interview companies with teams working together in close-knit groups, therefore we decided to only focus on small and medium-sized enterprises or small teams. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are defined by their staff headcount and turnover or balance sheet total (European commission 2016, cited 2.12.2016.) An enterprise is defined by the European Commission to be any entity engaged in an economic activity, irrespective of its legal form. Including family businesses and self-employed persons as well as partnerships or associations (Recommendation 2003/361/EC of the European Commission, cited 2.12.2016).

TABLE 1. The new thresholds (European Commission 2016, cited 2.12.2016)

Company category	Staff headcount	Turnover	or	Balance sheet total
Medium-sized	< 250	≤ € 50 m		≤ € 43 m
Small	< 50	≤ € 10 m		≤ € 10 m
Micro	< 10	≤ € 2 m		≤ € 2 m

A team is a group of individuals working together for a common goal. While each individual within the team may have their own specific skills, personality traits and general goals, the most important aim is to fulfil the needs of the team. The team should have targets that they all are working towards. By doing so they work together openly and do what they can to assist each another for the benefit of the group. (Quick 1992, 8.)

2.3 Situational Leadership

The world, as well as leadership is changing. In today´s quickly changing world leaders need to adapt their leadership style according to the situation. Situational leadership is a model that studies the relationships between three factors. Firstly, it checks the amount of direction and guidance a leader provides. Secondly, it looks at the readiness level of the followers and lastly compares the amount of socioemotional support the leader provides. The concept was developed to provide leaders understanding of the relationship between the level of readiness of their followers and an effective style of leadership. Readiness refers to the ability and motivation of employees to complete a task. (Hersey & Blanchard 1988, 170–171.)

The main focus in situational leadership is on the behaviour of a leader in relation to followers. According to Hersey and Blanchard there is no one-size-fits-all approach to influence people in situational leadership. The readiness level of the people determines which leadership style should be used. The leader must analyse the group's ability and willingness and consider the readiness level of their subordinates. (Hersey & Blanchard 1988, 170–171.)

Hersey and Blanchard present four leadership styles: delegating, participating, selling and telling. Maturity of the team members determines which leadership style the leaders should use.

Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership

Relationship behaviors		Task behaviors: Low	Task behaviors: High
	High	**Participating S3** Share ideas and faciliate in decision making (Followers able, unwilling, not confident)	**Selling S2** Explain decisions and provide opportunity for clarification (Followers unable, willing, confident)
	Low	**Delegating S4** Turn over responsibility for decision and implementation (Followers able, willing, confident)	**Telling S1** Provide specific instructions and closelty supervise performance (Followers unable, unwilling, not confident)

Figure 1 Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership, leader behavior (Hersey & Blanchard 1988, 171)

- Style 1, telling, is often referred as crisis leadership in which the leader provides specific instructions and monitors the performance closely
- Style 2, selling, the leader is still providing direction, in addition he or she is also providing socioemotional support to the individual or group
- Style 3, participating, the leader is focusing on maintaining high relationship behaviour and providing fewer task behaviours. Ideas are shared on how to accomplish the given task
- Style 4, delegating, process and responsibility has been turned over to the individual or group. The leader is still involved in decisions and monitoring the process. (Hersey & Blanchard 1988, 170–174.)

Follower readiness			
High	Moderate		Low
R4	**R3**	**R2**	**R1**
Able and willing, confident	Able, but unwilling or insecure	Unable but willing or confident	Unable and unwilling or insecure

Figure 2 Hersey & Blanchard Situational leadership, follower readiness (Hersey & Blanchard 1988, 171)

There are four follower readiness levels from low maturity level to high. High maturity followers should be led differently than low maturity followers.

- Readiness level 1, unable and unwilling. The followers lack the specific skills to accomplish the task and are unable and unwilling to take responsibility for the task.
- Readiness level 2, unable but willing. The followers are unable to take responsibility for the task; but have the right mind-set to work on it.
- Readiness level 3, able but unwilling. The followers have the required skills to perform the task but are not willing to use them. They lack confidence to take responsibility.
- Readiness level 4, Able and willing. The followers have the required skills to perform the task and are committed. The followers are able to perform the task and take responsibility. (Hersey & Blanchard 1988, 176–179.)

Hersey & Blanchard's Situational leadership styles can also be fit, according to their description, into Lewin's leadership model, authoritarian, Laissez-Faire and democratic (Lewin, Lippitt, & White 1939). Hersey & Blanchard's telling leadership style corresponds to the authoritarian leadership, selling and participating are close to Lewin's democratic leadership and delegating corresponds to the Laissez-faire.

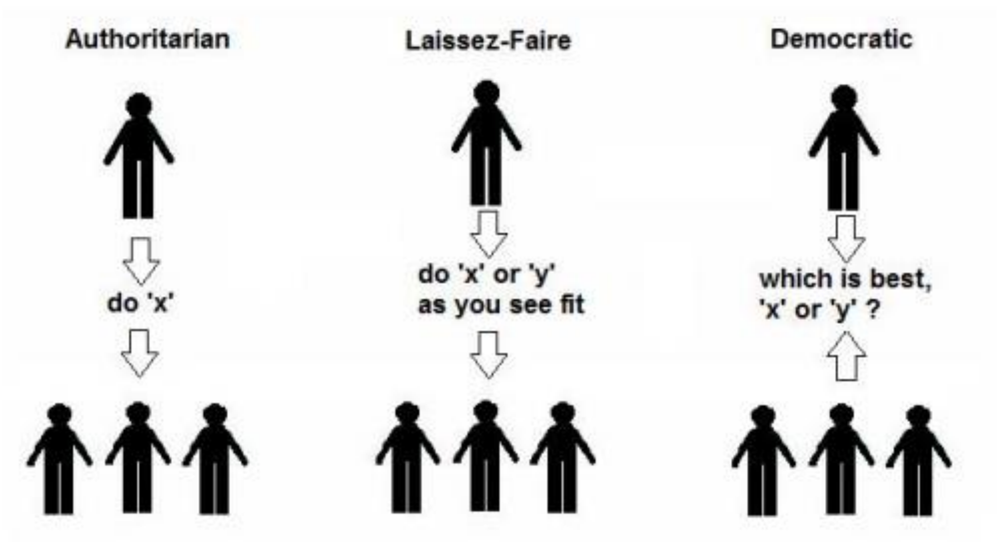

Figure 3 Leadership styles (Business studies notes for IGCSE 2012)

Authoritarian leaders give clear expectations and instructions for what, when and how the task should be done. The leader makes decisions independently without consulting rest of the group. This leadership style focuses on controlling, monitoring and commanding the subordinates' actions. Studies show that decision-making was less creative under authoritarian style. This style of leadership is often viewed as controlling, bossy, and dictatorial and should only be used in situations where there is almost no time for group discussion and decision-making. The authoritarian approach can be beneficial if the situation needs quick decisions. However, it might create resistance from the followers and lead to a dysfunctional working environment. (Lewin, Lippitt, & White 1939, 271, 273, 277, 284.)

