Sustainable high-performance in a self-organizing company

Mirka Rantanen

Bachelor's Thesis

Degree Programme in

Business Administration

2019

Haaga-Helia
University of Applied Sciences

Abstract

29.9.2019

Author(s) Mirka Rantanen	
Degree programme Degree programme in business administration	
Report/thesis title Sustainable high-performance in a self-organizing company	**Number of pages and appendix pages** 69 + 47

This research-oriented bachelor's thesis is a case assignment for Netlight, an IT consultancy operating throughout Europe. Netlight is a self-organizing network organization, which engages in business-critical IT projects across a wide range of industries.

The thesis aims to examine the impact of self-organization on the well-being of an individual and the ways in which an individual can be a high-performer in a sustainable way. *Self-organization* is a way of organizing, where top-down structures are minimized. *High-performance* can be described as an expression of one's potential by meeting and exceeding goals, setting one's own standards, and taking total ownership. *Well-being* is a multifaceted concept without one correct definition. However, the major division is between the hedonic perspective of well-being as pleasant feelings and evaluations, and the eudaimonic perspective, which suggests that well-being involves engaging in self-actualizing, meaningful, and growth-producing behavior.

The study aimed to explore Netlight as a working environment in the context of individual well-being and high-performance and to identify themes that would benefit from further examination. The study included four semi-structured interviews with pre-determined themes and a survey. The study showed that participants saw Netlight's self-organizing structure as having both positive and negative impacts on well-being. The study also revealed that there are many ways in which an individual can strive for sustainable high-performance, although it requires continuous learning from the individual as circumstances change. Based on the study findings, it is recommended that Netlight focuses on raising awareness of the importance of sleep, physical activity, nutrition, and recovery, sharing insights about sustainable knowledge work, encouraging open discussion about high-performance, expectations and self-compassion, and reflecting on the quality of teamwork and meetings.

Keywords
Self-organization, High-performance, Sustainability, Well-being, Knowledge work

Table of content

1   Introduction

This bachelor's thesis aims to examine how an individual can be a high-performer in a sustainable way in a self-organizing company. In addition to the relevant theoretical framework and study in the case company, the thesis serves as a guide for sustainable high-performance. The objective of the thesis is to find answers to the following research question: *How an individual can achieve a balance between well-being and high-performance in a self-organizing company?* The research question divides into two investigative questions, listed below:

1. What is the impact of the self-organization on individual well-being?
2. How to be a high-performer in a sustainable way in a self-organizing company?

Self-organization is a way of organizing, where top-down structures and predefined chains of command are minimized (Martela & Jarenko 2017, 12–13). According to Chen & Cooper (2014), there is no consensus around a single definition of *well-being*. The major division is between the hedonic perspective of well-being as pleasant emotions and evaluations, and eudaimonic perspective, which suggests that well-being involves engaging in self-actualizing and meaningful behavior. Well-being research has mostly focused on the hedonistic perspective. Viitala (2014) defines *performance* as reaching and exceeding goals. According to Whitmore (2009, 95 –96), a real performance is an expression of one's full potential by setting one's highest standards and taking total ownership.

The thesis is a case assignment for Netlight, an IT consultancy operating throughout Europe with more than 1300 Netlighter's in Stockholm, Oslo, Helsinki, Copenhagen, Munich, Hamburg, Frankfurt, Berlin, and Zurich. Netlight engages in business-critical IT projects across a wide range of industries. Netlight is organized in a post-industrial way. Netlight is a self-organizing company, where top-down structures and chains of command are minimized. There are no managers and subordinates at Netlight. Instead, Netlight is a network organization where everyone is leading or following depending on the situation. Instead of detailed job descriptions, every individual at Netlight focuses on a certain core

area. The core focus areas are Talent Search (Recruitment), Engagement Search (Sales) and Consulting, and most of the employees work as consultants at clients' premises. Swarm intelligence (SI) models the collective behavior of natural and artificial self-organized systems, inspired by social swarms in nature. Netlight's way of organizing is called BOID. Boid is an acronym for bird-oid, meaning a bird robot. Boid is an artificial intelligence program for the '80s, which is simulating the self-organizing flocking behavior of birds. At Netlight, every individual – or boid – is in command and decides which direction to take based on simple principles, while paying attention to the entire group whereby something greater emerges. (Ringertz 2015).

The thesis topic is very current. Today's world is often referred to as the "VUCA" world – volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (Holbeche 2015, 1). The humankind, especially in developed countries, suffers from so-called information overload. Individuals have access to more information than could ever be obtained in one lifetime. Staying alert all the time and being obsessed with obtaining more information has become common because the human brain is hardwired to crave information. Furthermore, during the past decade, new social technologies have shaped human behavior. People are increasingly comfortable living a public and connected life, and social media makes it easy to compare one's life with the lives of others. This fear of missing out even has its own acronym: FOMO. (Hanna 2014, 62–63; Morgan 2014, 1–16.) Today's techno-economic culture is built on electronic artificial environments. Jean Baudrillard, a French sociologist, calls today's world as a hyperreality, an artificial world where the human experience is only a simulation on reality. Hyperreality is an enchanting simulation of what could be, a continuation of the real world. For example, social media conversations and reality TV programs produce an artificial reality. The modern life is a mixture of hyperreality and reality, and especially for young people, hyperreality can be the primary environment in which they define themselves. (Juuti 2017, 45.)

The working life is changing its nature, too. Technologies such as artificial intelligence and robotics replace many traditional tasks, and humans are left with tasks that require innovation, creativeness, learning, interaction, and social intelligence. (Eskola 2018, 4–5.) To remain competitive, organizations have become more responsive to the needs of

knowledge workers when redesigning organizations. Organizations are slowly shifting from rigid management practices and bureaucratic processes to enabling effectivity of the employees. (Holbeche 2012.) Nieminen and Talja (2018, 71-72) argue that in the VUCA world, instead of approaching organizations as controllable machines, the organizations should be seen as "organizms". It has been suggested that future work would be organized like the Internet – organizations will be flexible and solve problems through self-organizing processes (Eskola 2018, 4).

Well-being is one of the most important issues in society today. The shift from physical work to knowledge work has led to an acceleration of the pace of work, and people's mental and social burden has increased. While the wealth of society has grown, the mental strain has increased, and even a quarter of the population suffers from mental disorders during their lifetime. Moreover, living in hyperreality increases stress in people who are not masters of adaptation. 1 in 4-6 person suffers from mental disorders, anxiety, depression, and stress globally. In many countries, stress is the number one reason for sick absences and presenteeism, which harm the business in general. (Chen & Cooper 2014; Hanna 2014, 63; Juuti & Salmi 2014, 43–44, 60.)

I have worked at Netlight since August 2018, during which I have learned a great deal about Netlight's organization and working culture. When I was choosing a topic for my thesis, Netlight's concept "Eternal Flame" served as a source of inspiration for me. Eternal flame is a declaration of sustainable consulting created by Netlight partners. The declaration begins as follows;

> Eternal Flame is about feeling passionate about Netlight and our work, but never let the flame burn out. It is about keeping all of us healthy and happy throughout our work life and to keep a good level of sanity and humanity to our high ambitions, high capacity and kick-ass deliveries. Basically, keep an eternal flame. (Netlight 2019.)

During my time at Netlight, it has become clear to me that Netlight attracts passionate and ambitious individuals with high expectations for themselves. Netlight is indeed a perfect playground for a high-performer – full of opportunities to engage in challenges and grow

both professionally and as a person. However, Netlight sets unique demands on individuals at the same time. In Netlight's self-organizing environment, individuals have a high responsibility for both their work and their well-being.

The theoretical framework of the thesis is divided into three parts (chapters 2, 3, and 4). The first part (chapter 2) deals with the concept of self-organization. The second part (chapter 3) examines the impact of self-organization on individual well-being. The third part (chapter 4) focuses on theories and practices for sustainable high-performance. Although the individual's well-being is influenced by many other factors besides the individual's own activity, such as leadership and culture of the organization, policies, processes, and the personal support network, this thesis focuses specifically on the individual level.

The study aims to explore the case company, Netlight, as a working environment in the context of individual well-being and high-performance and to identify themes that would benefit from a more in-depth examination. Chapter 5 presents the study methods and describes the implementation of the study. The study results are presented in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 highlights the most significant findings of the study. The chapter closes with recommendations to Netlight and evaluation of the thesis process.

2   Revolution of self-organization

Three waves of industrial revolutions have influenced modern society, and each wave has challenged prevailing leadership models. The first wave in the late 18th century brought people from rural areas to industrial villages. During the second wave in the late 19th century, Frederick Winslow Taylor, Henry Ford, and other pioneers developed the mass production logic. The third and current wave, referred to as digitalization, emerged in the 1980s alongside the Internet. (Auvinen, Riivari & Sajasalo 2018, 95; Martela & Jarenko 2017, 24.)

Taylor's theory of so-called scientific management represents a *bureaucratic* way of organizing. The bureaucracy is characterized by a strict hierarchy, rational top-down management, and strictly defined roles. In the 19th century, large organizations were a new phenomenon, and bureaucracy was a solution to the problem of controlling thousands of employees. Taylor's approach focused on optimizing the productivity of an individual. As stated by Taylor, "The work of every workman is fully planned out by the management at least one day in advance, and each man receives in most cases written instructions, describing in detail the task which he is to accomplish, as well as the means to be used in doing the work." (Cable 2018, 32–33; Grebow & Gill 2018; Martela & Kostamo 2018, 54.)

Lewis (2016, 2–8) argues that management theories, such as Taylor's scientific management, are not timeless, but products of their time and context. For example, many theories applied still today were developed in the 1940s and 1950s, and most of the theorists were European males, who had left Europe under the threat of Nazis during the war in the 1940s. After the war, some of them devoted the rest of their lives trying to understand how so many people were capable of such inhumane behavior, and how to prevent it from happening again. Many of the theories created during the time are built on the idea of predictability and controllability.

Strictly hierarchical management models don't work well in a knowledge-oriented economy in the 21st century. The knowledge-intensive work today is characterized by

unpredictability and unclarity, and it requires new skills from individuals such as creativity, learning, and problem-solving. (Eskola 2018, 3–8.) Bureaucracy is based on the belief that the top management has the appropriate expertise to run the organization. However, in a modern expert organization, anyone can be an expert in their own area. (Martela & Kostamo 2018, 56.) Grebow and Gill (2018 differentiate two types of companies. "Managing hands" companies meet the needs of the industrial economy during the 19th and 20th century and "Managing minds" companies serve the needs of the knowledge economy of the 21st century.

According to Holbeche (2012), in a fast-moving, complex, and unpredictable context, organizations need to reform, instead of reproducing success patterns of the past. The complexity theory, a product of the 20th century, offers a novel way to look at organizations. It studies how in different systems patterns emerge through the interaction of many agents, which makes the whole greater than the sum of its parts. Like living organizms, organizations need to adapt to their changing environment continuously, work in sustainable ways, and recognize the symbiotic relationship between the ability to thrive (business success), the health of the organizm (culture), and how constituent parts (employees) are nourished. (Eskola 2018, 4; Holbeche 2012.)

Self-organization has emerged as an alternative organizational structure. A few key qualities define self-organizing companies. First, the hierarchy is kept to a minimum. Instead of clear chains of commands, people are given autonomy and assumed to take responsibility. Second, individuals have considerable freedom the make decisions independently. Third, the knowledge of the whole organization is used to lead the company. As supervising is minimized, self-organization requires the employees to "lead themselves" – to be self-determined. Self-determination refers to a person's ability to act independently without a need for external control. To be self-determined, a person must be motivated, have a goal, and possess the necessary skills, both technical skills, and self-management skills. (Martela & Jarenko 2017,12–13; Martela & Kostamo 2018, 53, 58, 61.)

Martela and Kostamo (2018, 67) believe that it is time for the revolution of self-organization. People are active and self-determined by nature and thrive in organizations where they can fully express themselves and use their talents to achieve common goals. Martela and Jarenko (2017, 24.) name three reasons why self-organization is breaking through in work-life. Firstly, the speed of change in the global, highly networked, knowledge-intensive environment is faster than ever before. Secondly, the nature of work tasks is going through the most significant change since the industrial revolution of the 19th century. The third reason is the recent technological innovations that have made it possible to lead larger groups of people without managers.

Evolutionary Teal is a world-view introduced by Frederic Laloux in his book 'Reinventing Organizations'. According to Laloux (2014, 14–15), humanity has evolved by sudden transformations to a new stage of consciousness – and each stage also impacted people's ability to co-operate and produced a new organizational model. According to the theory, organizations are the expression of the current world-view, the current stage of consciousness. There are corresponding organizational models for each major stage of human consciousness; Infrared, Magenta, Red, Amber, Orange, Green, and Teal.

Infrared and Magenta represent the early development stages of humanity when organizations didn't yet exist. *Red organizations* are built on the continuous exercise of power in interpersonal relationships. Red organizations are like street gangs with a chief demonstrating overwhelming power and surrounding himself with loyal followers. *Amber organizations* strive for order and predictability and are run like armies with rigid hierarchy, formal processes, and obedient followers. The hierarchy in *orange organizations* is less rigid in order to encourage innovation. The top management sets the goals and doesn't generally care how they are met. Orange organizations invented strategic planning, key performance indicators, balanced scorecards, performance appraisals, and bonus schemes. *Green organizations* strive for equal power and consensus and empower frontline workers in decision-making and guide people through shared values. Green organizations emphasize the importance of the company culture and believe that businesses have a responsibility not only to investors, but also to management,

employees, customers, suppliers, local communities, society, and the environment. (Laloux 2014, 15–32.)

The founders of *Teal organizations* often describe their organizations using metaphors such as a living organizm – inspired by the life itself with all its complexity and unpredictability, with no need for central command and control. The three breakthroughs for pioneer Teal organizations are self-management, wholeness, and evolutionary purpose. *Self-management* is based on peer relationships without the need for hierarchy or consensus. Teal organizations don't have organizational charts, job descriptions, or job titles. The hierarchy is spontaneously formed by recognition, influence, and skill. Anyone can take leadership by bringing about important decisions or initiatives, holding colleagues accountable and helping to resolve conflicts. *Wholeness* means bringing the whole self to work – not only the narrow "professional" self (Laloux 2014, 56–93). Traditionally, the organizations set behavioral expectations on people. People are expected to wear a professional mask, which often means showing determination and strength and hiding doubts and vulnerability. Teal organizations are fostering wholeness by striving self-management, inviting humanity to work, creating safe and open work environments with opportunities for reflection, and sharing stories. (Laloux 2014, 144–159.) Instead of predicting and controlling, the goal is to build an understanding of the *evolutionary purpose* the organization wants to serve (Laloux 2014, 56). Instead of a strategy process, Teal organizations have a clear sense of the organization's purpose. The strategy happens organically. (Laloux 2014, 207.)

3 Self-organization and well-being

Self-organization fosters individual well-being, as it is built around the intrinsic motivation of individuals. On the other hand, self-control, independent decision-making, and flexible working hours are both empowering and burdensome, as many people feel a need for structures in their lives. (Martela & Jarenko 2017, 318.) This chapter examines the impact of self-organization on individual well-being.

3.1 Self-organization and human flourishing

Philosophers and researchers define well-being in a variety of ways. However, the primary division is between the hedonic perspective of well-being as pleasant emotions and evaluations, and the eudaimonic perspective that suggests that well-being involves self-actualizing, meaningful, and growth-producing behavior. Well-being research has mostly focused on the hedonistic view. A third distinct aspect of well-being, social well-being, complements hedonic, and eudaimonic aspects. Individuals need stable relationships that involve giving and receiving care. (Chen & Cooper 2014; Nokelainen 2015.) According to *the "life satisfaction" theory*, well-being arises when reality meets the expectations of an individual. Life satisfaction has been used as a measure of happiness, especially in economics and in comparisons between different countries. *Subjective well-being* is currently considered to be the best measure of society's success. Subjective well-being consists of positive and negative feelings and life satisfaction. (Martela 2014, 40–44.) Martin *Seligman's "well-being theory"*, a five-element construct, combines hedonic, eudaimonic and social aspects of well-being. According to Seligman, well-being is a concept similar to, for example, freedom. It is not measurable itself, but many elements, such as citizens' sense of freedom, the level of press censorship and the regularity of elections, are related to it. The five elements of well-being theory – referred to as PERMA (Figure 1) - are *positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment*. The combination of these elements leads to human flourishing. (Seligman 2012, 11–15.)
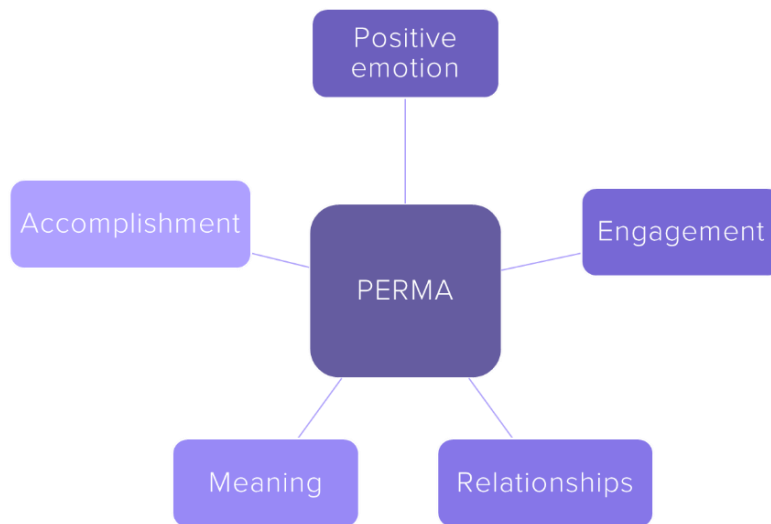
Figure 1. Martin Seligman's well-being theory (Adapted from Seligman 2012, 16–20)

Positive emotions bring satisfaction to life. Engagement is related to the flow experience described later in this chapter. Meaning is about serving something with a higher purpose. People who accomplish much in their lives often focus on what they do (engagement), enjoy what they do (positive emotion), and often succeed when they feel they have served a higher purpose (meaning). Finally, positive emotions usually occur in the presence of other people in relationships. (Seligman 2012, 16–20.)