According to Lewin, democratic leadership is usually the most effective way to lead. Democratic leaders guide their subordinates and take part in the group and listen feedback from other group members. In Lewin's study, the democratic group was less productive than the authoritarian, but produced higher quality results. Leaders with this leadership style encourage members to participate in decision-making but retain the final say. Subordinates feel like they are an important part of the team, which increases employee commitment and helps them to reach their goals. (Lewin et al. 1939, 273, 278, 284.)

Studies show that followers under laissez-faire leadership, were the least productive of all three groups. The group made more demands on the leader, were unable to cooperate and could not work independently. Laissez-faire leaders leave decision-making up to other group members and offer no guidance. This style might be beneficial in teams full of highly qualified experts, thought it often leads to lack of motivation and unclear roles. Studies found that groups were missing direction and often resulted in internal blaming for mistakes. Followers rejected personal responsibility and groups were inactive. (Lewin et al. 1939, 273, 293.)

2.4 Management and Leadership

Being a supervisor requires a lot of knowledge and can be challenging. The supervisor must know how to act with both individuals and groups and know how to influence them. There is a strong link between successful organizations and good supervisory work. One of the supervisor's most important tasks is to help the staff understand the organisation's vision and help them succeed. The goal is that the staff are motivated and competent. (Hyppänen 2007, 7–8.)

The supervisor is always acting as the employer. He or she is responsible for the operation of his or her unit and responsible of achieving the given targets. Typically, supervisor tasks have been split to management and leadership tasks. Managers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right thing. There is an ongoing debate about which tasks are more important. A good supervisor does both since both are important. (Hyppänen 2007, 9–11.)

Management	Leadership
creating order and stability by doing things right	creating the conditions for a change and development by doing the right thing
Planning	**Establish direction**
to-do list timetables resources	vision unit and organizations, creating an overall picture Defining strategies
Organising	**Aligning people**
structures job profiles Rules and guidelines	objectives commitment to goals teams and networks
Controlling	**Motivating**
rewarding for results taking corrective measures solving problems	encouragement and enthusiasm authorization needs and expectations

Figure 4 Leadership and management tasks (Hyppänen 2007, 10)

People often argue about differences between management and leadership styles (Yukl 2013, 6). Grint studies the differences between leadership and management styles in two ways. Leadership style aims for long-term decisions, while management style solves daily problems. (Grint. 2010, 15.)

2.5 Leader-Member Exchange Theory

Leader-member exchange theory looks at the relationship that is created between managers and their employees. It is a theory that has developed over time with contributions from a large number of researchers since the 1970s. According to the theory there are three stages that these relationships go through. These are role taking, role making and routinization. (Mindtools 2018b, cited 12.3.2018.)

Role taking is the first stage that comes into play as soon as the employee joins the team. Managers will be evaluating the skills and abilities of the new team members. Some of the factors that may be focused on are ability, benevolence and integrity. (Day 2014, 408.)

Role making happens as the new team members begin to take part in projects with the team, managers will continue to evaluate them. They will expect to see the new employees working hard and showing themselves to be loyal and trustworthy in their new position. These roles can already emerge early in the relationship. According to the theory, managers will mentally place the team members into two groups. They may well do this subconsciously. These two groups are the in-group and the out-group. (Mindtools 2018b, cited 12.3.2018.)

The in-group is formed by the team members that are favoured by the manager due to proving themselves as being skilled, trustworthy and loyal. As the manager trusts these team members, they are likely to give this group more attention as well as giving them more challenging and interesting work. Opportunities for training and growth for the employees are likely to go to members of this group along with getting more one-to-one time with their manager. It is likely that members in this group will share traits such as work ethic and personality with their manager. (Mindtools 2018b, cited 12.03.2018.)

This relationship can be started as an exchange of favours, which leads to the building of trust. As trust is built, the previous economic exchange becomes a social exchange as each side of the relationship stops worrying about how much they give and get from the relationship. This can in turn lead to members being willing to go beyond what is required for their leaders. (Day 2014, 408.)

Out-group team members are those that are less favoured by their manager. This may be due to showing themselves as unmotivated or lacking in skill, or even if they betray the trust of the manager. These employees will typically spend less time with their manager and will not receive as many positive opportunities. (Mindtools 2018b, cited 12.03.2018.)

Routinization is the phase where the manager and their employees develop routines between each other. For in-group team members this means working hard to maintain their status. Typically, they should show trust, respect, empathy and persistence. Successfully taking chances and opportunities that are offered will continue to improve their position. (Mindtools 2018b, cited 12.03.2018.)

For the out-group members it can be hard to change the opinion the manager has, and therefore it can be hard to leave the out-group. The negative relations may lead to the team members disliking and losing trust in the manager. It may be necessary for the team member to move work place or department to have a chance to become a member of the in-group. (Mindtools 2018b, cited 12.03.2018.)

Due to the manager acting differently, the classification in either group can cement itself overtime. Members of the in-group are given opportunities to excel and improve. They will also get more time talking to the manager and receiving support from them. This allows them to grow personally but also in the eyes of the manager. (Mindtools. 2018b, cited 12.03.2018.)

For the out-group the opposite is true, they do not get many chances to prove themselves on challenging tasks, or chances to grow through training. The lack of time spent with the manager means less support and less chance to change the opinion the manager has. (Mindtools 2018b, cited 12.03.2018.)

There are various factors that may make a difference to how much benefit leader-member exchange provides both groups. For example, members are likely to put more effort into tasks and relations with leaders who have greater influence or authority, as they can get more from it. This can benefit both parties as the leaders will also have members who give more. This is particularly relevant to SMEs as employees are more likely to have possibilities for direct interaction with their CEO or other key figures. (Mindtools 2018b, cited 12.03.2018.)

3 MOTIVATION AND WORK WELLBEING

Motivation is the reason for performing an action. In a business setting it can be seen as making someone perform the task required, because they want to. Merriam-Webster makes the distinction between motivation as a process of motivating someone, and the level of motivation an individual has (Merriam-Webster 2018, cited 05.03.2018). In our work we will be looking at ways to improve the state of motivation, however measuring motivation would be difficult, and reliant on the individual in question. Therefore, employee's performance and productivity to assess the effectiveness of different leadership styles is also looked at. (Sailesh 2011, 468.)

Performance is the action of performing a task, and subsequently how well that action is performed. In a business setting, the criteria for performance can include the time taken, the end quality and the overall costs. (Oxford Living Dictionaries 2018, cited 31.5.2018.) This is similar to productivity, which can be seen as the total work done divided by the amount of hours worked. Alternatively the units of output divided by the units of input, the exact description will vary depending on what performance is being measured. (Williams & Thompson 1998, 2, 5.)

Productivity and performance both refer to how effectively actions are completed. Due to their similarity both will be used interchangeably through this thesis. However, the focus will be more on motivation than either, this is because to consistently measure performance or productivity there would need to be a common output for each organisation that could be assessed to compare.

The theories discussed in this section were chosen to be relevant due to discussing motivation with a focus on relations, belonging or affiliation. This meant leaving out theories covering other areas of motivation. However, some of these theories covered a wide range of motivators, meaning that topics that had some potential to be relevant were still researched.

3.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Alderfer's ERG Theory

Maslow's Hierarchy of needs is one of the earliest theories about motivation, and one of the best known. The overall theory suggests that each individual will have a category of needs that must be satisfied before they truly begin to desire the higher categories. (Maslow 1943, 370-396.)

One of the most common criticisms of this theory is the idea that individuals only want another layer of needs when previous layers have been fulfilled. This criticism is important for managers to be aware of. Due to this, even if some of the earlier needs are not possible to meet, for example job security, meeting higher needs can still motivate employees. (Maslow 1943, 370-396.)

Looking at Maslow's Hierarchy of needs, it is possible to match some possible different methods for motivating staff to each level. Each method may suit different organisations due to the varying size of the company, the number of employees, and the personal situation of their employees. (Maslow 1943, 370-396.)

TABLE 2 *An Adaption of Maslow's Hierarchy (Maslow 1943, 370-396)*

Maslow’s Hierarchy	What the employee requires	What the job provides
Physiological	Need for money to access basic needs	Any work providing enough money is acceptable
Safety	Having some form of guaranteed pay in the future	Little chance of losing the job. Pay includes a pension
Belonging	Enjoy the working atmosphere, get along with colleagues	Friendly colleagues with an organisation that allows team interactions
Esteem	Receive recognition for good work	Awards, performance reviews, simple congratulations from superiors
Self-actualization	Chances to develop and see themselves improving	Opportunities for further training and promotion

This thesis is focused on ways to improve motivation through workplace relations, this falls most directly into the belonging section. However, evidence of the importance of workplace motivation may well appear in other areas of Maslow's hierarchy. (Maslow 1943, 370-396.)

ERG theory is closely related to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The three sets of needs Alderfer describes are Existence needs, which are similar to Maslow's physiological and safety needs. The relatedness needs are also close to the relationship or belonging needs. Finally, the growth needs share characteristics with esteem and self-actualization. (Value Based Management 2016, cited 12.3.2018.)

The significant difference between the two theories is Alderfer proposed that people can be motivated by more than one level at the same time. Secondly, he suggested that people will place different amounts of importance on each level depending on their circumstances. Finally, there is an element of potential regression, suggesting that if an individual spends too long without reaching one of the higher levels they may become frustrated, and pursue lower levels. (Value Based Management 2016, cited 12.3.2018.)

3.2 Acquired Needs Theory

McClelland proposed that needs are split into three areas, need for achievement, need for power and need for affiliation. People's needs and desires will fit into one of these categories. Most people will tend towards one of these, so that more motivations fit in one category than the other two. The category people fit into is based on experiences that an individual has been through in their life. A manager or leader should act differently towards individuals whose needs fall into different categories. (McClelland 1961, 36–39.)

Need for achievement individuals desire recognition for what they are doing, additionally they tend to avoid low risk activities where the potential gains are small as well as activities with a high chance of failure. A leader should look to challenge this group with stretching goals. (McClelland 1961, 44–46.)

Need for power expects individuals to desire power as a means for control or other goals, therefore they are less interested in recognition and approval, but rather for people to agree with them. These individuals can be problematic for their leaders as they are likely to seek to increase their influence. To manage them, a leader may look to assist them in increasing their power, but it is important for the leader to ensure that they have enough power of their own. (McClelland 1961, 167–168.)

Need for Affiliation suggests people in this category typically feel the need for harmonious relations with others. Due to this they do not want to stand out from others and prefer approval to recognition.

Leaders should not seek to give these too much recognition, instead they need to feel safe and accepted. (McClelland 1961, 160–161.)

3.3 Herzberg's Two Factor Theory

Herzberg's two factor theory splits motivating factors into two areas. These are factors for satisfaction and factors for dissatisfaction, also called hygiene factors. It is important to note that these are not considered opposites. Instead, the opposite of satisfaction is no satisfaction, while the opposite of dissatisfaction is no dissatisfaction. Therefore, the ideal situation for most organisations is many factors of satisfaction and no factors for dissatisfaction. (Mindtools 2018a, cited 12.03.2018.)

According to this theory, taking away all negative hygiene factors will not motivate the employees, rather it will only take away the demotivating factors. Among these hygiene factors are working conditions, salary and relationships with supervisors and peers. (Mindtools 2018a, cited 12.03.2018.)