Since the Industrial Revolution of the 19th century, the way most of the organizations motivate their people has been inspired by Taylor's scientific management. For the machine to work, employees must be controlled by prizes and punishments. (Pink 2009, 19–20.) According to Laloux (2012, 123), in self-organizing companies, on the contrary, performance is not managed by keeping the pressure on employees by targets given by top-management. Instead, people perform well when they have a meaningful purpose, decision-making power, and enough resources. Martela & Kostamo (2018, 53.) stress that successful self-organization requires an understanding of how to stimulate intrinsic motivation. While bureaucracy is based on the belief that employees are passive and need extrinsic motivators, a fundamental assumption of self-organization is a belief of the self-determination of employees.

Self-determination theory (SDT), developed by Deci and Ryan, suggests that intrinsic motivation is related to happiness. Motivation can be either extrinsic or intrinsic. Rewards and punishments drive an externally motivated person. Examples of extrinsic motivating factors are survival, money, and reputation. Intrinsic motivation, on the contrary, arises from within the person. Intrinsic motivation involves engaging in an activity for its own sake and not being dependent on extrinsic rewards or punishments. An internally motivated person actively seeks meaningful activities. A typical example of intrinsic motivation is a children's play. (Martela 2014, 44–46 & Martela & Jarenko 2014, 14.)

According to the self-determination theory, people have three basic psychological needs, Autonomy, Competence, and Relatedness, which are vital elements of intrinsic motivation. Autonomy refers to a person's experience of being free to make decisions about himself. In autonomy, a person does not work as a result of external guidance, but he feels able to express himself. Competence refers to a person's experience of being able to perform the tasks assigned to him well. Relatedness is the human feeling of being cared for and caring for other people. (Martela 2014, 48–50.) At best, the basic needs form a positive cycle, in which all parts are mutually supportive. Increasing autonomy creates new experiences, which challenges a person and ultimately increases competence. With the growth of know-how, the person contributes more in the community, and the community is willing to enhance the autonomy further. (Martela & Jarenko 2014, 29–31.) Studies show that people with intrinsic motivation show more interest, enthusiasm, creativeness, and self-confidence in their tasks when compared to externally motivated people. They also perform better, and their subjective well-being is higher. (Carr 2004, 47.)

Intrinsic motivation is often associated with Flow experience. The concept of "Flow" is originated from studies by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, one of the most famous researchers of happiness in the world. He first explored artists and scientists intending to understand what made them sacrifice their entire lives for something important to them without any expectation of reputation or wealth. His research led to the conclusion that when one is in a completely engaging process of creation, one can no longer pay attention to the feelings of the body, such as hunger and fatigue, and gradually the consciousness of the body and

identity is lost. This is because it is not possible at the same time to do something that requires concentration and feel existing. In his research, many people described this experience spontaneously as a flow, which is why Csikszentmihalyi named it as "Flow experience". (Csikszentmihalyi 02/2004.)

According to Csikszentmihalyi (02/2004), seven universal conditions are present in the flow experience; a complete focus on the task in hand, a sense of ecstasy, great inner clarity, trusting in one's skills, a sense of serenity, timelessness and intrinsic motivation. The Flow experience tends to occur when the task is challenging and internally motivating. Flow experiences are most common in organizations where work tasks match the skill level of the employee, and when the work is connected to the employee's own goals. In the flow experience, the task is not too boring and repetitive, nor too challenging and stressful. Individuals tend to perform well when experiencing flow. (Carr 2004, 61; Holbeche 2012.) According to Goleman (2013, 22), people are rarely in flow in everyday life. Only 20 percent of people experience flow moments more than once a day, and around 15 percent of people never experience flow during a regular day.

3.2 Stress overwhelm – 21st century epidemic

Simply put, stress is a natural physical reaction to a perceived threat. Stress prepares the body for fight or flight by releasing hormones that cause blood pressure to go up, heartbeat faster, and lungs take in more air. (Singh 2015, 103.) Stress is impossible to prevent because it's related to the human's autonomic nervous system. When the fight-or-flight state becomes activated, the autonomic nervous system directs all available energy to the threat. Short-term stress is beneficial, as it has a positive influence on strength, short-term memory, and immune functioning. However, repeating stress causes strain on the body and the brain. In today's ever-changing, complex, and fast-paced working life, one may live in a state of constant anxiety. (Juuti & Salmi 2014, 52–53; Hanna 2014, 36–37.)

Stress can be divided into four main types according to their intensity and physical and emotional impact. *Hypostress* is insufficiently low stress, *eustress* is sufficient and adaptable stress, *hyperstress* is high, but recoverable stress and *distress* is excessive and

unadaptable stress. Ideally, a person experiences eustress and hyperstress, and sometimes also hypostress. Eustress is also experienced in the flow experience (see subchapter 3.1.). (Sovijärvi, Arina & Halmetoja 2018, 20, 27.)

Stress, or positive anxiety, enables action. On the other hand, too high stress level hinders performance (Figure 2). Each activity, and every individual, has an optimal stress level for high-performance. (Sydänmaanlakka 2017, 120.) Peak performance in any competitive endeavor occurs when there is a proper amount of meaningful, focused stimulation to energize efforts. However, getting pulled into stressful situations without necessary recovery leads to burnout – a state of physical, emotional or mental exhaustion (Hanna 2014, 33–34; Hansen 2018, 199.) Stress is like a rubber band; one can cope with environmental demands, stretch according to situations. However, if the rubber band is stretched too far, it breaks. (Kumar & Rajamohan 2008.) On the other hand, lack of stimulation would be stressful as well. Research shows that it's dangerous to suddenly move away from the hectic environment and stop being always "on", which is why the risk of death is elevated within the first six months of retirement. To grow without breaking down, the stress and recovery need to be balanced. (Hanna 2014, 33.)
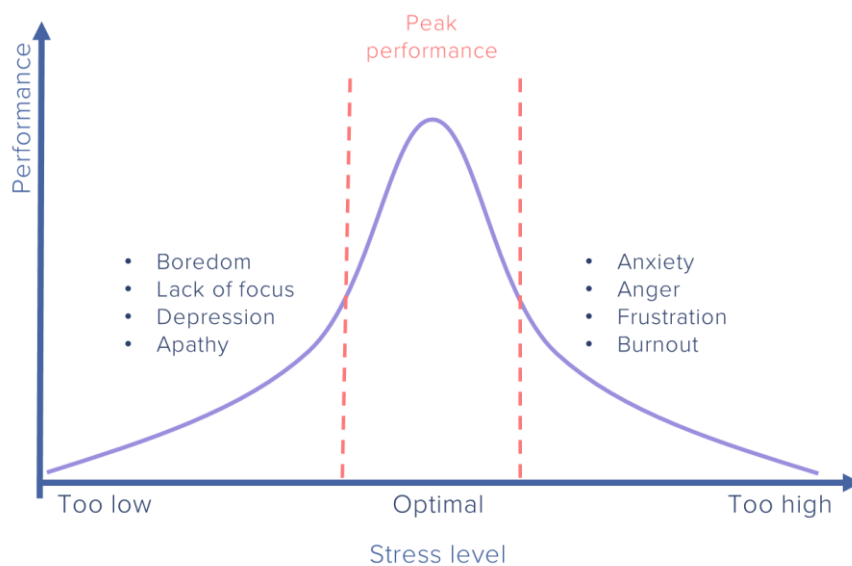

Figure 2. The optimal stress level for peak performance (Adapted from Sovijärvi, Arina & Halmetoja 2018, 21)

When strain and recovery are not in balance, the body responds with stress. The more activity, the more recovery is needed. Overwhelming amount of work doesn't lead to collapse if it's combined with an adequate amount of rest. When time is limited, it's tempting to take time out from activities related to recovery, such as sleep, hobbies, and spending time with friends and family. (Perski & Rose, 2010, 104–105.) There are many early symptoms of prolonged unhealthy stress level, the most common of which are irritability, mood swings, restlessness, anxiety, sleeping problems, body overactivity, headache, muscle pain or muscle fatigue, memory disorders, difficulty concentrating, decision-making difficulties, slowed reflexes, frustration and lack of motivation. (Sovijärvi, Arina & Halmetoja 2018, 24; Perski & Rose 2010, 106.)

According to Hanna (2014, 31), stress can be as addictive as drugs. Stress releases dopamine - a "feel good" chemical, which encourages repeat behaviors by activating the reward center in the brain. Stress and drugs also have similar side effects, such as increased heart rate, blood pressure, increased blood sugar, migraines, skin problems, breakdown of muscle tissue, decreased digestive functioning, premature aging, loss of brain cells, social isolation and loneliness, anxiety, panic attacks, depression, relationship problems, lack of focus, and disengagement.

Stressor, a term developed by a stress researcher Hans Selye, means a factor that triggers stress. Stressors can be individual or collective as well as internal or external (Figure 3). Individual internal stressors deal with individual conscious experiences, such as negative thinking patterns and self-talk. External individual stressors include all physical strain factors, including musculoskeletal tension, inflammatory condition, and physical traumas. Collective internal stressors include social factors such as the death of a family member or a divorce. Collective external stressors include environmental phenomena such as noise and light pollution and natural disasters. (Sovijärvi, Arina & Halmetoja 2018, 18–19.)
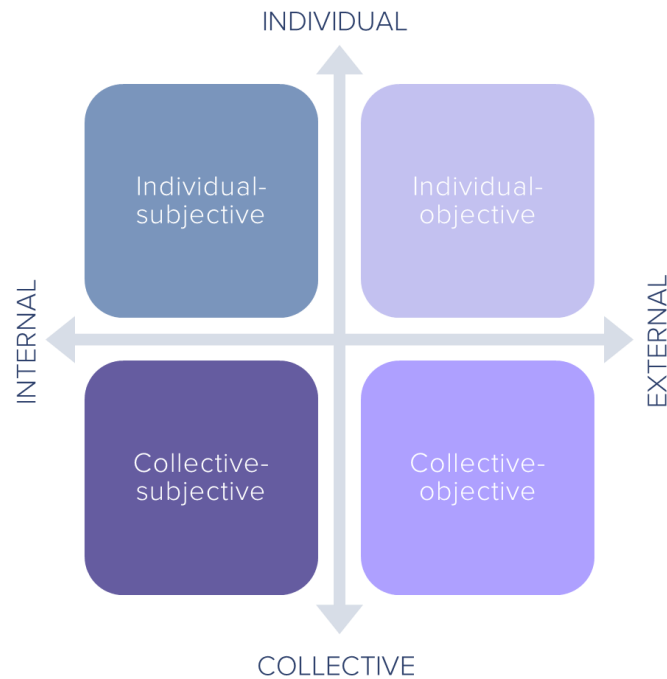
Figure 3. Sources of stressors. (Adapted from Sovijärvi, Arina & Halmetoja 2018, 18.)

There are a variety of stressors with different levels of severity and frequency at work, of which some are inherent in the work, and some may not be easily eliminated or isolated. At the individual level, stressors are often related to job demands, role conflict, role ambiguity, and workload. Organizational stressors are related to leadership, lack of cohesiveness, intragroup conflict, culture, structure, technology, and change. (Chen & Cooper 2014; Elvin & Strycharczyk, 2014.) However, what stresses one person may enable someone else. Depending on the individual, stress can mean a variety of things, from a small hurry to mental fatigue and even physical illness. (Elvin & Strycharczyk 2014; Hanna 2014, 33–34.)

Organizations are not immune from exposure to psychological hazards; however, there are venues for organizations and individuals to sustain healthy organizations in which individuals utilize their talents to achieve both high-performance and happiness. (Chen & Cooper 2014.) According to Hanna (2014, 32–33), the stress is not the problem, but accepting stress without recovery. Instead, the focus should be on prioritizing optimal recovery on a holistic level, including both the body and the mind.

4 Self-organization and sustainable high-performance

Although stress cannot be avoided, it's possible to build workplaces in which people can be high-performers as well as pursue happiness (Chen & Cooper 2014, 4). Self-organization is built around the assumption that individuals have an intrinsic motivation to perform well. For self-organization to work, individuals must be able to lead themselves and manage their thoughts and emotions. (David & Congleton 2013, 122; Martela & Kostamo 2018, 61.) This chapter examines how individuals can pursue a balance between high-performance and individual well-being.

4.1 Brain at knowledge work

More people than ever are knowledge workers, paid to think. While knowledge work is connected to intrinsic motivation, it is still a burden to the human brain. A growing number of people feel overwhelmed due to a massive volume of work, and because of the biological limits of the brain, the increasing workload can be challenging to handle. However, by understanding one's limitations, it's possible to improve performance in knowledge work. (Eskola 2018, 7; Rock 2009, 1–4.)

The brain of a modern knowledge worker is the brain of a hunter-gatherer – optimized for responding to threats quickly, adapting to new environments and being socially flexible. (Huotilainen & Saarikivi 2018.) Knowledge work is all about processing and understanding information, making decisions, and solving problems. These conscious mental activities rely heavily on the prefrontal cortex, the outer covering of the brain behind the forehead. Without the prefrontal cortex, one wouldn't be able to set goals, plan, solve problems, or think creatively. (Rock 2009, 5–6.) With all its benefits, the prefrontal cortex has weaknesses as well. Firstly, using it is very energy-consuming. Secondly, the prefrontal cortex has a limited ability to hold different information.

The five mental activities of the prefrontal cortex, understanding, deciding, recalling, memorizing, and inhibiting, consume metabolic fuel, such as glucose and oxygen. Prioritizing is one of the brain's most energy-hungry activities because it involves imagining and moving around new concepts, and it involves all the mental activities at

once. Some tasks are less energy-consuming because they rely more on the basal ganglia, which is an energy-efficient region of the brain that drives routine activities beneath conscious awareness. For example, a truck driver driving on a familiar route all day and night, only limited by his need for sleep. (Rock 2009, 8–13.)

As the prefrontal cortex's ability to hold different information is limited, too much load leads to mistakes and puzzlement. Due to this limitation, the less information held in mind at once the better. According to a research by Nelson Cowan in 2001, the maximum number of items a person can hold in mind is four, depending on the complexity of the items. For example, memorizing four numbers is relatively easy, but four long words or even sentences are much more challenging to hold in mind. The ideal number seems to be just one item – or two items when making decisions. An entire field of study, called relational complexity, explores the decision making between items. The studies show that the fewer variables are held in mind, the more effective the decision-making is. (Rock 2009, 20–24.)

People often believe they are good at multitasking. However, it's not possible to focus close attention on more than one task at the same time. One can work on multiple tasks side by side, but the attention needs to be switched between tasks. For example, it is possible to participate in a conference call and write emails at the same time, but because of a lack of close attention, long-term memories may not form, and important information may be missed. (Rock 2009, 38.) According to Hanna (2014, 63–64), the brain is designed to multitask only in a life-threatening situation where attention should be paid to several targets. In the short-term, this is beneficial, but in the long run, dangerous. Also, studies show that multitasking can reduce productivity by up to 40%. Hansen (2018, 22) calls this a complexity trap. Toggling between different tasks requires mental exertion and consequentially reduces productivity. Adding more tasks increases complexity and hinders performance.

Reducing the mental load and using visuals can help to reduce the energy required for processing information. It's helpful to reduce the load on the prefrontal cortex whenever possible. The load can be reduced simply by writing ideas down instead of using mental energy to hold them in mind. It's also helpful to schedule the tasks according to their

mental energy needs. The most attention-rich tasks should be performed when the most alert, while routine tasks can be performed when less alert. The working day can also be divided into blocks of time, based on the type of thinking. Visuals are highly information-efficient constructs; one image in mind can hold a vast amount of information. Picturing a concept activates the visual cortex of the brain. The visual cortex can be activated by actual pictures, metaphors or storytelling, for example. The visual processes are also very efficient, especially in comparison to the language. (Rock 2009, 14–16.)

Simplifying and chunking can help to tackle the challenge of having too much information on the prefrontal cortex. *Simplifying* is using a less defined representation of a concept in the creative process. Simplifying frees resources for reorganizing the concept or changing elements in it. For example, graphic designers simplify concepts in their work. They simplify the design idea into its core elements, into a sketch. After receiving feedback, they can easily implement any changes, and no resources are wasted for changing a complicated design. Successful business executives use simplifying to make complex decisions. *Chunking* is about grouping information into chunks. Chunking allows interacting with complex concepts, anything from a game of chess to personal life changes. Chunking helps to memorize information, which is why phone numbers are often grouped into pairs of numbers, e.g., 72 38 11 56 49. (Rock 2009, 25–27.)

The ability to focus or disengage is vital for well-being, and it relies on the prefrontal cortex. Focusing is boosting the strength of the chosen incoming stimuli and damping down the rest. The focus requires tuning out emotional distractions. The inability to change focus, on the contrary, may lead to chronic anxiety, and at clinical extremes even to depression, anxiety disorders, or obsessive-compulsive disorder. Full focus, on the contrary, gives a potential doorway to flow experience (see subchapter 3.1.) (Goleman 2013, 15, 23.) The hunter-gatherer's brain is optimized to continuously and accurately analyze surroundings. The analysis takes place mainly outside consciousness, and only important events draw conscious attention on the subject. As a result, unexpected sounds and passing people can interfere with focus. (Huotilainen & Saarikivi 2018.) Distractions can be either sensory or emotional. Sensory distractions are the incoming stimuli from surrounding sounds, tastes, and smells, for example. Emotional distractions, on the other

hand, are emotionally loaded signals. For example, one might find it easy to focus in a crowded coffee shop, but if one should overhear one's name, it's almost impossible to stay focused on the task. Emotional turmoil such as a crisis in relationships is perhaps the biggest challenge. (Goleman 2013, 14.) Mindfulness gives a higher level of choice in focus. Mindfulness helps to break the stream of thoughts and foster a here-and-now presence for the task at hand or the conversation. (Goleman 2013, 202.) Subchapter 4.4. deals with mindfulness in more detail. Focused attention gets fatigued like a muscle, and mental fatigue may manifest as inefficiency, distractedness, and irritability, for example. Attention is like a muscle that requires rest – such as a relaxing break in a restful environment. Quiet time restores the focus. According to Stephen Kaplan's "attention restoration theory", the most restful surroundings are in nature. (Goleman 2013, 56–57.)

According to Seppälä (2016), there is a common misconception that in order to be successful one has to sacrifice or at least post-pone happiness and that there is no success without hard work including stress and suffering. According to Morten Hansen (2018, 3–11), the prevailing "work hard" paradigm suggests that maximizing individual effort by doing more, working harder, leads to success. To some extent, this is true but eventually working harder leads to unhealthy stress levels, even to burnout. Hansen took an alternative approach and explored whether specific work practices account for success. In 2011, Hansen undertook a comprehensive research project focusing on identifying behaviors that are connected to high performance. The research group created a framework of "work smart" factors, based on over 200 academic studies,120 in-depth interviews of professionals, and a 300-person survey pilot. Finally, the framework was tested with a survey study of 5000 managers and employees who represented 15 industries and 22 job functions. As a result, seven "work smart" practices were identified (Figure 4), and Hansen arrived at the following definition of working smart: "To work smart means to maximize the value of your work by selecting a few activities and applying intense targeted effort".

Figure 4. Seven "work smart" practices (Adapted from Hansen 2018)

It's commonly believed that performance improves by taking on more tasks. However, adding more tasks increases complexity, which is a mental strain. Furthermore, having too many tasks can lead to a lack of time to perform well in any of them. "Do less, then obsess" is the most powerful among the seven practices. It simply means focusing on a few selected tasks and obsessing over them. (Hansen 2018, 18–22.)

According to the "work hard" paradigm, the more hours put to work, the better the performance. (Hansen 2018, 62.) Working longer hours does improve performance to a certain point, but in the long run, it's more effective to change the way of working, to redesign. The redesign is about adding value, not working hours. The work creates value when the work benefits others greatly, and when it's performed efficiently and with high-quality. As Hansen encourages: "Don't just see yourself as an employee – see yourself as an innovator of work. Hunt and cure pain points, ask stupid questions, and zoom in on how you can redesign and create value for others". (Hansen 2018, 46–52.)

Effective learning isn't putting a lot of time in it; it's about how the learning is done. "The Learning loop" is a behavioral learning model for everyday work. Simply, it's about trying a

new approach, measuring the outcome, gathering feedback, improving, and trying again (Figure 5). (Hansen 2018, 70.)
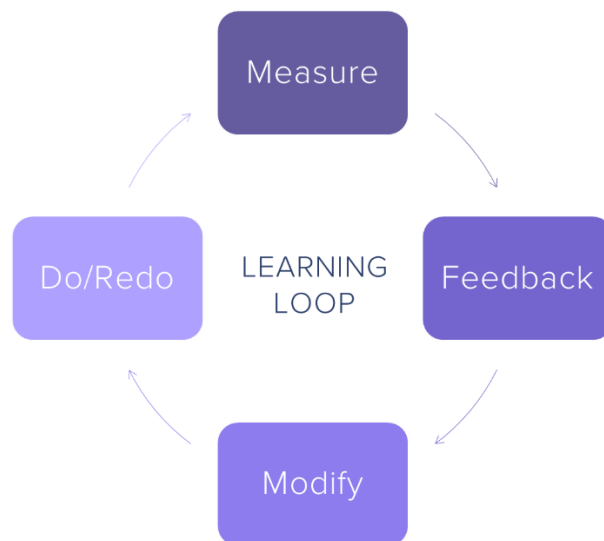
Figure 5. The Learning Loop. (Adapted from Hansen 2018)

P-Squared is about matching passion with purpose. Being passionate is not enough to perform well; it needs to be combined with a sense of purpose, which comes from contributing to something meaningful. P-Squared brings a higher level of intensity and focused energy into work which leads to better performance. (Hansen 2018, 90–94.)

Often getting the job done depends on the support and contribution of others. In flatter organizations, people need to work in teams and interact across teams. In complex and interconnected environments, communication and collaboration skills are critical drivers of success. Forceful champions gain support from others by inspiring them by appealing to both their emotions and rational mind, and by having "smart grit" to overcome resistance. Smart grit involves learning about the perspectives of others and finding a way to neutralize the opposition. (Hansen 2018, 120–131.)

"Fight and Unite" brings a new perspective to meetings. As teamwork often happens in meetings, the individual performance depends on the quality of the meetings. Because of the "work hard" mentality, poor meetings often lead to more meetings. Hansen found two

winning meeting principles in his study; fighting and uniting. Fighting is about letting participants debate and challenge each other in a safe environment. Uniting is about fostering unity and committing to the decision together. Fight and Unite -approach leads to smarter meetings and better performance. (Hansen 2018, 143–148.)

Disciplined collaboration is choosing smartly when to collaborate with others and when not to. According to the "work smart" approach, over-collaboration is as bad as under-collaboration. High-performers consider carefully when to collaborate with others, and when they do, they commit fully. (Hansen 2018, 189–190.)

Hansen's study showed that the above practices predict better work-life balance, higher job satisfaction, and less burnout (Hansen 2018, 10). Especially practices "do less, then obsess" and "disciplined collaboration" improve work-life balance. Narrowing scope and the help received from others by collaboration free time for personal commitments outside work. (Hansen 2018, 197.)

4.2   Emotional agility

Emotions – love, happiness, affection, elation, fear, hate, shame, disgust, surprise, sadness, anger – are present in day-to-day life. Psychologists have not yet agreed on the complete definition of "emotion". However, it's generally accepted that emotion is a state of excitement marked by strong feelings, and involving physical changes such as pounding heart, flushed face and sweaty palms. (Singh 2015, 1, 12.) While words emotion and feeling are often used interchangeably, psychologists distinguish between them. Feelings emerge from a human's motivational system – succeeding emerges positive feelings and failing negative. Emotions are an interpretation of these feelings. Feelings are translated into emotions by using surrounding information. Simply put, emotions help understand feelings. (Markman 2018, 191–192.) Huotilainen & Saarikivi (2018) stress that emotions focus attention on relevant and meaningful issues. According to the latest brain research, emotions affect thinking and should not be turned off.

For long, IQ – reflected on academic achievements or IQ test scores – has been considered the most important success factor in working life. Emotional Intelligence (EI) is

the ability to recognize one's feelings, and those of others, to motivate oneself, and to manage emotions in oneself and one's relationships. As Aristotle once said: "Anyone can be angry – that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way – that is not easy." (Singh 2015, 34, 1.)

While emotional intelligence is a relatively new concept, the skills related EI have been around since the early stages of humanity. During hunter-gatherer societies getting along with others was crucial to survival. Emotions served as a signaling system, and the ability to interpret emotions led to human survival. (Stein 2017, 28–29.) According to Singh (2015, 29–30.) high emotional intelligence is connected to long-term happiness. Daniel Goleman divides EI into five competencies; self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skill (Figure 6).
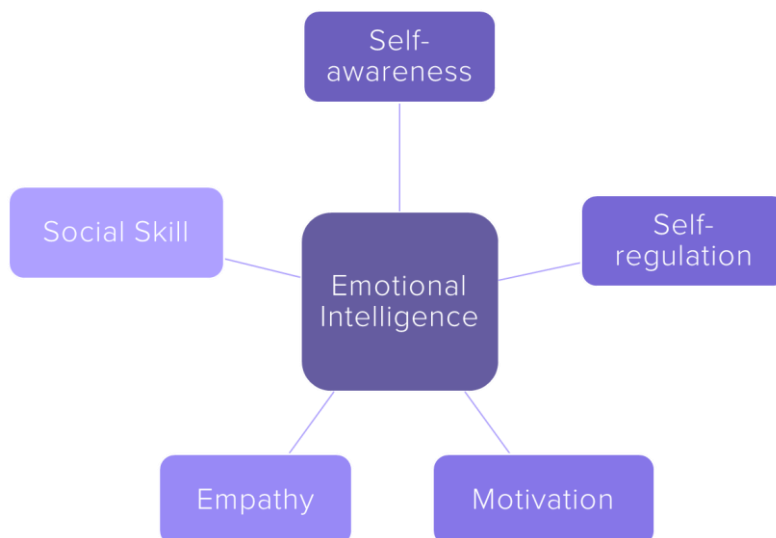
Figure 6. Daniel Goleman's approach to emotional intelligence (Adapted from Goleman, McKee & Achor 2018, 170)

Self-awareness is about knowing one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, drives, values, and goals – and their impact on others. *Self-regulation* is about controlling our redirecting disruptive emotions and impulses. *Motivation* is about being driven to achieve for the sake

of achievement. *Empathy* is about considering others' feelings, especially when making decisions. *Social skill* is about managing relationships to move in desired directions. (Goleman, McKee & Achor 2018, 170.)

According to Singh (2015, 35–37), EI constitutes three psychological dimensions; *emotional competency*, *emotional maturity*, and *emotional sensitivity*. *Emotional competency* is the ability to tackle emotional upset and avoid emotional exhaustion such as burnout. It's also about finding ways to deal with negative emotions and channelize them. It includes self-esteem, which gives a person realistic confidence to perceive opportunities. Emotional competence is also about avoiding egoism and taking responsibility for interpersonal relationships.

Emotional maturity is about developing others, delaying gratification, adaptability, and flexibility, and countering the inferiority complex. An emotionally mature person encourages others and recognizes and appreciates others' contributions and opinions. Delaying gratification is about not allowing emotions to get the upper hand. Emotional maturity is also about knowing when to take the lead and when to follow. A high emotional maturity helps to overcome the inferiority complex that can arise from issues such as physical characteristics, religion, gender, and education. (Singh 2015, 37–38.)

Emotional sensitivity is about self-awareness, knowing the threshold of emotions, empathy, and the infectiousness of emotions. Self-awareness is about recognizing and interpreting one's emotions. Knowing the threshold of emotions means understanding what is triggering one's emotions, what is the feeling behind a specific emotion. Being emotionally sensitive also includes empathy, the ability to sense how others feel and accept others' feelings without getting carried away by personal emotions. Emotional sensitivity also includes the ability to communicate positive emotions verbally and non-verbally because emotions are infectious. (Singh 2015, 38–39.)

According to David & Congleton (2013, 122–123), Emotional agility is approaching emotions mindfully and productively, instead of suppressing them. Studies show that

emotional agility can help to alleviate stress and perform better. Developing emotional agility constitutes of the four following steps:

1. Recognizing one's patterns
2. Labeling one's thoughts and emotions
3. Accepting one's emotions
4. Acting on one's values

Recognizing patterns is the first step in developing emotional agility, and it means noticing when thoughts and emotions hook one. When hooked by thoughts and emotions, the mind is too crowded to examine them. *Labeling* is taking a helicopter view of private experiences, considering situations more objectively. For example, "I'm not doing enough at work" becomes "I'm having a thought that I'm not doing enough at work.". The next step is to accept one's emotions, examine the reality of the situation, and show oneself compassion. *Accepting* one's emotions is not about acting on all of them or having a negative attitude but being open and paying attention to them. After unhooking from difficult thoughts and emotions, one can decide to act in a way that aligns with one's *values* – "Emotions can change like the weather, but values can be called on at any time, in any situation". (David & Congleton 2013, 125–128.)

4.3   Authentic self-expression

According to Singh (2015, 74), people are social by nature, and isolation leads to stress and anxiety. There must be trustworthy colleagues at the workplace to whom they can talk to and share their true feelings. According to Laloux (2014, 189), people tend to wear a masculine, rational, and self-centered "mental mask" at work. In the long-term, this leads to alienation from emotions and inability for connection and compassion.

Social situations at work may require playing a role rather than expressing true feelings. This is called emotional labor, a term invented by a sociologist Arlie Hochschild. Emotional labor is the regulation of emotions to meet organizational demands, and it's often associated with occupations that involve a great deal of interaction with strangers and require a person to display positive emotions, such as receptionists, nurses, and teachers.

The purpose of emotional labor is to suppress one's own emotions and give rise to the desired emotions in another person. It requires coordination of mind and emotions. Today, emotional labor is a universal part of most work tasks. (Grandey & Sayre 2019; Hochshield 2012, 20; Martela, Paakkanen & Pessi 2017, 160.) Many organizations, such as Marriott, Disney, and TGI Fridays, have openly requested their employees to imagine themselves as actors while on duty. According to a dramaturgical perspective of emotional labor, there are two types of emotional labor: surface acting and deep acting. Surface acting is a pure pretense of emotions that can lead to job dissatisfaction. Deep acting means that the employee is trying to feel certain emotions, which may lead to an increase in job satisfaction instead. (Mullins & Dossor 2013, 53–54.)

In an experiment performed at Wipro, a group of new hires at the onboarding session were asked to take few minutes to write an answer to a question: "What is unique about you that leads to your happiest times and best performance at work? Reflect on a specific time – perhaps on a job, perhaps at home – when you were acting the way you were 'born to act'." Afterwards, they were asked to share their personal stories with fellow new hires. The exercise is called the "best selves" intervention. Studies show that this individualized approach leads to better performance and retention because it allows individuals to express themselves more authentically. Best-self activation can lead to positive emotions and more productive responses to stress. Sharing "best selves" by personal stories can help organizations without clear-cut hierarchies, such start-ups, to collaborate by reducing ambiguity. (Cable 2018, 54–60, 74.)

Self-expression activates a part of the human brain called the seeking system. The seeking system encourages people to explore the world, learn about the environment, and extract meaning from the circumstances. Following the urges created by the seeking system releases dopamine – a neurotransmitter linked to motivation and pleasure. An active seeking system makes people feel motivated, purposeful, and zestful. Games such as World of Warcraft, with their explorable worlds and open-ended outcomes, feed the seeking system. Interestingly, even though people are born to explore, experiment, and learn, organizations are often not correspondingly designed to take advantage of people's seeking systems. Instead, organizations were purposely designed – especially during the

late 19th century but still today – to suppress these natural impulses. Many organizations are still deactivating the seeking systems of their employees. (Cable 2018 6–7.)

Authentic self-expression requires self-esteem and self-compassion. Self-esteem is an individual's subjective evaluation of their own value. It's about accepting one's needs and emotions and trusting that one is worthy. Over-performing can be a coping mechanism for low self-esteem. Self-compassion positively influences resilience, self-development, life satisfaction, and emotional flexibility, and lack of self-compassion may lead to depression, anxiety, hostility, fear of failure, and burnout. (Ahlvik & Paakkanen 2017, 158–160; Perski & Rose 2010, 44.) Kristin Neff, a pioneering researcher of self-compassion, divides self-compassion into three elements; self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness (Figure 7).
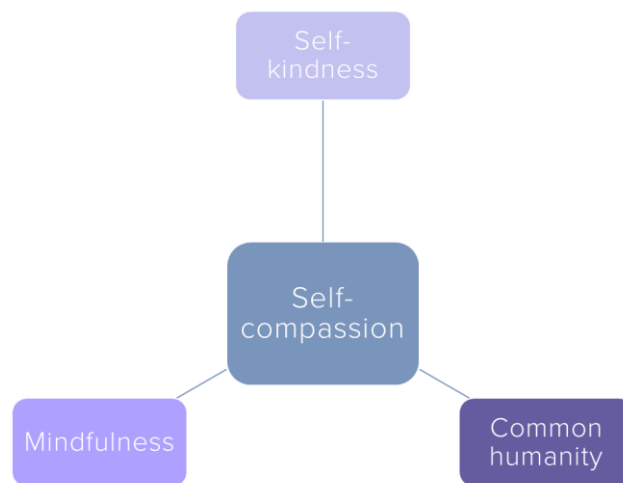
Figure 7. Three elements of self-compassion (Adapted from Paakkanen 2017, 152–153)

Self-kindness Self-kindness is merely being kind, caring, and encouraging towards oneself, instead of criticizing or judging oneself. Self-kindness requires understanding the incompleteness and temporary nature of life and humanity. (Ahlvik & Paakkanen 2017, 152.) Self-kindness can activate the innate caregiving system, which releases oxytocin. Oxytocin is a neurotransmitter and peptide hormone that relieves anxiety and calms the

mind. (Germer 2018, 315; Sovijärvi, Arina & Halmetoja 2018, 33.) Common humanity is about recognizing that vulnerability, inadequacy, and suffering are part of the shared human experience and knowing that one is not alone. Mindfulness is a mindset in which one confronts suffering as it is without exaggerating and undervaluing it. (Ahlvik & Paakkanen 2017, 152–153). Mindfulness helps to stay focused on the task in hand. When failing, it's natural for people to become engulfed in shame, which is disorientating. Mindfulness is the ability to ground oneself in a tricky situation. Subchapter 4.4. deals with mindfulness in more detail. Self-compassion is needed to recover emotionally after setbacks. It's not about not being ambitious or not pushing oneself to succeed. It's about motivating oneself like a good coach without blame and self-criticism. (Germer 2018, 314–318.)