The suggestion that relationships are considered a hygiene factor is interesting for the outcome of this thesis, as it will look into the possibilities of motivating employees through positive relationships. It may be that to motivate through a workplace relationship it has to provide some other factor that can truly motivate, such as recognition or responsibility. (Mindtools 2018a, cited 12.03.2018.)

3.4 Employee Commitment and Incentives

According to Viitala, commitment means the psychological relationship between individual and organisation. The relationship includes the desire to work in the organisation, respect for the organisation, and satisfaction to work in the organisation. (2013, 85–86.) A committed person does his or her job enthusiastic and efficient and takes responsibility for the work he or she has done. The emotional commitment contains values, emotions and the feeling of belonging. Employees consider their work valuable and important. (Lämsä & Hautala 2005, 92, 94.)

Incentive systems are implemented to recruit desired staff, achieve enthusiasm, improve work commitment, improve work results, develop competence and improve productivity and the quality of work. People's higher education levels have changed their attitude towards work. Increased expectations of freedom and independence have raised a question of how the human creativity and energy can be led to improve productivity and assure that the organisation goals are reached. Successful incentive systems need to be integrated into the organization's goals and values and should have more individualised goals. Therefore, it is important to understand what the staff is expecting from their work and life. Each person has their own expectations, including the content and amount of work. Also experiences of incentive systems are unique. Sometimes incentives can generate negative effects such as feelings of injustice. Organisations can receive a significant competitive advantage by adding positive effects to the incentive system and by removing negative effects. Incentives are generally divided into two main parts, tangible and intangible incentives. Tangible incentives refer to the person's salary and its components, such as different benefits and rewards. Intangible incentives are the content of work, development opportunities, participation and the possibility to influence. (Kauhanen 2010, 79, 83; Hakonen, Hakonen, Hulkko-Nyman & Ylikorkala 2014, 16, 36, 57, 61.)

3.5 Wellbeing at Work

According to the Finnish institute of occupational health, wellbeing at work is achieved through safe, healthy and productive work which is well organised in a well-managed organisation. Employees and groups should experience their work meaningful and rewarding. (Anttonen & Räsänen 2009, 18.)

Term wellbeing at work includes individual's personal experience as well as the atmosphere of the whole work community. Work wellbeing means different things for different people. Factors and elements that affect the wellbeing at work can be experienced and interpreted in a completely different way depending on the person. One employee can experience the atmosphere of the workplace to be nice and relaxed at the same time another employee finds multiple shortcomings and room for improvement. (Otala & Ahonen 2005, 28.)

The psychological aspect of well-being at work emphasises the great importance of emotions experienced by the individual. Humans are sensitive to all the thoughts and feelings that are in their mind. These can affect the person's ability to work. Displeasing and poorly organized work is exhausting and increases the risk of illness significantly. (Luukkala 2011, 31–45.)

Manka presents the factors affecting work well-being by dividing it into four sections. These sections are organisation, supervisor, group spirit and work. In the organisation section, goal-orientation, flexible structure, continuous development and a functional work environment are important. In the work section, emphasis is on the importance of influence and active learning. Group spirit is also a big part in one's work wellbeing. Open communication and team functionality through common rules are the keys to a better workplace. The fourth factor is the supervisor, who should lead the work community in an inclusive and motivating way. There is an individual in the middle of the areas, where life management, know-how and health are important. (Manka, Hakala, Nuutinen & Harju 2010, 7–8.)

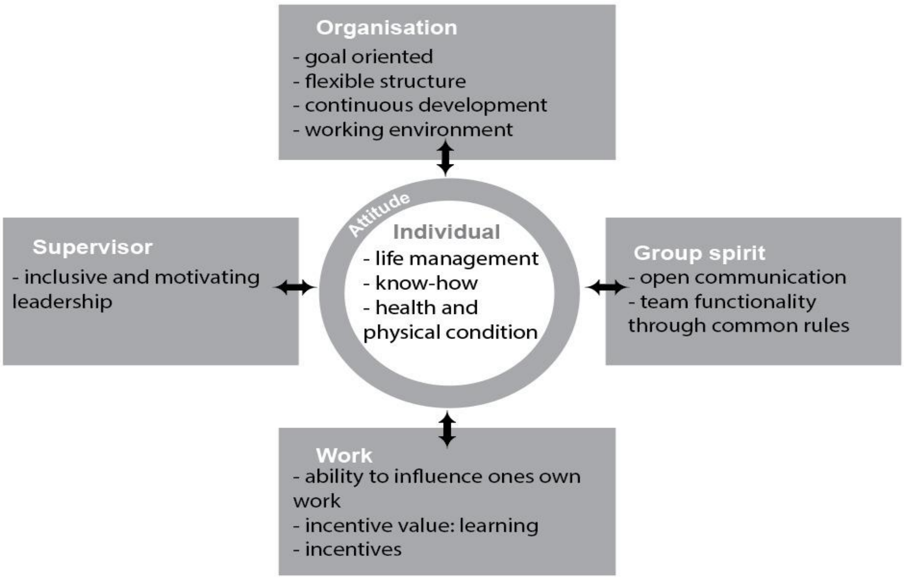

Figure 5 Factors in wellbeing at work (Manka et al. 2010, 8)

Wellbeing at work can also be divided into three elements: competence, requirements and social support. Luukkala considers competence as the most important area in work well-being. Skilled employees can finish challenging tasks and reach the goals, finishing the task gives them positive feeling. A successful employee gets recognized by the work community. However, there is a risk that the employee is not able to set limits and might work too much. If a worker is expected to over perform, his work wellbeing is threatened. Even a well-versed expert can become tired if the workload and demands are too high. Competence and requirements should be in balance. Social support in the workplace as well as in personal life is one of the most important matters in maintaining the employee's well-being. Support of the work community helps to continue. The supervisor has a crucial role in providing assistance. (Luukkala 2011, 31–45.)

4 METHODOLOGY

The methodology will discuss the processes used to complete the thesis. This will include the types of research, how the research will be conducted and who will be researched. This will explain the intentions for the theoretical framework of the project, covering the intended areas of focus and the sources that will be used.

As well as this, the methodology cover the plan for the physical writing process of the thesis. This will involve the software to be used, both to write and to plan and organise. It will also cover the processing of our research data, and once again the software needed for this.