4.4   Resilience and recovery

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from setbacks encountered in all aspects of life (Elvin & Strycharczyk, 2014). Being resilient is about experiencing positive emotions even in stressful situations and coping with difficulties. A resilient person doesn't let the failures define himself but frames them as learning experiences instead. Resilience is not invulnerability but adaptability to changing circumstances. Resilience requires realistic optimism, which is the tendency to focus on the positive sides of events and expect a positive outcome. It's understanding that both good and bad things happen but daring to take the leap of faith anyway; trusting that one can survive challenges ahead. (Bryant & Kazan 2013, 21–23.)

Biologically, the brain-based chemical responses are triggered by an individual's perception of stress – whether it's positive or negative. The response can be quite different, depending on the perception. Therefore, it is possible to deal with stressful situations by restructuring one's perception. (Hanna 2014, 43–44; Stein 2017, 61–62.) According to McConigal (2013), by changing the perception of the stress response, the body's response to stress changes. A study at Harvard University revealed that perceiving the stress response as helpful, instead of something negative, leads to less stress and anxiety. In an ordinary stress response, the heart rate goes up, and blood vessels constrict, which is not healthy in the long-term. The positive view of stress response leads

to a different physical stress response. In the study, when participants viewed the stress response as helpful, the blood vessels stayed relaxed, the physical response resembled a moment of joy or courage.

A stress response has a built-in mechanism for stress resilience. Oxytocin, a stress hormone, primes a person to seek social support during stress. It also increases empathy and helps to notice when others are under stress. Oxytocin is also a natural anti-inflammatory, and it helps the blood vessels stay relaxed during stress and strengthens the heart. Therefore, human connection increases resilience to stress. (McConigal 2013.) In today's complex and changing world, having supportive social relationships is crucial. Being left out of the group is painful. In fact, social isolation and physical pain activate the same parts of the brain. (Sajaniemi & Mäkelä 2014.)

Research has shown that mindfulness helps to alleviate stress. Mindfulness was brought to Western countries by professor Jon Kabat-Zinn. Mindfulness is awareness that arises through paying attention in the present moment, on purpose and non-judgementally. It's a technique for improving mental well-being, and meditation is an essential part of practicing it. (Sovijärvi, Arina, Halmetoja 2018, 66; Lehto 2014, 86.) Mindful breathing – also referred to as meditation – releases stress and tension in both mind and body. Breathing is the only automatic function in the human body that a human has control over. By inhaling, the heart rate increases. By exhaling, it decreases. Inhaling energizes, exhaling relaxes. Mindful breathing is about focusing attention on the physical sensation. New meditators often find it challenging to quiet their minds. Therefore, it may be beneficial to start with short periods, for example, from 3 to 5 minutes, and slowly increase the length of meditation. A focusing tool may help to still the mind. Many traditional meditation practices recommend using mantras for keeping the mind focused at the moment. Mantras can be completely neutral, or positive, inspiring mantras. Counting numbers is a good example of a neutral mantra. Phrases "Just be here now" and "All is well" are good examples of positive mantras. (Hanna 2014; Seppälä 2016.) *Anchoring* is a technique in which the mind is anchored to the present moment by focusing on the body or emotions. Paying attention to one's body is often an easy way into mindfulness. Focusing on the body, the body serves as an anchor in what's happening at the moment. There are many simple

anchoring practices. Simply taking an intentional breath can change the perspective by giving a break from the mind's chatter. Another way to anchor is to pay attention to emotions. By acknowledging negative, unpleasant emotions, they cause less distress. (Weiss 2018, 217–220.)

According to Achor and Gialan (2013, 319–321), resilience is often associated with a militaristic approach to work. It's commonly believed that being successful is about being tough. However, according to research, it is the lack of recovery that is often on the way of resilience. Resilience is not about working hard all the time. Ideally, there are cycles of hard work combined with stops for recovery: the more stress, the more recovery is needed. According to Hanna (2014), a systematic approach to recovery requires focusing on the key internal stressors, an overactive mind, and an overwhelmed body. The overactive mind is often caused by ongoing information overload. Too much physical workload can lead to inflammation, which is the body's natural response to stress. Short-term inflammation is beneficial because it helps to repair the body. Chronic inflammation, on the other hand, causes damage.

First, it is important to get the basics right – sleep, nutrition, and physical activity. According to Foster (2018), sleep is undervalued in society. Sleep is often treated as an enemy, an illness, or a complete waste of time. However, sleep is an extremely important part of human biology. An average person sleeps 36% of his life and spends more time sleeping than working. Although often perceived so, sleep is not an indulgence. Quality sleep reduces stress and improves concentration, decision-making, creativity, and social skills. (Foster 2018; Barnes 2012, 1.) A consolidation of memory, an arrangement and transfer of the memory data, is dependent on high-quality sleep. During sleep, the memory data is transferred from active memory to long-term memory, which is critical for learning. Furthermore, during sleep, the brain processes all strong emotions experienced during the day. High-quality sleep is both sufficiently long and well-structured. Sleep deprivation leads to difficulties in concentration, planning, problem-solving, communication, flexible thinking, and creativity. Sleep disorders have adverse effects on mental health. (Huotilainen & Saarikivi 2018.) Adequate nutrition, stable blood sugar, and hydration are basic requirements for brain health and performance. Still, nutrition is often

neglected in today's hectic work-life. Adequate nutrition provides energy to brain cells. In a survival mode, the brain fuels only the most critical functions such as heartbeat and neglects less critical mental functions, including the prefrontal cortex. (Hanna 2014.) There is a strong connection between the body and the mind. The passivity of the body causes inactivity of the mind. (Huotilainen & Saarikivi 2018.) Physical activity has powerful effects on the brain. Physical exercise is beneficial for the brain, because it affects the brain immediately. Exercise releases neurotransmitters like dopamine, serotonin, and noradrenaline that perk up the mood and improves the ability to focus attention. Also, exercising is changing brain anatomy, as it activates the production of new brain cells. (Suzuki 2017.)

Stopping work is not enough to recover as rest and recovery are not the same things. Building resilience requires both adequate internal and external recovery periods. External recovery refers to leisure time activities during the week, weekends, or vacations. Internal recovery includes shorter periods of relaxation during the workday by taking breaks or changing attention to another task that requires a different kind of resources, for example switching from mental to physical work. (Achor & Gialan 2013, 321–322.). According to research, breaks during the working day helps to maintain performance and protect against the need for a high need for recovery after the end of the working day (Sianoja & Syrek 2017, 4). Recovery can be anything that restores energy; it can be passive like a massage or active like a walk in nature or even cleaning the house. Different people prefer different ways to recover. Building resilience requires strategic relaxing techniques for day-to-day life. (Hanna 2014.)

5　Conducting the study

The study aimed to explore Netlight as a working environment in the context of individual well-being and high-performance and to identify themes that would benefit from a more in-depth examination. The study is based on the theoretical framework of the thesis. I combined qualitative and quantitative approaches to gain broad perspectives and increase the reliability of the study. I decided to use semi-structured interviews and a survey as study methods. I conducted a survey targeted to all employees at Netlight (Appendix 1) and interviewed four senior employees (Appendix 2).

5.1　Interviews

I started the study by interviewing four senior employees of Netlight. The goal of the interviews was to learn about Netlight in the context of high-performance and individual well-being from the senior employee's perspective. An interview is a flexible study method and suitable for a wide range of studies. Its purpose is to perceive the thoughts, emotions, perceptions, and experiences of the interviewee. The interview is best suited for studies where there is little knowledge about the research topic, or the researcher expects diverse answers. The interview has many advantages for both the researcher and the interviewee. Since the interviewer is in direct interaction with the interviewee, it is possible to direct information acquisition during the interview. The interview allows the interviewee to express themselves as freely as possible and the researcher to present clarifying questions. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2009, 34–41.)

A theme interview is a focused, semi-structured interview method designed to focus the discussion on pre-selected themes. The interview focuses on the subjective experiences of the interviewees, and the basic principle is that the interviewees have specific experiences. The researcher has formed a certain understanding of the subject on which the interview structure is based. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2009, 47–48.) I chose a theme interview as a study method because I knew that my subject would raise diverse perspectives. The interview structure (Appendix 2) was purposefully kept very open in order to allow interviewees to express themselves as freely as possible.

I conducted the interviews in June 2019 during weeks 25 and 26. I sent the interview themes to the interviewees in advance. Two of the interviews were held at Netlight's Stockholm office and two of them at Netlight's Helsinki office. The length of the interviews varied from 28 minutes to 57 minutes. I did not deliberately try to equalize the duration of the interviews in order to allow the interviewees to share their perspectives as thoroughly as possible. I asked the interviewees for permission to record interviews, which everyone agreed to. This allowed me to focus on listening and asking questions during the interview. After each interview, I listened to the recording once, after which I transcribed the interview from word to word. Depending on the interview, it took 2 to 4 hours for the transcript. After transcribing the interviews, I analyzed the material. I used coding to extract relevant information related to the interview themes from the transcripts and then divided the relevant information into categories.

5.2 Survey

A second part of the study was a survey that targeted all employees of the organization. (Appendix 1). The survey is a standardized research method. All questions are presented to the target persons in the same way. The benefit of the survey is that it saves time and effort of the researcher. A mindfully designed survey is also easy to analyze. The disadvantage of the survey is that it is difficult to formulate questions in such a way that all respondents understand them in the same way. (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 1997, 193–194.) I chose a survey as a study method because I wanted to guarantee the opportunity to answer anonymously. I also considered a survey to be an efficient way to include as many perspectives as possible in the study.

The survey included 42 items, of which 35 were Likert-scale items, and 7 were open-ended questions. The Likert-scale items were mandatory and open questions voluntary. The Likert-scale items measured different claims with a four-step scale rising 1–4, where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = somewhat agree and 4 = strongly agree. The items did not include the middle answer option "does not agree nor disagree". I ended up with this solution in order to avoid that respondents too easily choose the middle option because of the difficulty of choice. The open-ended questions allowed the respondents to express their thoughts more freely than in Likert-scale items. I created the

survey by using a browser-based Webropol tool and published the survey link in Netlight's internal communication platform Slack. The cover letter contained a description of the thesis topic. I also informed the last response date in the cover letter and an estimate of how much time it takes to participate in the survey. I set a two-week response time for the survey, between 28.6.-11.7.2019. The survey was open for all employees, approximately 1229 in total, and participated by 91 employees, 7,4 % of the target group. I did not try to maximize the number of participants in the survey, as the purpose of the study was not to make reliable generalizations, but to identify themes that deserve further examination.

6 Results

This chapter presents the results of the interviews and the survey. The results are analyzed in chapter 7.

6.1 Interview results

This chapter summarizes the relevant results of the theme interviews. I have striven to respect interviewees' anonymity in the presentation of the results. To guarantee full anonymity, the interviewees are not distinguished at all. The theme interview included four pre-selected themes, listed below:

1. High-performance
2. Well-being in self-organizing companies
3. Sustainable working methods
4. Emotions, authentic self-expression, and vulnerability

6.1.1 High-performance

The purpose of the first interview theme was to explore the interviewees' perceptions of being a high-performer at Netlight. I started each interview by asking the interviewee to describe high-performance at Netlight from their perspective. The main results are summarized in figure 8 and described below.
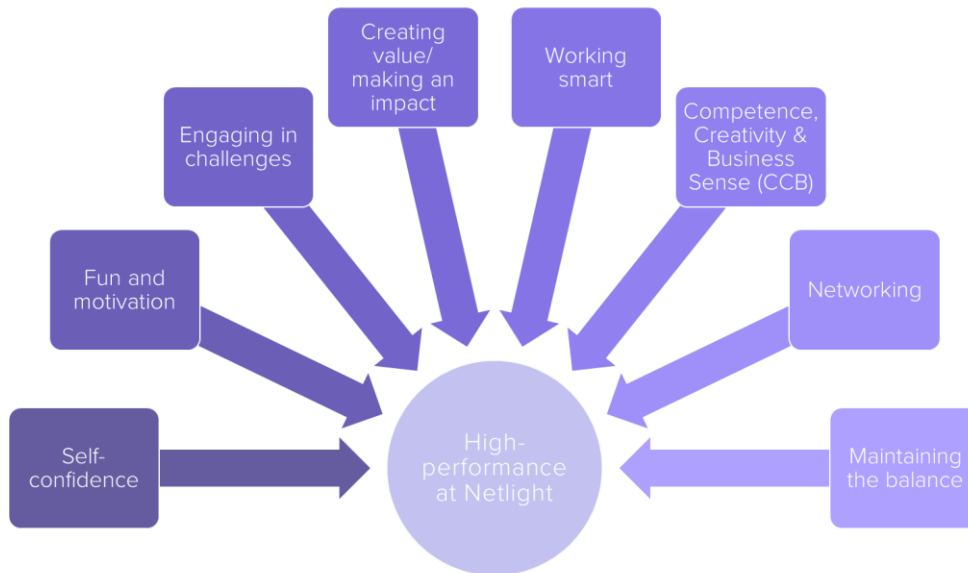
Figure 8. Interviewees' perceptions of being a high-performer at Netlight

Most of the interviewees linked high-performance with *creating value or making an impact*, rather than only producing something concrete, completing tasks, or working at a fast pace. High-performance was described as being good at the "value assessment" of the performance, and it was emphasized that one could create value by helping others to perform, too.

It was raised that high-performance requires *self-confidence*. Self-confidence is needed to evaluate, recognize, and appreciate the value of one's performance. It is also required to assess the patterns of one's performance, and to understand what level of quality is required in each task. Furthermore, self-confidence helps an individual to understand that value can be created in ways other than creating something tangible. For example, a 15-minute discussion with a colleague may well be the most valuable delivery during the working day if it enables the colleague to succeed. Building self-confidence alone is challenging, but possible with the support of others, for example, through mentoring and feedback.

High-performance was connected to *working in a smart way*. However, one of the interviewees noted that working in a smart way may not be a good expression as its opposite would be working stupidly. According to the interviewees, high-performance is about making the right choices, and focusing on the right tasks at the right time. Finding the level of "good enough" in different tasks was also considered important, as was daring to show work to others, even though the quality of the work may not meet one's own standards. A principle of 80% of the outcome is created by 20% of the effort, and an iterative way of quickly producing value was appreciated, too.

According to one of the interviewees, *being motivated and having fun* leads to better performance and results. It is not easy to stay motivated and have fun all the time, as everyone has their ups and downs. However, helping others on this issue is something Netlight's employees are good at.

Interviewees also considered *maintaining a balance* being part of high-performance. One of the interviewees commented that working in a high-performing environment can be exciting and bring happiness, but it can quickly become very demanding and stressful, too. One of the interviewees described the balance by using the Swedish expression of "lagom", not too much and not too little. It was emphasized that at Netlight people care about each other, and do not expect each other to overwork. It was noted that senior consultants often know how to use their time smart to contribute to both client and Netlight sustainably.

High-performance was associated with exceeding expectations by combining Netlight's core qualities - *Competence, Creativity, and Business Sense* - whether it is delivering in client assignments, helping colleagues or anything else. It was emphasized that Netlight's consultants do not only bring their competence to client assignments, but they also bring their motivation and create value by finding out the client's real needs, in a humble way. One of the interviewees emphasized the importance of having an ambitious recruitment process at Netlight in order to be entirely sure that the candidate possesses Netlight's core qualities. In addition to these qualities, the candidate also needs to be identified as "a

Netlighter", which is a set of qualities difficult to describe but generally recognized during the recruitment process, especially by senior employees of Netlight.

The interviews revealed that high-performing employees at Netlight are ambitious and willing to *engage in challenges*. Typically, employees experience challenging and uncomfortable situations, right from the start of their careers. One of the interviewees described that sometimes working at Netlight is like getting on a scary roller coaster one would not initially dare to get on, and afterwards feeling excited and wanting to get on it again. It was noted that being challenged early in the career can be intimidating, especially for junior colleagues. However, being exposed to uncomfortable situations fosters learning and personal growth. In fact, challenging junior colleagues is part of building competence needed to become a high-performer. Moreover, employees are not alone with their challenges but surrounded by helpful colleagues. One of the interviewees emphasized the importance of *networking*. Sometimes it takes time for new employees to understand how Netlight works. Exploring Netlight by networking is the key to understand Netlight and becoming a high-performer. First, the employee should focus on building the network and then being an active member of it.

One of the interviewees pondered that high-performance may not even be a relevant concept to discuss. Instead, individuals should perform in ways that they are satisfied with – while understanding that the level of performance is naturally changing, depending, for example, on the changing energy level. Each individual must find their pattern to view their own performance. Also, it's important to appreciate one's own performance - to be proud of it and comfortable with it. According to the interviewee's own experience, it is the gap between how the individual views his or her performance and how he or she views it meets the expectations of others, which causes stress. An individual may try to manage this by trying to view their performance better, and others' expectations slightly lower.

6.1.2 Self-organization and individual well-being

The purpose of the second interview theme was to explore the interviewees' perceptions of the impact of the self-organizing organizational structure on the well-being of an individual at Netlight. The main results are summarized in figure 9 and described below.

Figure 9. The interviewees' perceptions of the impact of self-organization on individual well-being

The interviews revealed that, at its best, self-organization fosters a growing *sense of belonging* and creating together. It can make the individual feel *engaged* – being not only employed at the company but creating and shaping the company together with others, which can be very rewarding. In addition to feeling engaged, the individual gains new experiences, learns a lot and feels joy. It was emphasized that in a self-organizing company, the individual can potentially *grow tremendously as a human being*. It was highlighted that Netlight is truly an agile organization where each employee is a decision-maker from day one and empowered to make decisions by boiding – gathering perspectives from colleagues. In a self-organizing organization, the individual does not need to ask permission or to be afraid of failure. On the contrary, failure should be considered as a learning opportunity. If the individual feels secure, they can *express themselves* by trying things out, testing their ideas, and seeing how far they can go.

The interviews revealed that self-organization also has its challenges. It was emphasized that self-organization requires a lot. One of the interviewees noted that Netlight has been and still is working hard to make the self-organization work and trying to set the self-organization up in any random organization can be quite dangerous. The interviews

disclosed that self-organization can create a lot of *stress*, *insecurity*, and a sense of ambiguity in people, because people are raised into more hierarchical structures in society, one example being the school world. People may also be accustomed to having a manager supervising them, and it was also emphasized that since new employees may have negative experiences in working life, it is important to show them that Netlight's self-organizing structure is more than just words.

It was considered a risk if an individual saw Netlight only as an employer and felt *disconnected* to Netlight – for example, talking about Netlight as "them" instead of "us". A feeling of not belonging can lead to alienation, which can lead to an individual leaving the company or feeling more engaged in the client organization. The importance of creating a connection to Netlight by getting to know the organization and its people, especially for consultants working in client assignments, was emphasized. The individual may also compare himself or herself to others and feel insecure, which may lead to the individual trying to work harder than others to prove his or her worth. In this case, instead of performing though joy, the individual is performing through fear of letting others down, not belonging, or not being good enough. It was also considered a risk that the structure of the organization is so flat that it is difficult to monitor the well-being of individuals - individuals may, by metaphor, disappear from the radar. This was considered particularly true for consultants working in client assignments.

The importance of creating trust in the organization was emphasized and considered as an important part of Netlight's culture. To feel well, people need to feel trusted and that they can trust others. It is important to create a safe environment where it is acceptable to fail and to nourish the feeling of love and connection and the feeling of belonging. It was also emphasized that this does not happen automatically but needs to be worked on both at a company level and office level, and through focusing on mentoring and supporting individuals in interacting in other relationships. It was also noted that self-organization would not work if people were not taking initiatives. If people stopped taking initiatives, it would create uncertainty at the organizational level. In order for people to feel well in a self-organized organization, it is crucial to ensure that initiatives are taken – that people want and dare to take them.

6.1.3 Sustainable working methods

The purpose of the third interview theme "Sustainable working methods at Netlight" was to explore the interviewees' learnings of balancing between high-performance and individual well-being in Netlight's working environment. The main results are summarized in figure 10 and described below.
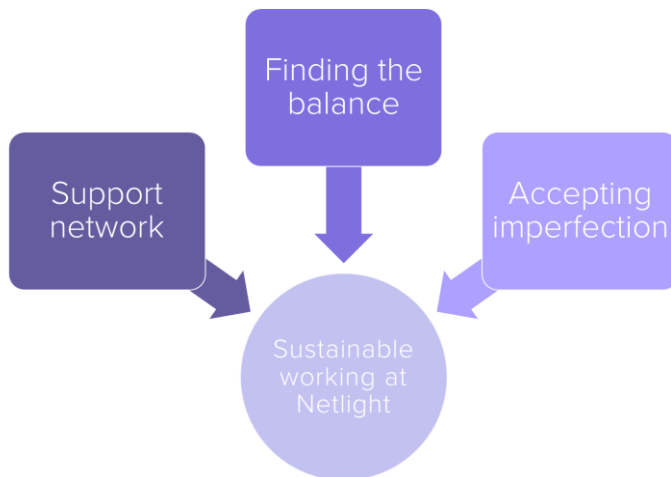
Figure 10. Interviewees' perceptions of sustainable working at Netlight

The importance of *finding the balance* was highlighted. It is essential to be aware of the impact of the changing circumstances on one's performance. By experience, individuals learn the habits that suit them. However, the learning is never finished as the circumstances are constantly changing, and the person itself is changing, too. It was considered important to allow oneself not to perform at the top all the time, and that one should view one's career as a marathon, instead of a sprint. Finding balance in practice means different things to different people. It can mean balancing work and leisure time, taking regular breaks, getting enough sleep, or having a healthy, balanced diet. Some people find it important to spend time without technology. For some, creative hobbies bring balance, for others, regular sports. The most important thing is to find ways that suit oneself. It was also highlighted that as there is always something going on at Netlight, almost 24/7, it is essential to save time for areas outside Netlight as well. Some of the interviewees also mentioned Slack – the communication platform used at Netlight. It was

highlighted that it might be useful to disconnect from Slack occasionally because it can take one's attention too much, and cause stress in some people.

It was also emphasized that it's important to *accept imperfection* - recognize that no one is perfect, everyone is struggling, and failure is inevitable. What is essential, however, is to be open about it and accept help from others. Some interviewees highlighted the importance of finding the "good enough" level, which means acknowledging that the quality of a certain task could be better but deciding that the quality is good enough and serves the purpose of the task. It is important to understand that one can always perform better, but it is sustainable to learn to be happy with the "good enough" quality in order to have time for other aspects of both work and private life.

All interviewees agreed that individuals at Netlight have a high responsibility for their well-being. However, it was also emphasized that it is unrealistic to expect an individual to take this responsibility alone. Part of individual responsibility is to seek help from *the support network,* and one of the interviewees noted that the concept of *boid* could be used for this as well. The importance of having trusted mentor-mentee relationships with open communication was highlighted. In addition to the mentor, an individual should have other relationships as well. Sometimes the individual does not recognize the signals of unhealthy stress in themselves, which is why it is essential to have people around. One of the interviewee's compared these situations as an individual being the boxer in a boxer ring. In a boxing match, the boxer may continue the match without fully understanding what is going on. If the match gets too dangerous, it is important that someone else throws in the towel and stops the match because the boxer may not be able to do it. All employees, regardless of their levels, have the responsibility to show caring for each other. Talking about personal well-being should be easy, and employees should coach each other in being open. The interview revealed that while an individual should never feel the need to prove their worth at Netlight, openness can be difficult for an ambitious high-performer who wants to show the world – and Netlight – how awesome he or she is.

Human Resources is also an important part of the support network, and some concrete mechanisms are in place already, for example, sick leave monitoring. However, one of the

interviewees emphasized that these mechanisms should not be really needed. Instead, it is crucial to be proactive, as when a colleague gets on a long sick leave, Netlight has already failed. It was also highlighted that for the sake of personal sustainability, it would be good to remove any connections between adjusting the pace of performing and leveling – moving to a next Consultant level in Netlight's framework for personal development. Individuals should not feel pressured to overwork because they are worried about reaching the next level. It should be emphasized that working hard does not guarantee leveling – one will level when one is truly ready.

6.1.4 Emotions, authentic self-expression, and vulnerability

The purpose of the last interview theme was to explore the interviewees' perceptions of the role of emotions, authentic self-expression, and vulnerability at Netlight.

It was emphasized that being authentic and showing emotions are key to creating trust, love and connection. Also, emotions were connected to engagement. Engagement is always tied to caring, and both positive emotions, such as happiness and pride, and negative emotions, such as sadness and disappointment, are part of caring. Authenticity was connected to performance. Just as an individual needs self-confidence to see the value of one's performance, he or she also needs the self-confidence to be authentic – not having a professional mask on or being a "delivery-machine". Showing emotions – both positive and negative - are part of being comfortable with oneself. It was highlighted that authenticity is essential if an individual wants to build a relationship with another person or wants to coach another person well. It was emphasized that all employees of Netlight have their hearts with them at work and that there is always a loving, warm, and welcoming atmosphere at Netlight's office. It was also stressed that although emotions are showed at Netlight, it is done in a professional manner, especially when interacting with clients.

According to the interviewees, circumstances at work may require playing different roles. Sometimes it may make sense to play different roles at work depending on the people and teams one works with. Also, people are always shaping their own professional identities at work. It was also noted that it is normal to act differently at work and in private life, as

different approaches suit in different contexts. For example, in private life, it may seem more natural to be fun-loving and more relaxed, while at work it may seem better to give a more senior impression and to behave in a more mature manner. However, changing behavior was not considered as being less authentic or pushing oneself into an uncomfortable role.

According to the interviewees, sometimes negative emotions may be masked because one does not want to ruin the positive mood of others. An individual may believe that everyone else is an awesome high-performers who do awesome things. It was emphasized that negative things and failures should also be shared. It was also noted that it is easier for other people to recognize when an individual needs support if the individual is showing their emotions. The individual must have a close support network with whom to share their feelings and get support during difficult times. It is also crucial that the individual has a good relationship with their mentor. In some situations, it is worth switching to a new mentor, which is why it is important to discuss the topic openly. However, having a mentor is not a silver bullet; other relationships are important, too.

6.2   Survey results

In this chapter, the main survey results are examined by graphs and supported by the text. The survey results are presented in the following sub-chapters in a way that does not allow individual participants to be identified. The responses to the open questions have been analyzed by thematic coding. All quantitative results of the survey are presented in Appendix 3.

6.2.1   Survey participants

The total number of participants in the survey was 91. The figure below (Figure 11) shows the distribution of respondents between the different categories.

Survey participant distribution

Role

3,3 %
7,7 % 6,6 %
6,6 %
75,8 %

■ Operations   ■ Engagement Search
■ Talent Search   ■ Internal Consultant
■ Consultant at client

Consultant Level

2,2 %
2,2 %   7,7 %   15,4 %
7,7 %   6,6 %
14,3 %   23,1 %
20,9 %

■ A   ■ AC   ■ C
■ SrC   ■ AM   ■ M
■ SrM   ■ P   ■ Operations

Time at Netlight

16,5 %
16,5 %   39,6 %
27,5 %

■ Less than 1 year ■ 1-2 years
■ 3-5 years   ■ Over 5 years

Mentor representation

26,4 %

■ Mentor
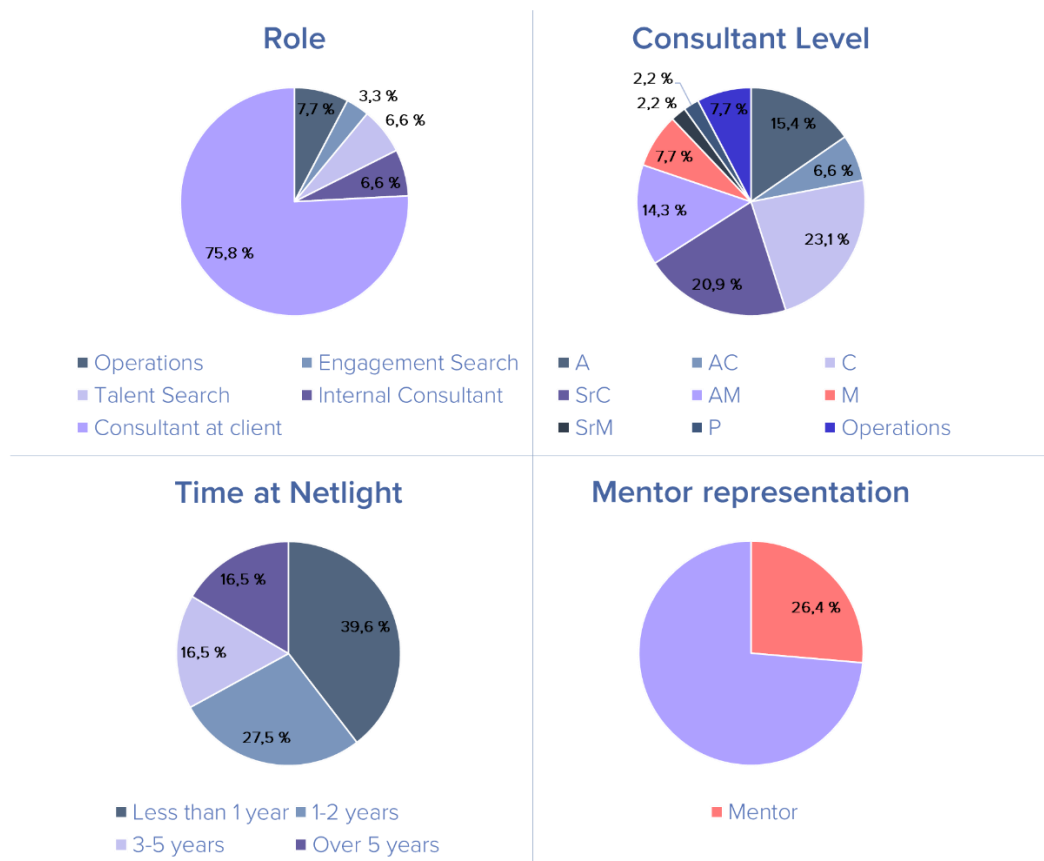
Figure 11. Survey participant distribution (N = 91)

Netlight's *core roles* are divided into Consulting (Client assignments), Talent Search
(Recruitment), Engagement Search (Sales), and Operations (Finance, Human Resources,
Legal, Office & Event Management and Internal IT). Out of 91 participants, 69 (75,8 %)
are working as consultants in client assignments at client premises, 7 (7,7 %) are working
in Operations, 6 (6,6 %) are working in Talent Search, 6 (6,6 %) are Internal Consultants,
and 3 (3,3 %) are working in Engagement Search.

A cornerstone in the personal development at Netlight is the *Consultant levels.* There are
eight consultant levels, named as Analyst (A), Associate Consultant (AC), Consultant (C),
Senior Consultant (SrC), Associate Manager (AM), Manager (M), Senior Manager (SrM),

and Partner (P). Out of 91 participants, 14 (15,4 %) are Analysts, 6 (6,6 %) are Associate Consultants, 21 (23,1 %) are Consultants, 19 (20,9 %) are Senior Consultants, 13 (14,3 %) are Associate Managers, 7 (7,7 %) are Managers, 2 (2,2 %) are Senior Managers, 2 (2,2 %) are Partners and 7 (7,7 %) are part of Operations.

Out of 91 participants, the number of participants who have been employed at Netlight for less than one year is 36 (39,6%). 25 (27,5%) of the participants have been employed for 1-2 years. 15 (16,5%) of the participants have been employed for 3-5 years. Finally, 15 (16,5%) of the participants have been employed for more than five years.

From day one, all of Netlight's employees have a dedicated mentor. Mentors are trusted senior colleagues who are responsible for coaching and guiding their mentees in their professional and personal development at Netlight. 24 (26,4 %) of the survey participants are mentors.

6.2.2 Brain at knowledge work

The survey started with Likert-scale statements based on the theoretical framework presented in the sub-chapter 4.1. "Brain at knowledge work". Participants were asked to show their intensity of agreement with the given statements (Figure 12). The written results are presented below the figures.

Brain at knowledge work
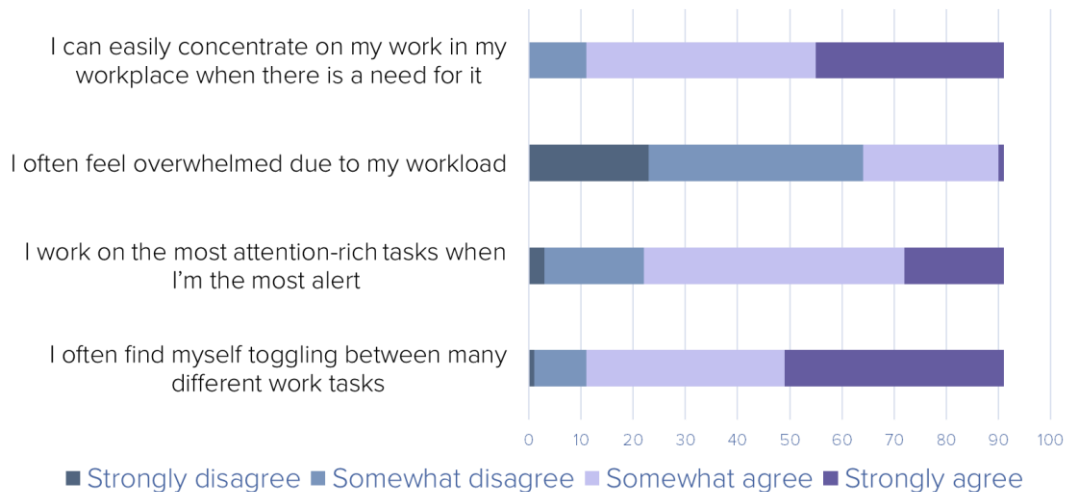
Figure 12. Brain-friendly knowledge work at Netlight (N = 91)

The first statement, "I can easily concentrate on my work in my workplace when there is a need for it", measured the participants' ability to concentrate in their workplace. 36 (40 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 44 (48 %) somewhat agreed, 11 (12 %) somewhat disagreed. None of the participants strongly disagreed.

The second statement, "I often feel overwhelmed due to workload", measured whether participants often feel overwhelmed due to their workload. One of the participants strongly agreed (1 %), 26 (29 %) somewhat agreed, 41 (45 %) somewhat disagreed, and 23 (25 %) strongly disagreed.

The third statement, "I work on the most attention-rich tasks when I'm the most alert", measured the participants' tendency to take their alertness into account when scheduling tasks. 19 (21 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 50 (55 %) somewhat agreed, 19 (21 %) somewhat disagreed, and three (3 %) strongly disagreed.

The fourth statement, "I often find myself toggling between many different work tasks", measured the participants' tendency to multitask at work. 42 (46 %) of the participants

strongly agreed, 38 (42 %) somewhat agreed, 10 (11%) somewhat disagreed, and one (1 %) strongly disagreed.

The last seven statements (Figure 13) were related to smart working methods.