4.1 What is Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is a process of naturalistic inquiry that seeks in-depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural setting or context. It can be further described as research to focus on the why rather than the what. This may be the clearest difference with quantitative research which is focused on numbers and quantity. (Klenke 2016, 6.)

Using qualitative research allows the researcher to find deeper meaning in the answers to their questions. This makes it suitable to explore views and opinions that both managers and employees have. In contrast, quantitative research tends to lack deeper analysis of problems, and as opinions and relations are rarely straightforward, there is a need to analyse in depth. Additionally when looking to research a person’s motivations and the reasons for their actions qualitative research is most suitable. (Klenke 2016, 11; Myers 2013, 6.)

Additionally, it is possible to adapt qualitative research to delve into unexpected responses, or to adjust to a change in the direction of the research. Another benefit of using qualitative research is the reduced importance of sample sizes. This was beneficial as it became clear that finding a large number of organisations and individuals willing to assist with the research would be challenging. (Klenke 2016, 9, 11.)

4.2 Research Techniques

The initially planned research started by using basic quantitative research in the form of a questionnaire. This would be with the intention of finding individuals that were suitable to interview, for example those managers who appeared to pay particular attention to how they lead. Instead the research would be focused to interviews with groups from a small number of companies. It was decided to be unnecessary to limit the research to those leaders who have clear thoughts about their leadership as various approaches would allow us to build up a bigger picture of the possibilities, and what seems to work.

The primary research will be done through interviews with members of the companies. Interviews will be used because they are one of the best ways to obtain more detailed information about feelings, perceptions and opinions which are a key feature of the intended research. They will also enable easy follow up on the areas that come up during responses, which had not been previously planned for. (Birmingham City University 2006, cited 15.1.2018.)

One of the major challenges in the research will be to assess how employees are affected by the actions of their leaders. There are many causes for this being difficult, firstly to measure motivation is not possible, and therefore it can only be based on what we are told. Secondly is the challenge in assessing what the causes in a change in motivation might be, for example an individual's personal life may have a significant impact.

Another method of research that could be very useful to use is observation. This would have involved visiting workplaces and watching day to day activities and interactions. It would have provided a backing to information found from the interviews, with less potential for bias from individuals. However, it would be hugely time consuming and challenging to implement, both due to the amount of time needed to see enough happen, and due to the likely weariness for businesses to provide so much access. It is also unlikely that it would be possible to set up to fully record these situations, so it would be necessary to rely on notes. Lastly there is a significant risk that all those being watched would act differently while being observed. (McLeod 2015, cited 20.5.2018.)

4.3 Theoretical Research Process

The theoretical framework will provide a basis of knowledge, both for the authors and the readers. This will therefore be relevant to the intended primary research, to allow those involved to better understand the results. It will also enable better planning of the research, due to a greater understanding of the subject. Finally, the framework will also improve the ability to analyse the research, both in terms of aligning the generalisations made with existing theory and limiting generalisations by understanding other variables. (University of Southern California 2018, cited 05.6.2017.)

The theory will have two major sections. Firstly, the study of leadership theory, with focus on the areas that are relevant to the management of relations. Secondly will be motivational theory, as the main aims of this work will be to help leaders to motivate their team members, and therefore improve their productivity. Combined with this will be work wellbeing, an area that is impacted greatly by workplace relations.

To find the basis for the theoretical framework a variety of sources of literature will be used. Firstly, this will be the resources provided by the university. This includes access to the physical university libraries, as well as city libraries. Additionally, the databases such as EBSCO will be used to search for academic journals.

Google Scholar will also be used to gain access to a huge range of sources. This can be limited due to limited access to complete works but can still be useful. Articles in relevant magazines and journals may also be of use, these are less likely to actively search for these due to being more time consuming to find suitable work. Lastly, basic search engines can be used to find suitable websites with relevant information. Using this will be limited as although it can be an effective way to find information, there are less guarantees on the quality.

4.4 Interview Process

To perform the research a semi-structured interview style will be used, meaning the interviewers will have some prepared questions and topics, but will vary what is asked depending on the situation. These questions will be open-ended to encourage long and descriptive answers. This style should allow the research to show the perspective of the interviewees. (McCammon 2018, cited 20.4.2018.)

The idea of this is to cover the topics needed for research, while allowing the knowledgeable participants to lend their own insights. Semi-structured interviews are suited to research on a smaller scale, and in particular for small case studies. Giving the person being interviewed freedom to choose the detail of their responses should enable them to explain about what they truly find important. (Drever 1995, cited 20.4.2018.)

One of the most important criteria for the interviews is that they are one to one and confidential, so the interviewees do not feel the need to withhold information. To keep the interviews confidential, it will be important not to show answers to questions from both employee and manager, as it would be possible for either party to recognise their own answers and make the connection. Combined with this it will be important to make the interviewees comfortable. This may be done through simple and more general questions, such as asking about their work and their position.

These interviews will be used to develop small scale case studies. These will explore the topic through each organisation involved in the research. These case studies will each look at how the manager leads their team, and how well the employees respond to this. A benefit of the case study is how effective they are in presenting challenging and complex issues in a relevant and understandable format, which can be told in a personal way. (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2016, 133.)

While the topics we are researching are generally not hard to grasp they have complexity owed to the variable nature of human interaction, and all the potential impacts. Through the case studies it should be possible to explain how to avoid some problems and lead or manage effectively. (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 116.)

4.5 Preparations for Interviews

The research will target individuals that are in skilled positions. These people should be those that are in a career that they expect to continue in for several years. This is largely to get away from working with people in roles that have high staff turnover, as this is likely to reduce the possibility of a build-up of relations between the groups.

This build-up of relations should be important as it makes it possible to view the potential effects that friendships or negative relations have on staff productivity and motivation. These should build and increase in impact over time, due to this interviews will not be conducted with any employees who have started within the past couple of months.

A key requirement is to be interviewing both employees and their employer or manager. Speaking to both parties will allow comparison between their views of the effectiveness of the manager's actions, with what the manager intended. An unavoidable weakness to the research will be that the individuals researched are those willing to offer their time for free. This immediately narrows the possibility of who can be researched and makes it likely that those who are researched have similarities in their personalities.

Each set of interviews will start with the leaders or managers before interviewing their employees. This is to enable using what the managers say are their intentions, before finding out whether they succeed in achieving them. This will mean adjusting each interview with any of the employees to fit what we found from the manager, for example by asking questions about a specific technique that a manager uses.

Making the interviewees comfortable is important to getting useful responses. The main part of this is to ask general questions at the beginning of each interview. It is also possible that these simpler questions will naturally lead on to more specific questions for the research or provide potential ideas for later questions. For the same reasons the interviews will be conducted in a conversational style, as opposed to simple questions and answers. (McCammon 2018, cited 20.4.2018.)

4.6 Process of Recording, Writing and Creating Transcripts

Following the interviews, the first step will be to ensure the quality of the recording. It will then be necessary to create a transcript, this will be done by one individual, but checked by the other to ensure the accuracy. After this the recordings will be deleted and the transcripts will be relied upon for the remaining, this is in part to keep information in the recordings safe.

Additionally, when writing the transcripts, small changes will be made to ensure the privacy of the interviewees, for example any names mentioned would be removed. Minor changes will also be made to wording to make the transcripts easier to read and understand. During this process care will be taken to avoid altering anything that might change the intended message.

Following this the most important points from each of the interviews will be noted. Then the points that are repeatedly mentioned, or that seem of particular importance based on what was said by the participant, will be recorded. This should allow for a simpler and more effective comparison of results. This will then lead to the final stage of the analysis, which will be to analyse the overall trends, to enable us to draw some conclusions and prepare advice for those reading.

Due to this thesis being a cooperation, it is important to share all work done at regular intervals, to avoid repetition and wasting time. To do this Microsoft's OneDrive will be used for the majority of written work. Sharing files is made simple by this and it also provides the ability to work on projects at the same time with real time updates.

To add to this, regular meetings will be held, discussing the progress that has been made and considering the future direction. Due to the expectation that the authors will not be located nearby, these meetings will mostly be done over Skype or equivalent software. Through OneDrive and Skype, it should be possible to maintain a clear idea of what is done and what still needs to be done. The work will be divided between the authors, so that both can fluidly write each section, and not risk repetition. However, it will be important for both to assist each other through areas such as sharing useful sources, critiquing each other's work and providing inspiration and direction.

4.7 Content Analysis

Content analysis is the process of evaluating the conducted research. In this thesis this will be the series of interviews. It is commonly used for analysis of transcribed interviews. The overall idea of the process is to take large quantities of text and form them into organised summaries of results and key data. It is important to hold the core meaning of the original research intact when the text is condensed and analysed. It should allow analysis of the data that combines previous knowledge and understanding of the topics with the new results. (Erlingson & Brysiewicz 2017, 94.)

The amount of material in qualitative research is extensive. Therefore, it is important that when analysing the material, the research question is selected and clear. Researchers must decide what material is studied and the rest of the material should be ignored. Thematic analysis is one of the most commonly used methods in data analysis. In thematic analysis, the material is sorted by the chosen themes. Materials with similarities are collected together and presented under the main themes. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, 92–94, 96–99.)

To perform the content analysis, the conventional style will be used, as well as key points of thematic analysis. This will first involve thoroughly reading through the content, to provide a complete knowledge of the research. Following this is the process of making notes regarding the initial analysis. Data can then be sorted into categories, this should make it clear how frequent each topic is. The relationship between different parts of the results can then be explored and identified, to enable the researcher to draw suitable conclusions. (Hsieh & Shannon 2005, 1279.)

5 RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

The key points from the interviews are presented in this chapter. All manager and employee interviews are combined in their own sections. The main focus is to compare the data from the interviews with the theory presented earlier and to find the key points that affect employees' motivation and wellbeing. These interviews involved three companies, where the manager and the employee were both interviewed separately. When studying the interviews there were several points echoed by each participant. As well as some points which showed significant differences in opinion, potentially coming from difference in personality.

5.1 Interviews with Managers

The first interview was performed with the CEO of a small start-up company that is selling ICT solutions to customers. The CEO is working as the direct superior for a team of five employees. The second interview was with a CEO who is both managing director and co-owner of the business and has worked there since 2006, but only in the current position since 2014. The CEO is managing a team of five employees. The company is specialised in electrical engineering and offers their clients electrical engineering services. The third interview was with a person that has a directorial position in a large department at the organisation. The supervisor is responsible for 70 people in total while working as a direct superior for 25 people. The company operates in the educational sector.

All three managers had a people orientated approach, putting value in being able to talk comfortably. Establishing open two-way communication in a small team or organisation is very important and the feeling of friendship was emphasised. Two-way communication can benefit both employee and manager. For the manager, it is a source of new ideas and a new perspective while the employee knows that their views are being considered. None of the managers felt like being just the manager who is in charge but valued discussions of non-work related topics occasionally. Talking about non-work related topics released stress and increased creativity. Maintaining a flat hierarchy in the company helps managers to connect with staff.

As the team size is small and expert organisations are heavily relying on individual’s expertise, it is extremely important that the recruitment process is done correctly and the right person is hired. Even one wrong recruitment can have negative effects on the team spirit and team motivation that can last a long time. Most managers are looking for a person with the right attitude instead of trying to fulfil a vacancy. Each manager mentioned that they have some expertise or competence or know-how in their company that they are selling or utilising. Expert organisations utilise their highly skilled and trained employees to gain a competitive advantage. Managers want to minimise staff turnover and be closely involved in the recruitment process.

Every managers felt that the most motivating factor for the employees is to have them understand the vision and make them understand that they are doing meaningful work. When the employees were part of the decision-making and by that affecting the company’s future, they felt more motivated and engaged. Maslow’s theory describes five different factors and levels that affect people’s motivation. Of these five levels the feeling of belonging, self-esteem and self-actualization were the topics that were most discussed upon.

Creating a positive atmosphere also creates productivity. Employees take more pride in the work they do for a company they believe in. It also increases employee’s level of happiness and motivation. Employees feel safe at work and this allows for better social connections, empathy, and encouragement among team members.

Flexitime was one of the points that managers thought is motivating employees tremendously. Flexitime means that employees can alter their workday start and finish times. Every company offered flexible hours in some way to their employees, either it was that employees had full control over their worktime or they could leave a bit early on Friday and work longer on Monday. This method was found to be working very well.