7 "work smart" practices
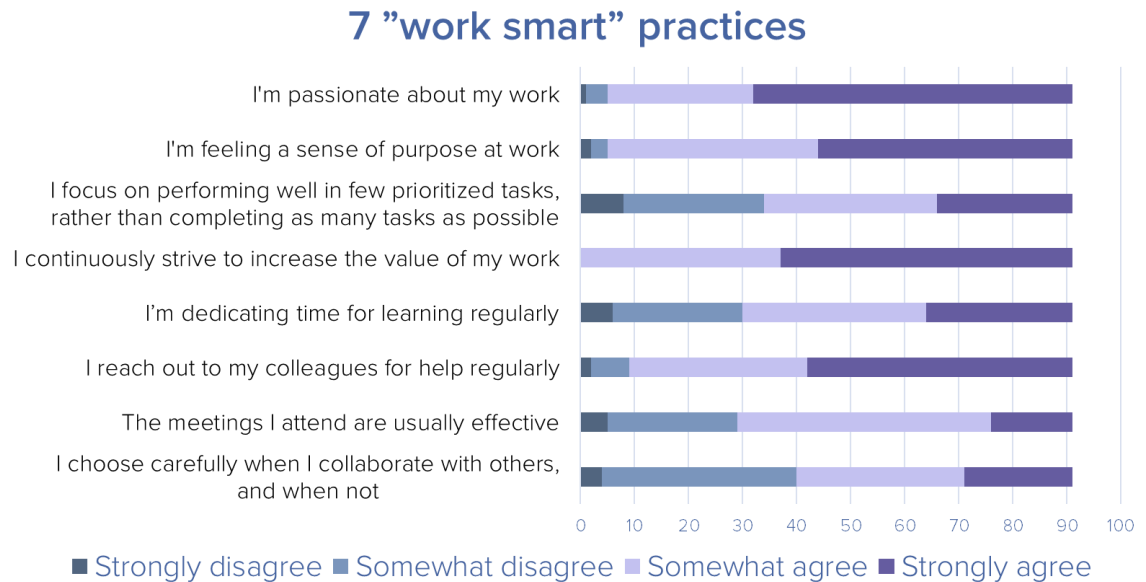
Figure 13. 7 "work smart" practices at Netlight (N = 91)

The first statement, "I'm passionate about my work", measured whether the participants feel passionate about their work. 59 (65 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 27 (30 %) somewhat agreed, four (4 %) somewhat disagreed, and one (1 %) strongly disagreed.

The second statement, "I'm feeling a sense of purpose at work", measured whether the participants feel a sense of purpose at work. 47 (52 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 39 (43 %) somewhat agreed, three (3 %) somewhat disagreed, and two (2 %) strongly disagreed.

The third statement "I focus on performing well in few prioritized tasks, rather than completing as many tasks as possible", measured the participants' tendency to work according to the "Do less, then obsess" principle presented in the theoretical framework

48

earlier. 25 (27 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 48 (53 %) somewhat agreed, and 18 (20 %) somewhat disagreed. None of the participants strongly disagreed.

The fourth statement, "I continuously strive to increase the value of my work", measured the participants' tendency to focus on creating value in their work. 54 (59 %) of the participants strongly agreed, and 37 (41 %) somewhat agreed. None of the participants somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed.

The fifth statement, "I'm dedicating time for learning regularly", measured whether the participants regularly dedicate time for learning. 27 (30 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 34 (37 %) somewhat agreed, 24 (26 %) somewhat disagreed, and six (7 %) strongly disagreed.

The sixth statement, "I reach out to my colleagues for help regularly" measured the participants' tendency to use their network of people for support. 49 (54 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 33 (36 %) somewhat agreed, seven (8 %) somewhat disagreed, and two (2 %) strongly disagreed.

The seventh statement, "The meetings I attend are usually effective", measured the participants' perception of the effectiveness of the meetings they attend. 15 (16 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 47 (52 %) somewhat agreed, 24 (26 %) somewhat disagreed, and five (6 %) strongly disagreed.

The eighth statement, "I choose carefully when I collaborate with others, and when not", measured the participants' tendency to consider the relevance of collaboration in different situations. 20 (22 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 31 (34 %) somewhat agreed, 36 (40 %) somewhat disagreed, and four (4 %) strongly disagreed.

6.2.3   Resilience and recovery

The survey continued with Likert-scale statements based on the theoretical framework presented in the sub-chapter 4.4. "Resilience and recovery". Participants were asked to

show their intensity of agreement with the given statements (Figure 14). The written results are presented below the figures.
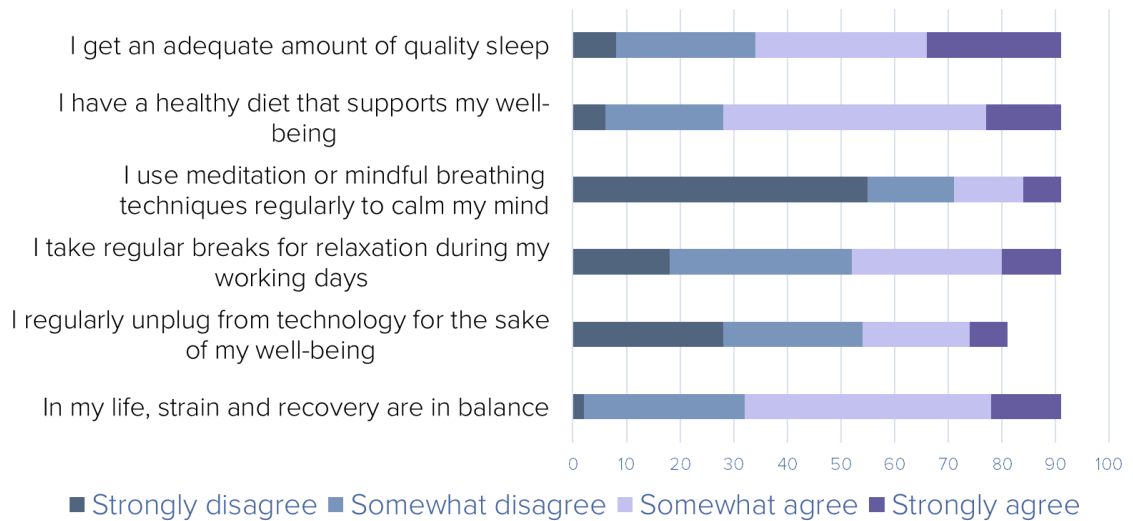
Figure 14. Participants' perceptions of their holistic well-being (N = 91)

The first statement, "I get an adequate amount of quality sleep", measured the participant's perception of getting enough quality sleep. 25 (27 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 32 (35 %) somewhat agreed, 26 (29 %) somewhat disagreed, and eight (9 %) strongly disagreed.

The second statement, "I have a healthy diet that supports my well-being", measured the participants' perception of how well their diet supports their well-being. 14 (15 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 49 (54 %) somewhat agreed, 22 (24 %) somewhat disagreed, and six (7 %) strongly disagreed.

The third statement, "I use meditation or mindful breathing techniques regularly to calm my mind", measured whether the participants' use meditation or mindful breathing techniques regularly. 7 (8 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 13 (14 %) somewhat agreed, 16 (18 %) somewhat disagreed, and 55 (60 %) strongly disagreed.

50

The fourth statement, "I take regular breaks for relaxation during my working days", measured the participants' break habits. 11 (12 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 28 (31 %) somewhat agreed, 34 (37 %) somewhat disagreed, and 18 (20 %) strongly disagreed.

The fifth statement, "I regularly unplug from technology for the sake of my well-being", measured the participants' habit of spending time without any technology for the sake of their well-being. 7 (8 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 20 (22 %) somewhat agreed, 26 (28 %) somewhat disagreed, and 38 (42 %) strongly disagreed.

The sixth statement, "In my life, strain and recovery are in balance", measured the participants' perception of the balance between strain and recovery in their lives. 13 (14 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 46 (51 %) somewhat agreed, 30 (33 %) somewhat disagreed, and 2 (2 %) strongly disagreed.

The participants were asked to estimate their physical activity and sleeping patterns (Figure 15). The participants asked to estimate their physical activity with a question "During the past six months, on how many days per week on average have you done a total of 30 minutes or more of physical activity, which was enough to raise your breathing rate?" 28 (31 %) of the participants answered 3-5 times a week, 27 (30 %) 1-2 times a week, 24 (26 %) less than once a week, and 12 (13 %) over five times a week. The participants were also asked to estimate their sleeping patterns with a question "During the past six months, how many hours per night have you slept on average?" 55 (61 %) of the participants answered 7-8 hours/night, 33 (36 %)answered 5-6 hours/night, and three (3 %) answered over 8 hours/night. None of the participants answered less than 5 hours/night.

Physical activity & Sleeping patterns
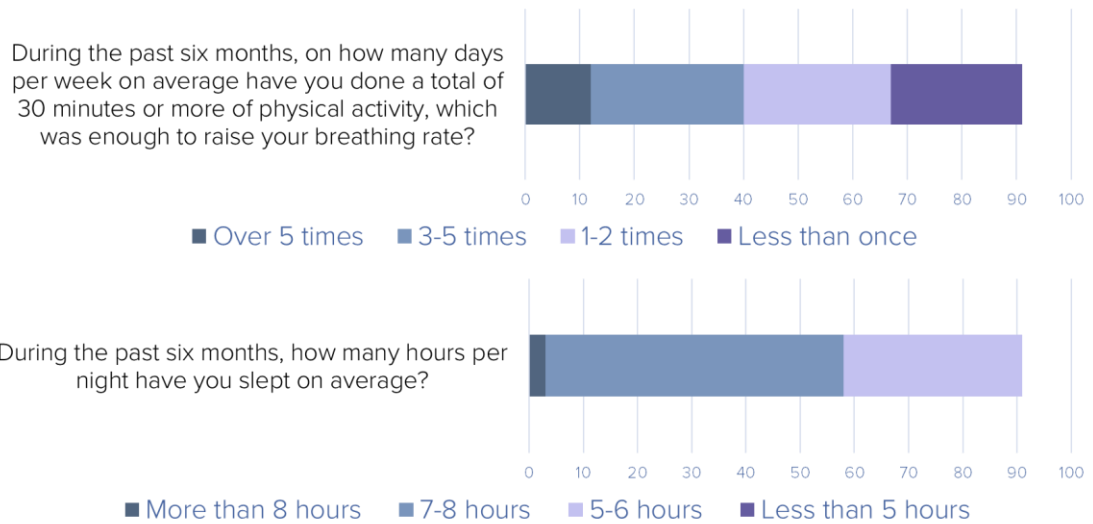
Figure 15. Physical activity and sleeping patterns of the participants (N = 91)

The participants were also asked the following open-ended question: *"How do you restore energy in your life?".* The responses are classified into main themes that stood out from all the responses, which are named as "*Social connections*", "*Physical health*", and "*Mental health*". A significant part of the participants mentioned *social connections*, such as spending time with friends and family or just talking with people to share perspectives, as a way to restore energy. A large part of the participants also mentioned taking care of *physical health*, such as exercising, getting enough sleep, and eating well, of which exercising in different forms was the most common. Taking care of *mental health* included a variety of different personal hobbies, taking time to oneself to relax and reflect, meditating, spending time in nature, and unplugging from technology, to name a few.

6.2.4   Self-organization and individual well-being

The survey continued with Likert-scale statements based on the theoretical framework presented in chapter 3 "Self-organization and well-being". Participants were asked to show their intensity of agreement with the given statements (Figure 16). The written results are presented below the figures.

Self-organization and individual well-being
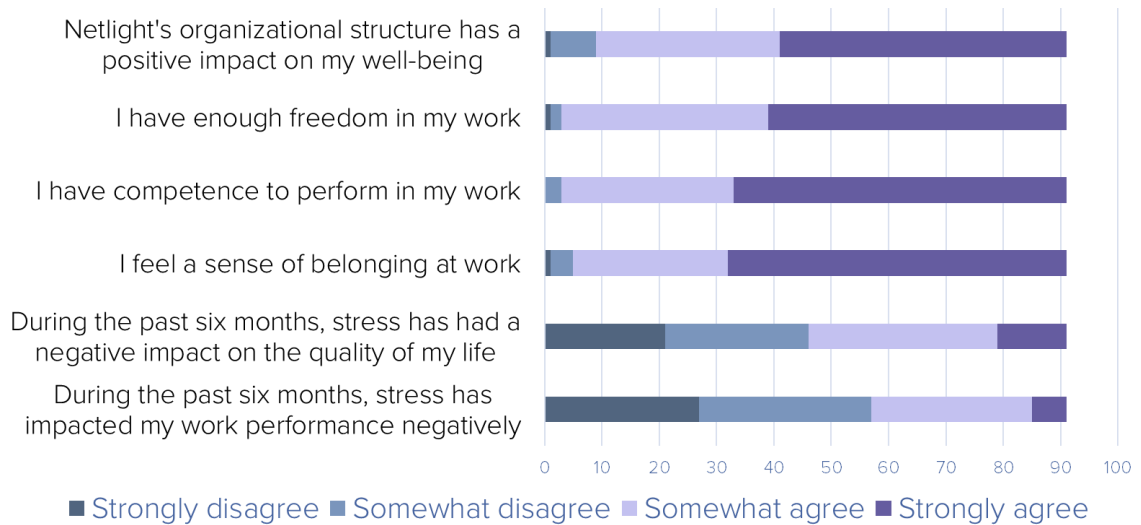
Figure 16. Participant's perceptions of their well-being and impact of Netlight's organizational structure on their well-being (N = 91)

The first statement, "Netlight's organizational structure has a positive impact on my well-being", measured the participant's perception of the impact of Netlight's organizational structure on their well-being. 50 (55 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 32 (35 %) somewhat agreed, eight (9 %) somewhat disagreed, and one (1 %) strongly disagreed.

The second statement, "I have enough freedom in my work", measured the participants' experience of having enough freedom in their work. 52 (57 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 36 (40 %) somewhat agreed, two (2 %) somewhat disagreed, and one (1 %) strongly disagreed.

The third statement, "I have competence to perform in my work", measured the participants' perception of having competence to perform in their work. 58 (64 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 30 (33 %) somewhat agreed, and three (3 %) somewhat disagreed. None of the participants strongly disagreed.

The fourth statement, "I feel a sense of belonging at work", measured the participants' feelings of sense of belonging at work. 59 (65 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 27 (30 %) somewhat agreed, four (4 %) somewhat disagreed, and one (1 %) strongly disagreed.

The fifth statement, "During the past six months, stress has had a negative impact on the quality of my life", measured the participants' perception of stress having a negative impact on the quality of their life during the past six months. 12 (13 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 33 (36 %) somewhat agreed, 25 (28 %) somewhat disagreed, and 21 (23 %) strongly disagreed.

The sixth statement "During the past six months, stress has impacted my work performance negatively", measured the participants' perception of stress having a negative impact on their work performance during the past six months. Six (6 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 28 (31 %) somewhat agreed, 30 (33 %) somewhat disagreed, and 27 (30 %) strongly disagreed.

The participants were asked the following open-ended question: "*Which factors in Netlight's organizational structure have a positive impact on your well-being?*". The answers are classified into two main themes that stood out from all the answers, which are named as "*Freedom*" and "*Community*".

The word *freedom* was mentioned repeatedly. A significant part of the participants felt that individual freedom at Netlight has a positive impact on their well-being. Freedom was associated especially with a lack of top-down hierarchies, bureaucracy, and managers. The presence of trust was mentioned repeatedly, too. According to the responses, the trust empowers individuals to make decisions and take initiatives. Also, the non-rigidity of the ways of working enables individuals to influence their work, and the flat organizational structure allows utilizing one's personal network in a meaningful way. Furthermore, some participants mentioned the possibility to drive personal development in their chosen way and pace. Having permission to fail was brought up, too. Also, many participants

mentioned the possibility of taking personal responsibility and making an impact in the organization.

Another theme that stood out in the responses was *the community*. A significant part of the participants felt that the colleagues at Netlight have a positive impact on their well-being. Participants appreciated the opportunity to reach out to their colleagues for support and transparent knowledge-sharing, and they emphasized the importance of being surrounded by great colleagues and having a sense of belonging. Netlight's culture was described as attentive and co-operative, and the people at Netlight were described as open, welcoming, trusting, helpful, genuinely caring, lovely, including, understanding, and easy to talk to.

In addition to the main themes above, many other factors were mentioned as well, such as the value of having a dedicated mentor, the culture of continuous feedback, the concept of "sense and respond", fast decision-making, transparency in communication and compensation, the lack of internal competition, events focusing on well-being, HR support, Genuine Consulting Program, support for parents, physical activities offered by Netlight, and the presence of the "human touch" at Netlight.

The participants were asked the following open-ended question: *"Which factors in Netlight's organizational structure have a negative impact on your well-being?"*. The responses are classified into two main themes that stood out from all the responses, which are named as "*Ambiguity*" and "*Pressure to perform*".

According to the responses, *the ambiguity*, caused by the lack of structure, common principles, and clear responsibilities, has a negative impact on a significant amount of participants' well-being. Many participants expressed that the lack of structure and hierarchies put pressure on the individual to find relevant information and the right people in the network to spar with or reach out to, which can be a source of stress. Also, a lot of things can happen in the organization without the individual knowing about it and having an opportunity to contribute or share opinions about the topic. It was also mentioned that it can be difficult for an individual to find "the context" or a group to belong to at Netlight.

Furthermore, not getting straight answers from colleagues was felt to be a source of stress, too.

A significant part of the respondents brought up factors related to *the pressure to perform* as having a negative impact on their well-being. According to the responses, the unclarity or diversity of expectations on the individual performance can cause stress. The responses showed that individuals are expected to determine their own level of "good enough", and some respondents expressed that being part of a high-performing, fast-paced organization and surrounded by high-performing colleagues makes them set their own expectations on themselves very high. According to the responses, it can be difficult to find the right level of engagement at work. The responses showed that high pressure or expectations of working long hours and of taking more responsibility have a negative impact on some of the respondents' well-being. Being pushed to challenge oneself was felt uncomfortable by some respondents, and it was also expressed that there is a risk that employees take on bigger challenges than they are ready to handle.

In addition to the main themes above, other factors were mentioned as well. It was shown in the responses that making decisions, especially large decisions, can be challenging. It can sometimes be difficult to find the right persons to involve in decision-making, motivate others to take responsibility, and to know when there are enough perspectives to make the final decision. Furthermore, it was expressed that it can be difficult to move projects forward without compromising with Netlight's core values. It was also expressed that due to Netlight's organizational structure, power dynamics are not very visible and therefore difficult to discuss. It was also brought up that Netlight's "networking climate" can be overwhelming for an introvert.