All companies had implemented a feedback system where the staff were able to give feedback either anonymously or in person. Managers felt that it helps the company to grow and the employees to feel more engaged when they are heard. This also helped managers to find each individual's strengths and weaknesses to help them improve.

Being available for the staff was one of the key points to maintain and strengthen the good relations. Focusing on leading the people instead of performing management tasks was brought up a few times during the interviews. Managers felt more connected to their staff and that made their daily leading easier.

None of the companies were using a goal oriented incentive system to motivate their staff. Small bonuses such as paid lunches were used by managers to show appreciation to their staff although not as a direct reward. Managers felt that there is no need for that kind of bonus system in an expert organisation, where people creativity is valued higher than fast results. Occasionally managers arranged recreational events for the whole team, where the main focus was on team building and enhancing relationships.

Table 3 Key points from manager interviews

Key point	Description	Impact
Open two-way communication	Possibility to discuss matters openly and talk about non-work related topics	Lessens stress and increases creativity
Recruitment process	Finding the right attitude over skill	Increases team wellbeing and enhances good relations
Understanding of vision	Staff understands the company vision and future plans	Feeling of belonging. Increases work commitment. Feeling of meaningful work
Positive atmosphere	Environment that encourages positivity and aims for a relaxed atmosphere	Increases level of happiness and productivity
Flexitime	Employees can alter their workday start and finish times	Trust both ways. Increases motivation and loyalty
Importance of feedback	Possibility to receive and give feedback frequently	Enables personal growth. Makes it easier to solve issues before they arise
Manager’s availability	Focus on leading people instead of performing tasks	Maintain and strengthen good relations

Appreciation of employees	Showing employee appreciation in form of small gifts or free lunches	Employees appreciate small rewards which increased motivation and loyalty

Every manager had completed some leadership training but did not actively choose to follow any specific leadership styles or theories. All of them were certain that they apply some leadership theory but were mainly trusting their instincts and using their experience. A common factor for all managers was that they applied different leadership styles to staff depending on the situation and the individual. This is the concept of situational leadership theory. One of the managers considered trust to be very important and also stated that trust goes both ways, which links into the ideas of LMX theory, that the relationship between a team member and leader is always two way. They also agreed that authoritarian leadership style is out-of-date, and they rarely use it, though there have been situations where they have used their right to direct. Their descriptions of their leadership showed that they used democratic leadership over other styles.

5.2 Interviews with Employees

The first employee that we interviewed has been working at the business for over a year, in a role that was largely focused on marketing, although with some work in other areas. The second interviewee has been working as an assistant in planning projects. The third interviewee has been working in a position in the educational sector for almost eight years.

All employees mentioned that they really appreciate when the managers take the time to discuss work and non-work related matters. It gives them the feeling of caring and that they can talk to their supervisor about anything and everything. A range of benefits were mentioned during the interview regarding the possibility of speaking openly and freely. One was that it stimulates everyone mentally and they will not get bored focusing on their current task that easily.

The most motivating factor for employees is the feeling of doing meaningful work. They mentioned that having a meaning for their work pushed them to work harder towards the common goal. Knowing the company vison and future plans helped with that. This also increased loyalty and employee commitment. The staff members credited both the meaningful job and a high level of autonomy in deciding how the task was performed.

The feeling of working in a one big family help employees to talk with their colleagues. Friendly relations encourage everyone to share information and to help each other. Additionally, employees do not feel ashamed asking for advice from a team member or the supervisor. Recreational events were welcomed and those helped with team building. Most interviewees mentioned that those events are more enjoyable when the atmosphere is open, positive and relaxed already at work. When discussing the overall effect of positive relations and a positive atmosphere, it appeared to be considered as both a factor for satisfaction and a hygiene factor according to Herzberg's theory.

Table 4 Key points from employee interviews

Key point	Description	Impact
Open two-way communication	The possibility to discuss matters openly and talk about non-work related topics	A feeling of caring and the possibility to talk about anything and everything
Feeling of doing meaningful work	Knowing what the company goal is and how one's work helps achieving it	A feeling of being an important part of the organisation. Improves employee loyalty and commitment
Flexibility working methods	One can decide how the work is done	A feeling of trust. Increases creativity and productivity
Positive atmosphere	An environment that encourages positivity and aims for a relaxed atmosphere	Improves information sharing and strengthens relationships in the team

All the employees that were interviewed fell under the category of readiness level 4, therefore being able and willing. The leaders' characteristics fell under a combination of styles 3 and 4, meaning either participating or delegating. The sign of participating were factors such as sharing ideas and discussing problems.

5.3 Conclusions

The research question of this thesis is to investigate how relaxed working atmospheres and friendly relations affect employee motivation. Additionally, the sub questions whether positive and friendly relations have a negative impact on productivity. As well as how much impact a manager has on employee job satisfaction and motivation.

Mainly everyone agreed that a friendly relaxed working atmosphere improves employee motivation, loyalty and work wellbeing. Although, creating a relaxed atmosphere with the freedom to talk can have negative effects too. One manager said that sometimes there might be too much chatting off topic during the working day. One employee felt that working in the same room as most of the team could be distracting. Another manager used a specific strategy to avoid staff using too much time chatting off-topic, by starting the week with the whole team sharing stories from the weekend. This meant they would not be sharing them separately or repeatedly.

By having friends at work, going to work is more enjoyable. Feeling more comfortable allows the team to make jokes which has benefits, as one of the CEOs said that humour can be used to take the edge off stressful work. All employees felt that it was much easier to share and receive information in a relaxed positive atmosphere, which is crucial for expert organisations.

Flexitime was discussed during the interviews and it was one of the key points to keep the employees motivated and give them the feeling of trust. By giving something to the employees they are more likely to give back to the company. Giving responsibilities and a high level of autonomy in deciding how to work was one the most effective ways to engage staff. All employees mentioned that they feel more motivated when their work is meaningful and rewarding.

None of the companies used a target driven incentive system. Providing free lunches and gifts were given to show appreciation by the company. Employee work wellbeing was discussed in all of the interviews. Managers were aware that positive relations affect their subordinates' work wellbeing. Although managers do play a big role in employees’ wellbeing, they cannot control everything. An individual’s personal life and health can affect their motivation levels and work wellbeing.

The financial situation of the company seemed to affects employees’ motivation levels. This is in relation with job security which Maslow has ranked one of the bottom pillars of the hierarchy of needs. So without safety one is less likely to be motivated by other factors that the company might provide. However, one employee clearly valued belonging and esteem over the feeling of safety.

In the end, all managers agreed that leading people is nice and they do it because they really enjoy it. Without positive relations the employees would be less likely to carry on in their current roles and they would likely to look for a new job. Below is a list of best practices collected from the interviews.

TABLE 5 Best practices

Best practice	Description
Ensure staff feel that their work is impactful	This increases the level of motivation and commitment
Provide staff with opportunities for feedback	Helps to find each individual's strengths and weaknesses to help them improve. Enables individual growth. Do it both anonymously and through open discussion
Study leadership theory but trust instincts	Leadership theories can help to understand different situations but it is more important to trust instincts and experience
Open two-way communication	Discuss problems and challenges with staff, and subsequently the solutions
Encourage positive working atmosphere	Provide the team with opportunities to talk off topic. Do not restrict the conversation topics. Positive relations can improve motivation, but negative relations will reduce motivation
Use your time effectively	Prioritise employees and make yourself available to your team
Do not forget about self-management	Take care of yourself. Leadership can be enjoyable
Remember that leaders cannot control everything	Employees motivation is affected by many factors out-side work
Think about the team when recruiting	Recruit for the team, not just the task or the leader

6 DISCUSSION

One of the biggest challenges for us, was to arrange interviews with suitable participants. This was a challenge for three different reasons. Firstly, we could not offer the interviewees any tangible reward. Secondly, we would require both a manager and employee, doubling the commitment from a company and meaning that two people we find have to be connected. Lastly, due to Mikko's move abroad it was more difficult for him to set up contacts, while Philip had difficulties due to having to make the first contact in English.

This had a major impact on our timeframe, which was stretched many times beyond what was originally planned and was clearly our biggest deficiency in the project. The timeframe was affected by other factors as well. After being pushed back a few months, it was affected by Philip starting full time work in a different city. We also had challenges with meeting our thesis instructor, due to both our living arrangements at different times, and unavoidably due to her sick leave. The meetings we did have were frequently productive and had a considerable benefit in improving the direction of our thesis.

Despite these challenges we accept that thesis could have been finished significantly sooner if we had been more motivated at the times when it was practical for us to work. Eventually placing a hard deadline pushed us to complete the work. During the final two months we worked effectively, with regular meetings and discussions and significant progress.

Overall, we are happy with the work we have done, and believe we have studied interesting topics, and developed our understanding of leadership, motivation and workplace relationships. We have also learned about the challenges of writing a thesis, or a similar large project. In particular, the challenge to maintain motivation and work ethic for a single piece of work over a long period.

In terms of our research, we felt that we had a suitable number of interviews, as by the third set we felt we had reached a point of saturation in responses. However, this was also partly due to the similarities between the individuals. Due to requiring people who are willing to give their time for no reward, we can assume that those willing to help would have similarities in their personalities, in particular with attitudes towards people. It may be that our aim to include different types of managers was not important, due to the possibilities of who we interviews being so limited.

One difficulty with the interviews is the difficulty for both authors to be available at the same time to interview in person. Due to this, we had to use skype for the majority of the interviews. The first two interviews were possible to do in person, using a dictaphone, while the last were through recording software for Skype. Using Skype presented some minor challenges, but overall the whole process went smoothly. It is difficult to say if there was a difference in responses when interviewing face to face or through Skype.

Those we did interview seemed happy to take part and were very friendly and responsive. All were happy to help afterwards if we required follow up questions. In comparison some interviews we tried to set up received very little interest or enthusiasm, some attempts were ignored entirely, while others did not have enough time, despite assurances that it would be less than half an hour and usually closer to 15 minutes.

We also had concerns with two areas of our research. Firstly, the small sample size means it is not possible to make larger generalisations. Secondly, our own ideas and biases may have played a part in the questions we asked. Although we tried to avoid it, it is possible that the questions we asked led the participants to answer in a certain manner. Additionally, it may be that both managers want to make themselves or each other look good and could be embarrassed by going into negative details.

Despite changing our direction during the early parts of the thesis, we believe we reached the main goals of the project. To find out how positive relations and a relaxed atmosphere affects workers. We were also able to give some clear points of advice, for leaders in a relevant area.

For future research, we considered three main ideas. Firstly, to go back to the original research question, and investigate the connections and impacts on productivity. Secondly to develop the research on a larger scale, by using a larger sample size and potentially by using quantitative research. Lastly, trying similar research with different types of organisations such as those that are larger, more hierarchical or in less professional industries.

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EMPLOYEE QUESTIONNAIRE APPENDIX 1

What are your roles in the company?

How long have you been working at the company?

How good would you say your working relationship is with your manager?

Is it friendly or just practical?

Is it similar with other employees?

How motivated would you say you are personally at work?

What would you say your manager does well?

Is there anything that is not working that well or could be improved?

Do you think there are any downsides to the more relaxed way of leading?

Do you have any kind of outside of work relationship with your colleagues and manager?

How beneficial would you say having these positive relations are?

Is there anything else you would like to add?

MANAGER QUESTIONNAIRE APPENDIX 2

What do you do at work?

How long have you been working there?

What is the team size? How many employees do you have?

What is your daily routine?

How would you describe your relationship with your employees?

What kind of working relationship do you aim for? How is the atmosphere in the company?

How motivated do you think your employees are? Do you think good relations are beneficial?

When you recruit people are you looking how well that individual would fit in with the company culture?

How much teambuilding and socializing do you do outside work?

Have you been trained to lead? Have you studied management and leadership?

Are there any theories or strategies that you keep in mind when leading?

Do you think at some point this relaxed atmosphere could affect the productivity in a negative way?

How do you maintain good relations?

How do you manage feedback? How do you give feedback and how do you receive feedback?

Whether anything you do, that goes beyond what you have to do, affect you in terms of workload and stress

Is there anything else you would like to add?