The participants were asked the following open-ended question: *"What kind of advice would you give to your colleague who suffers from negative stress?"*. The responses are classified into main themes that stood out from all the responses, which are named as "Support network", "Prioritization", "Self-compassion", and "Recovery".

In the responses, it was repeatedly recommended to reach out to one's personal *support network*, trusted colleagues, for help or simply talking about the experienced stress. It was also recommended to talk to friends and family. Also, in some cases reaching out to human resources or getting professional help was recommended.

The responses showed the importance of identifying what triggers stress in oneself and knowing one's limits of coping and early signals of unhealthy stress levels. Also, behaviors related to *self-compassion*, showing kindness to oneself, finding one's own balance, not having too high expectations on oneself, and understanding that one is not irreplaceable, were emphasized. Many respondents recommended focusing on *prioritization*; focusing on the right things, learning to say "no", delegating tasks, cutting down tasks that generate negative emotions and settling for "good enough" quality.

Taking time for *recovery* was emphasized. Focusing on aspects outside of work, sticking to reasonable working hours, and disconnecting from work outside office hours were seen important. Other advice was given as well, such as meditation, sleeping and eating well, exercising, and understanding that being "underqualified" at work is also a good thing, as it means that one can grow and learn.

6.2.5 High-performance

The survey continued with Likert-scale statements related to high-performance. Participants were asked to show their intensity of agreement with the given statements (Figure 17). The written results are presented below the figure.

High-performance
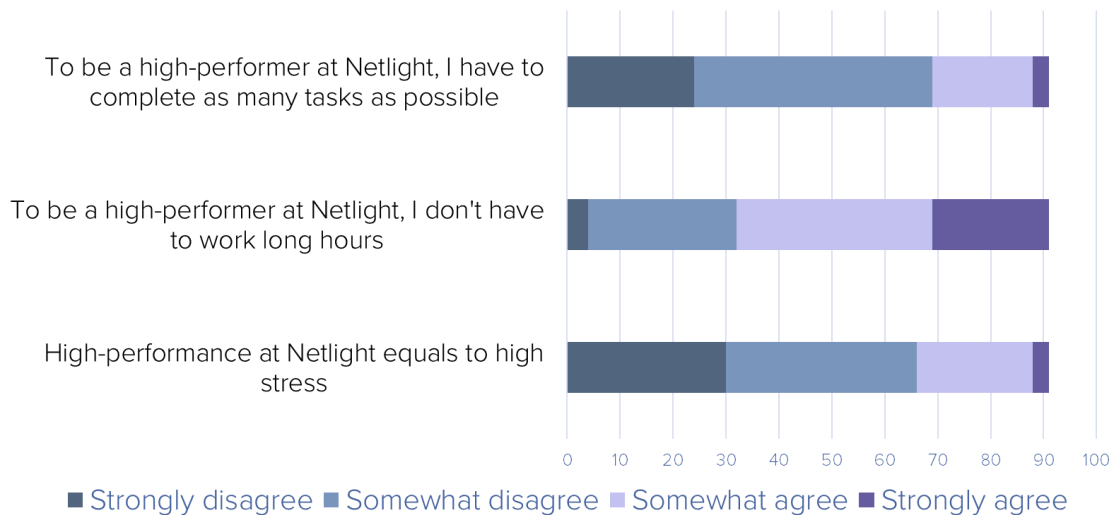
Figure 17. Participants' perceptions of high-performance (N = 91)

The first statement, "To be a high-performer at Netlight, I have to complete as many tasks as possible" measured tendency to associate high-performance at Netlight to the number of completed tasks. 3 (3%) of the participants strongly agreed, 19 (21 %) somewhat agreed, 45 (50 %) somewhat disagreed, and 24 (26 %) strongly disagreed.

The second statement, "To be a high-performer at Netlight, I don't have to work long hours", measured the tendency to associate high-performance at Netlight to the number of working hours. 22 (24 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 37 (41 %) somewhat agreed, 28 (31 %) somewhat disagreed, and four (4 %) strongly disagreed.

The third statement, "High-performance at Netlight equals to high stress", measured the tendency to associate high-performance at Netlight high stress. Three (3 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 22 (24 %) somewhat agreed, 36 (40 %) somewhat disagreed, and 30 (33 %) strongly disagreed.

The participants were asked the following open-ended question: *"What does it mean to be a high-performer at Netlight from your perspective?"*. The responses are classified into main themes that stood out from all the responses, which are named as "*Delivering*

through the network", "*Delivering through competence*", "*Creating value*", and "*Personal growth*".

Delivering through the network includes growing a great personal network at Netlight, helping others to grow and succeed in their work, and being a role model to others in the network. *Delivering through competence includes* mastering one's role and exceeding expectations. *Creating value* for clients and Netlight was mentioned repeatedly. *Personal growth* includes continuously developing as a professional and as a person and enabling one's full potential by taking on challenges in order to grow Netlight. In addition to the main themes above, other factors were mentioned as well, such as making an impact around oneself, investing time on Netlight and being authentic.

The participants were asked the following open-ended question: *"How do you maintain a balance between your well-being and being a high-performer at Netlight?"*. The responses are classified into main themes that stood out from all the responses, which are named as "Setting boundaries" and "Self-awareness". A significant part of the respondents is setting clear *boundaries* for themselves in order to maintain a balance between their well-being and being a high-performer. Setting boundaries can be attending to a certain maximum amount of evening events at Netlight, sticking to specific working times, separating work-time from free-time, for example. *Self-awareness* includes practices related to being aware of one's feelings and capacity, and knowing when to perform, and when to slow down a bit. It's also about letting one's passions and interests shape the career and determine which challenges to accept and which events to participate – and focusing on having fun at work. In addition to the main themes above, other factors were mentioned as well, such as maintaining relationships that give support, taking care of one's physical and mental health, and being consistent about one's priorities in life.

6.2.6   Emotions and authentic self-expression

The survey continued with Likert-scale statements related to the theoretical framework presented in sub-chapters 4.2. and 4.3. "Emotional agility" and "Authentic self-expression". Participants were asked to show their intensity of agreement with the given statements (Figure 18). The written results are presented below the figures.

Authentic self-expression and emotions
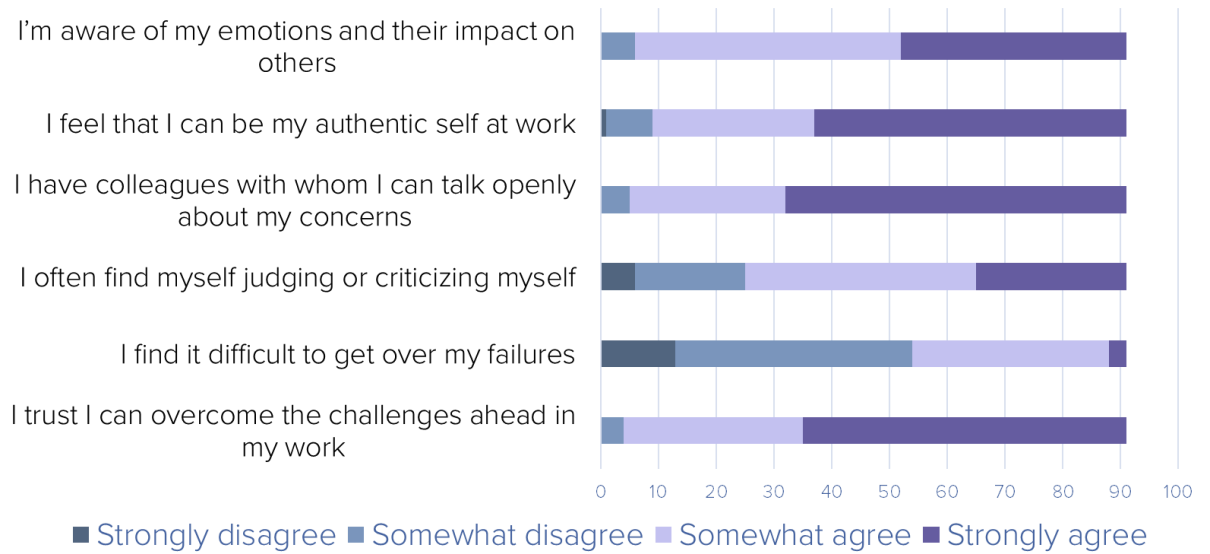
Figure 18. Participants' perceptions of authentic self-expression and emotions (N = 91)

The first statement, "I'm aware of my emotions and their impact on others", measured the participant's perception of their self-awareness if their emotions and their impact on others. 39 (43 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 46 (50 %) somewhat agreed, and six (7 %) somewhat disagreed. None of the participants strongly disagreed.

The second statement, "I feel that I can be my authentic self at work", measured the participants' feeling of being able to be their authentic selves at work. 54 (59 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 28 (31 %) somewhat agreed, eight (9 %) somewhat disagreed, and one (1 %) strongly disagreed.

The third statement, "I have colleagues with whom I can talk openly about my concerns", measured the participants' perception of having colleagues to talk about their concerns. 59 (65 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 27 (30 %) somewhat agreed, and five (5 %) somewhat disagreed. None of the participants strongly disagreed.

The fourth statement, "I often find myself judging or criticizing myself", measured the participants' tendency to judge or criticize themselves. 26 (28 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 40 (44 %) somewhat agreed, 19 (21 %) somewhat disagreed, and six (7 %) strongly disagreed.

The fifth statement, "I find it difficult to get over my failures", measured the participants' tendency to have difficulties in getting over their failures. Three (3 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 34 (38 %) somewhat agreed, 41 (45 %) somewhat disagreed, and 13 (14 %) strongly disagreed.

The sixth statement, "I trust I can overcome the challenges ahead in my work", measured the participants' feeling of trust to be able to overcome challenges at work. 56 (62 %) of the participants strongly agreed, 31 (34 %) somewhat agreed, and four (4 %) somewhat disagreed. None of the participants strongly disagreed.

The participants were asked the following open-ended question: *"What is the role of emotions at the workplace in your opinion?".* According to the responses, the expression of true emotions is important for the sake of well-being. Also, it was expressed that emotions are crucial for building genuine relationships. It's important to recognize one's emotions as they help to understand one's mind. Being aware of one's emotions and their impact on others was also considered as part of professionalism. A significant part of respondents felt that positive emotions reinforce well-being and performance at the workplace. A lot of positive emotions are shown in daily work, such as love, affection, appreciation, and happiness. Positive emotions are shared to encourage each other. The word *"happiness"* was mentioned repeatedly – however, the role of happiness at the workplace was not further explained by the participants. According to the responses, even though people should be allowed to be vulnerable and express negative emotions as well, negative emotions should be somewhat reflected on, controlled or neutralized before expressed. Open, respectful expression of emotions is the key. It's important to strive to enhance positive emotions that increase performance and avoid enforcing negative emotions that limit performance. It was also noted that emotions help to feel confident and as "at home" and reinforce knowledge-sharing at the workplace.

7   Discussion

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the key findings and present the conclusions and recommendations deriving from the study. Moreover, the trustworthiness of the study is addressed. The chapter closes with a reflection on my learning and professional development during the thesis process. The purpose of this thesis was to examine the effects of self-organization on the well-being of an individual and the ways in which an individual can be a high-performer in a sustainable way. The study aimed to explore Netlight as a working environment in the context of individual well-being and high-performance and to identify themes that would benefit from further examination. Both survey and semi-structured interviews with pre-selected themes were used as study methods to achieve the broadest possible understanding of Netlight's context.

7.1   Analysis

The study suggests that Netlight's self-organizing structure can have both positive and negative impact on individual well-being. The study showed that a significant part of the participants felt that Netlight's organizational structure has a positive impact on their well-being. On the other hand, the study results indicate that the self-organizing organization is not immune to the stress epidemic our knowledge-oriented society is suffering from. The survey revealed that the individual *freedom* and the supporting *community* at Netlight positively influence individual well-being, which was also supported by the interviews. Self-organization is dependent on the intrinsic motivation of the individuals, and according to Carr (2004, 47), individuals with intrinsic motivation perform better, and their subjective well-being is higher when compared to externally motivated individuals. The results suggest that participants are well placed to experience intrinsic motivation, as well as flow, as it is closely related to intrinsic motivation. At the same time, a significant part of participants has experienced stress having a negative impact on their quality of life over the past six months, and slightly fewer participants felt that the stress had a negative impact on their work performance. Also, both the survey and interview results indicate that *ambiguity* and *pressure to perform* to meet diverse expectations can be a stressor at Netlight. According to Juuti and Salmi (2014, 43–44), people's mental and social burden has increased due to the shift from physical work to knowledge work.

The study showed that Netlight does not have one dominant definition of *high-performance,* but it varies from person to person. On the other hand, a few themes emerged clearly. Firstly, both the survey and interviews disclosed that at Netlight high-performance is often connected to *creating value or making an impact*. Secondly, the importance of *networking* - growing a great network and supporting others - was emphasized. Thirdly, *being competent and exceeding expectations* was highlighted. When it comes to maintaining a balance between high-performance and well-being, the study participants emphasized the importance of setting *personal boundaries* regarding work-life balance and building *self-awareness* on one's personal resources.

The study suggests that the participants suffer from typical challenges of knowledge work. According to Rock (2009, 1–4), a growing number of knowledge workers feel overwhelmed due to the volume of work because of the biological limits of the brain. Accordingly, a third (29 %) of the survey participants somewhat agreed that they often feel overwhelmed due to their workload. As highlighted by Goleman (2013, 15; 23), the ability to focus is essential for well-being, and a crucial building block for flow experiences. The study suggests that most of the participants don't have significant difficulties in focusing in their workplace. However, the results indicate that participants with more experience at Netlight find it slightly easier to focus. According to Rock (2009, 15–16), performing attention-rich tasks when the most alert reduces mental load. Accordingly, on average, the participants who found it easy to focus, also strive to work on the most attention-rich tasks when they are the most alert. Increased complexity due to multitasking is a mental strain and toggling between tasks reduces productivity and hinders performance (Hanna 2014, 63–64; Hansen 2018, 22.) The results revealed that toggling between many different tasks is quite common at Netlight. Furthermore, the participants who often find themselves toggling between different tasks, also often feel overwhelmed due to their workload, and find focusing more difficult in their workplace. Therefore, the study results are quite aligned with the theoretical framework of "Brain at knowledge work".

The study indicates that most participants experience a combination of passion and purpose, focus on prioritizing, and strive to increase the value of their work. According to Hansen (2018, 90–91), *being passionate* is not enough to perform well, but it needs to be combined with *a sense of purpose*, which comes from contributing to something meaningful. The study results showed that most of the participants are experiencing a combination of passion and purpose, particularly participants who have worked at Netlight over five years or who currently work internally at Netlight (Internal Consultants, Engagement Search, Talent Search, Operations). According to Hansen (2018, 18–22), complexity is a mental strain, and performance can be improved by focusing on a few selected tasks and obsessing over them. Most of the survey participants either strongly or somewhat agreed on focusing on a few prioritized tasks, rather than completing as many tasks as possible. None of the participants strongly disagreed; however, participants between Analyst- and Senior Consultant levels somewhat agreed more often than those at other levels. According to Hansen (2018, 62), *redesigning* is about improving performance by adding value, not working hours, at work. All participants either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that they continuously strive to increase the value of their work, regardless of their seniority. However, consultants in client assignments somewhat agreed more often than those in other roles**.** These results are also consistent with how participants defined high-performance at Netlight. The responses to the survey statement, "I'm dedicating time for learning regularly", were very diverse, which may be due to individuals defining learning in different ways. Interestingly, participants between Analyst- and Senior Consultant level agreed significantly more often than participants on other levels.

The study showed that most of the participants ask help from their colleagues regularly. Hansen (2018, 120–131) stresses that communication and collaboration skills are key drivers for success in complex and interconnected environments. Most of the participants are reaching out to colleagues for help regularly. However, consultants at clients reach out to colleagues less than others. According to Hansen (Hansen 2018, 189–197), over-collaboration is as bad as under-collaboration, and high-performers consider collaboration carefully. *Disciplined collaboration* also improves work-life balance as receiving help from other people free time for personal commitments outside work. The

responses to the statement "I choose carefully when to collaborate with others, and when not" were very diverse, except that only a few strongly disagreed. Also, participants between Associate Manager and Partner levels choose more carefully when to collaborate than those at other levels. The variability of the answers may be due to the respondents' different ways of interpreting the statement.

The study revealed that only 16 % of participants strongly feel that the meetings they attend are usually effective. As teamwork often happens in meetings, the individual performance depends on the quality of the meetings (Hansen 2018, 143–148). Participants who have worked at Netlight less than one year found the meetings they attend more often effective than others. Also, the participants who work internally at Netlight found the meetings significantly more effective than participants who work in client assignments.

The study showed that a significant part of the survey participants (33 % somewhat disagreeing), especially participants between Analyst- and Senior Consultant levels, don't strongly feel they have strain and recovery in balance in their lives. Quality sleep reduces stress and improves concentration, decision-making, creativity, and social skills (Foster 2018; Barnes 2012). A significant part of the participants either strongly disagreed or somewhat disagreed getting an adequate amount of quality sleep. 75 % of the participants who strongly disagreed with getting enough adequate sleep have slept on average 5-6 hours per night during the past six months. Participants between Analyst and Senior Consultant levels reported not getting an adequate amount of quality sleep significantly more than participants on other levels. As highlighted by Suzuki (2017), physical activity has powerful effects on the brain. Most of the participants have been exercising rather regularly during the past six months, and 26 % of the participants less than once a week on average. Adequate nutrition, stable blood sugar, and hydration are basic requirements for brain health and performance (Hanna 2014). 31 % of the participant either strongly disagreed or somewhat disagreed that they have a healthy diet that supports their well-being. Meditation is an essential part of practicing mindfulness, which alleviates stress, fosters here-and-now presence and helps to focus (Goleman 2013, 202; Lehto 2014, 86; Sovijärvi, Arina, Halmetoja 2018, 66). Interestingly, most of the

participants don't use meditation or mindful breathing techniques to calm their minds. However, the responses may have been influenced by how respondents define these techniques. Participants between Analyst and Senior Consultant levels use meditation or mindful breathing techniques significantly more than those at other levels. Also, the techniques are more used among participants working internally at Netlight. Furthermore, a significant part of the participants doesn't take regular breaks for relaxation during their workday or regularly unplug from technology for the sake of their well-being.

The study revealed that most of the participants feel aware of their emotions and their impact on others, have colleagues with whom they can talk openly about their concerns and feel that they can be their authentic selves at work. According to Goleman, McKee & Achor (2018, 170), self-awareness, a component of emotional intelligence, is about knowing one's emotions and their impact on others. According to Singh (2015, 74), people need trustworthy colleagues at the workplace to whom they can talk to and share their true feelings, as isolation leads to stress and anxiety. According to Hochshield (2012, 20), social situations at work may require playing a role rather than expressing true feelings, which is called emotional labor. According to Cable (2018, 6–7), authentic self-expression activates a part of the brain called the seeking system, which encourages the person to explore the world, and makes the person feel motivated, purposeful and zestful. According to Ahlvik & Paakkanen (2017, 158–160), authentic self-expression requires self-compassion. Participants between Analyst and Senior Consultant levels found themselves judging and criticizing themselves significantly more than those at other levels. The same trend emerges in the statement, "I find it difficult to get over my failures". Most of the participants, however, trust that they can overcome challenges ahead.

7.2   Conclusions and recommendations

The thesis aimed to examine the ways in which an individual can achieve a balance between high-performance and well-being. The theoretical framework and the study showed that there are many ways in which an individual can strive for balance. On the other hand, there is no silver bullet. There is no stable, balanced state that an individual can achieve because environmental factors and context are constantly changing, which

requires learning and adaptation from the individual. Moreover, the experience of balance is strongly influenced by the individual's subjective evaluation of well-being and high-performance, too. Finally, although the study suggests that the individual has a great responsibility for their own well-being at Netlight, the importance of a personal support network was emphasized throughout the study.

The study aimed to explore Netlight as a working environment in the context of individual well-being and high-performance and to identify themes that would benefit from a more in-depth examination. Based on the study findings, I recommend Netlight to focus on the following topics.

1. Raising awareness of the importance of sleep, physical activity, nutrition, and recovery
2. Sharing insights about sustainable knowledge work more systematically in day-to-day work-life
3. Facilitating open discussion about high-performance, expectations, and self-compassion
4. Reflecting on the quality of collaboration

Firstly, it's important to raise awareness of the importance of sleep, physical activity, nutrition, and recovery. It makes no sense to focus on sustainable working methods if the foundation is not in place. *Secondly,* Netlight may benefit from sharing insights about sustainable knowledge work more systematically in day-to-day work. A significant part of employees is young professionals who may not have the relevant skills for sustainable working, while experienced employees at Netlight may have valuable knowledge about sustainable high-performance. *Thirdly*, employees, especially juniors, may benefit from open discussion about high-performance, expectations, and self-compassion. *Finally*, as collaboration and creating together are in a core of Netlight's culture, Netlight could benefit from reflecting on the quality of collaboration, especially teamwork and meetings.

7.3 Assessment of the thesis process

I started the study part of my thesis in June 2019. It took three months to complete the study, analyze the data, and draw conclusions. I conducted the data collection personally and carefully. I recorded the interviews and transcribed them. I analyzed the results on a computer to avoid human error. I reported all the study results thoroughly before making my own conclusions. I analyzed the material by utilizing the thematic analysis by categorizing the interview results of the study material by topic. I searched for connections between interview materials, the survey, and the theoretical framework.

Triangulation is the combination of methods, researchers, sources, or theories by which broadening the research perspective (Sarajärvi & Tuomi 2013, 140). I used both qualitative and quantitative methods to gain a deep understanding of the subject. I believe that leveraging triangulation increases the reliability of the study. I also believe that being employed at Netlight increased my commitment during the process. The fact that I was already familiar with the organization also helped me to design the study. On the other hand, my position at Netlight may have also affected how the study participants responded. Also, the fact that the survey participation was voluntary and that the invitation was not personally sent to each employee may have affected the profile of the participants. Moreover, interviewees were not randomly selected, which may have influenced the interview results. Also, strong generalizations about the study results cannot be made because the proportion of participants among all employees was relatively small. On the other hand, instead of generalization, the study sought a deeper understanding of Netlight's environment.

The thesis project has made a tremendous impact on my personal growth. During the project, I learned a great deal about self-organization, high-performance, and individual well-being. I also gained a deeper understanding of Netlight as an organization. As this was my second time writing a bachelor's thesis, I initially thought that my previous experience would significantly help me to complete the project successfully alongside my full-time work at Netlight. However, I quickly discovered that I couldn't rely on the success patterns of the past. I found myself in a completely new context, which required me to

rethink my expectations. Along the way, I found myself struggling with my own well-being, which I found ironic, considering the thesis topic. By continuously reflecting throughout the process, I have built self-awareness and understanding of my strengths, limitations, and values. I have built relevant competence that I can utilize in my work as an HR professional, and I also have more to give in discussions related to high-performance and individual well-being in the future.

95 Netlighter's directly engaged with my study, and even though it may not be a statistically significant number, being part of the study may have triggered something in these individuals – it may have served as a catalyst for something greater. I am very thankful for the opportunity to write my thesis for Netlight, the organization I'm proud to be part of, and I would like to thank all my colleagues who engaged in the study, and my mentor Jonas Elmlund who supported me throughout the process.

References

Ahlvik, C & Paakkanen, M. 2017 in Myötätunnon mullistava voima. PS-kustannus. Jyväskylä.

Auvinen, Riivari & Sajasalo 2018. In Eskola, A. 2018. Navigating through changing times. Routledge. New York.

Barnes, C. 2012. Working in our sleep: Sleep and self-regulation in organizations. Organizational psychology review. Sage.

Bryant, A & Kazan A. 2013. Self-leadership: how to become a more successful, efficient, and effective leader from the inside out.

Cable, D. 2018. Alive at work: the neuroscience of helping your people love what they do. Harvard Business Review Press.

Carr, A. 2004. Positive psychology – the science of happiness and human strengths. Routledge. New York.

Chen, P & Cooper, C. 2014. Introduction to Wellbeing: A Complete Reference Guide, Work and Wellbeing. John Wiley and Sons Inc. Uk.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. 02/2004. Flow – the secret of happiness. Professor. Claremont Graduate University. TED-seminar. URL: http://www.ted.com/talks/mihaly_csikszentmihalyi_on_flow. Accessed: 5.5.2019.

David, S & Congleton, C. 2018. In Everyday emotional intelligence: big ideas and practical advice on how to be human at work. Harvard business review press. Boston.

Deci, E & Ryan, R. 2017. Self-Determination Theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness. Guilford Publications. New York.

Martela, F & Jarenko, K. 2014. Sisäinen motivaatio – tulevaisuuden työssä tuottavuus ja innostus kohtaavat. Eduskunta. URL:
http://www.eduskunta.fi/triphome/bin/thw.cgi/trip?${base}=erekj&${html}=ekjx/ekjx4000&${sort}=vpvuosi+desc,aknumero+desc&${freetext}=teknologian+arvioin$+or+aktyyppi=tuvj&${maxpage}=51&${snhtml}=ekjx/akxeiloydy. Accessed: 12.5.2019.

Elvin, C & Strycharczyk, D. 2014. Developing Resilient Organizations: How to Create an Adaptive, High Performance and Engaged Organization. Kogan page Ltd. London.

Eskola, A. 2018. Navigating through changing times. Routledge. New York.

Foster, R. 2013. Why do we sleep? Ted Talk. URL:
https://www.ted.com/talks/russell_foster_why_do_we_sleep/. Accessed: 21.5.2019.

Germer, C. 2018. In Everyday emotional intelligence: big ideas and practical advice on how to be human at work. Harvard business review press. Boston.

Goleman, D. 2013. Focus – The hidden driver of excellence. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. London.

Goleman, D, McKee, A & Achor, S. 2018. Everyday emotional intelligence: big ideas and practical advice on how to be human at work. Harvard business review press. Boston.

Grandey, A & Sayre, M. Emotional Labor: Regulating Emotions for a Wage. 2019. Vol 28. Sage Publications.

Grebow, D & Gill, S. 2018. Minds at work: managing for success in the knowledge economy. Association for talent development.

Hanna, H. 2014. Stressaholic - 5 Steps to Transform Your Relationship with Stress. Wiley.

Hansen, M. Great at work: how top performers do less, work better, and achieve more.

Hirsjärvi, S, Remes, P. & Sajavaara, P. 2009. Tutki ja kirjoita. 15. painos. Tammi. Helsinki.

Hirsjärvi, S & Hurme, H. 2008. Tutkimushaastattelu: Teemahaastattelun teoria ja käytäntö. Gaudeamus. Helsinki.

Hochschild, A. 2012. The managed heart: commercialization of human feeling. University of California press. US.

Holbeche, L. 2015. The agile organization: how to build an innovative, sustainable and resilient business. CIPD. New York.

Holbeche, L. 2012. High-performance organization. Routledge. UK.

Huotilainen, M & Saarikivi, K. 2018. Aivot työssä. Otava. Finland.

Juuti, P & Salmi, P. 2014. Tunteet ja työ – uupumuksesta iloon. PS-kustannus. Jyväskylä.

Juuti, P. 2017. Kylmästä lämpimään. Books on Demand. Finland.

Kumar, R & Rajahoman, S. 2008. Burn out stress, pass on to success. Sage.

Laloux, F. 2014. Reinventing organizations. Nelson Parker. Brussels.

Lehto, J. 2014. Mindfulness – tiedostava ja hyväksyvä läsnäolo. In UusitaloMalmivaara, L. 2014. Positiivisen psykologian voima. PS-kustannus. Jyväskylä.

Lewis, S. 2016. Positive psychology and change. John Wiley & Sons Ltd. Uk.

McGonical, K. 2013. How to make a stress your friend. TED-talk. URL:
https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend/. Accessed:
15.4.2019.

Markman, A. 2018. In Goleman, D, McKee, A & Achor, S. 2018. Everyday emotional
intelligence: big ideas and practical advice on how to be human at work. Harvard business
review press. Boston.

Martela, F. 2014. Onnellisuuksien psykologia. In Uusitalo-Malmivaara, L. 2014.
Positiivisen psykologian voima. PS-kustannus. Jyväskylä.

Martela, F & Jarenko, K. 2017. Itseohjautuvuus – Miten organisaoitua tulevaisuudessa.
Alma Talent. Helsinki.

Martela, F & Kostamo, T. 2018. In Eskola, A. 2018. Navigating through changing times.
Routledge. New York.

Martela, F, Paakkanen, M & Pessi, A. 2017. Myötätunnon mullistava voima. PS-
kustannus. Jyväskylä.

Morgan, J. 2014. The future of work. John Wiley & Sons Inc. New Jersey.

Mullins, L & Dossor, P. 2013. Hospitality management and organizational behavior. 5th
edition. Pearson education limited. Harlow. United Kingdom.

Nokelainen, Mirva. 2015. The elements of happy organizational culture. Haaga-Helia.
Helsinki.

Perski, A & Rose, J. 2010. Ylitunnollisuus: eroon suorittamisen pakosta. Minerva. Helsinki.

Ringertz, E. 2015. The natural ways of managing leaders. URL:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3DyrDKYhSi8&feature=youtu.be. Accessed: 1.6.2019.

Rock, D. 2009. Your brain at work. HarperCollins Publishers. New York.

Sajaniemi, N & Mäkelä, J. 2014. Ihminen voi hyvin joukossa. In UusitaloMalmivaara, L. 2014. Positiivisen psykologian voima. PS-kustannus. Jyväskylä.

Sarajärvi, A & Tuomi, J. Laadullinen tutkimus ja sisällön analyysi. Tammi. Suomi.

Singh, D. 2015. Emotional Intelligence at Work. Sage Publications. Delhi.

Seligman, M. 2012. Flourish. A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Wellbeing. Free Press. New York. USA.

Seppälä, Emma. 2016. Breathing happiness. Ted-talk. URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uvli7NBUfY4. Accessed: 19.5.2019.

Sovijärvi, O, Arina,T & Halmetoja, J. 2018. Biohakkerin stressikirja. Biohacker center BHS Oy. Helsinki.

Stein, S. 2017. EQ leader: instilling passion, creating shared goals, and building meaningful organizations through emotional intelligence. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Uk.

Suzuki, Wendy. 2017. The brain-changing benefits of exercise. Ted-talk. URL: https://www.ted.com/talks/wendy_suzuki_the_brain_changing_benefits_of_exercise/ . Accessed: 19.5.2019.

Sydänmaanlakka, P. 2017. Älykäs itsensä johtaminen. Alma Talent. Helsinki.

Tuomi, J & Sarajärvi, A. 2017. Laadullinen tutkimus ja sisällön analyysi. Tammi.

Uusitalo-Arvola, L. 2019. Uuvuksissa – kirja sinulle, joka haluat voimasi takaisin. Tuuma-kustannus. Suomi.

Viitala, R. 2014. Henkilöstöjohtaminen – strateginen kilpailutekijä. Edita. Helsinki.

Weiss. L. 2018. in Everyday emotional intelligence: big ideas and practical advice on how to be human at work. Harvard business review press. Boston.

Whitmore, J. 2009. Coaching for performance. Fourth Edition. Nicholas Brealey Publishing. London.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Survey to employees

Sustainable high-performance at Netlight

1. What is your role at Netlight?
   - o Consultant at client
   - o Internal Consultant
   - o Engagement Search
   - o Talent Search
   - o Operations
   - o Other

2. What is your level?
   - o Analyst
   - o Associate Consultant
   - o Consultant
   - o Senior Consultant
   - o Associate Manager
   - o Manager
   - o Senior Manager
   - o Partner
   - o Operations

3. How long have you been working at Netlight?
   - o Less than 1 year
   - o 1-2 years
   - o 3-5 years
   - o Over 5 years

4. Are you a mentor?
   - o Yes
   - o No

5. I can easily concentrate on my work in my workplace when there is a need for it
   - o strongly disagree
   - o somewhat disagree
   - o somewhat agree
   - o strongly agree

6. I often feel overwhelmed due to my workload

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

7. I work on the most attention-rich tasks when I'm the most alert

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

8. I often find myself toggling between many different work tasks

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

9. I'm passionate about my work

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

10. I'm feeling a sense of purpose at work

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

11. I focus on performing well in few prioritized tasks, rather than completing as many tasks as possible

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

12. I continuously strive to increase the value of my work

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

13. I'm dedicating time for learning regularly

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

14. I reach out to my colleagues for help regularly

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

15. The meetings I attend are usually effective

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

16. I choose carefully when I collaborate with others, and when not

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

17. I get an adequate amount of quality sleep

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

18. During the past six months, how many hours per night have you slept on average?
- o Less than 5 hours/night
- o 5-6h/night
- o 7-8h/night
- o Over 8 hours/ night

19. During the past six months, on how many days per week on average have you done a total of 30 minutes or more of physical activity, which was enough to raise your breathing rate?

- o Less than once a week
- o 1-2 times a week
- o 3-5 times a week
- o Over 5 times a week

20. I have a healthy diet that supports my well-being*

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

21. I use meditation or mindful breathing techniques regularly to calm my mind

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

22. I take regular breaks for relaxation during my working days

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

23. I regularly unplug* from technology for the sake of my well-being

spending time without any technology

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

24. In my life, strain and recovery are in balance

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

25. I'm aware of my emotions and their impact on others

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

26. I feel that I can be my authentic self at work

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

27. I have colleagues with whom I can talk openly about my concerns

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

28. I often find myself judging or criticizing myself

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

29. I find it difficult to get over my failures

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

30. I trust I can overcome the challenges ahead in my work

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

31. To be a high-performer at Netlight, I have to complete as many tasks as possible

In this survey, high-performance refers to meeting and exceeding expectations in a role.

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

32. To be a high-performer at Netlight, I don't have to work long hours

In this survey, high-performance refers to meeting and exceeding expectations in a role.

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

33. High-performance at Netlight equals to high stress

In this survey, high-performance refers to meeting and exceeding expectations in a role.

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

34. Netlight's organizational structure has a positive impact on my well-being

Netlight is a network organization, managed from the inside and out as a flock, where the individual (a BOID) is in command and decides which direction to take, at the same time paying attention to the entire group whereby something greater emerges (the organization becomes a living organism).

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

35. I have enough freedom in my work

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

36. I have competence to perform in my work

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree
- o somewhat agree
- o strongly agree

37. I feel a sense of belonging at work

- o strongly disagree
- o somewhat disagree

     ○   somewhat agree
     ○   strongly agree

38. During the past six months, stress has had a negative impact on the quality of my life

     ○   strongly disagree
     ○   somewhat disagree
     ○   somewhat agree
     ○   strongly agree

39. During the past six months, stress has impacted my work performance negatively

     ○   strongly disagree
     ○   somewhat disagree
     ○   somewhat agree
     ○   strongly agree

40. "What does it mean to be a high-performer at Netlight from your perspective?"

41. "Which factors in Netlight's organizational structure have a negative impact on your well-being?"

42. "Which factors in Netlight's organizational structure have a positive impact on your well-being?"

43. "What is the role of emotions at the workplace in your opinion?"

44. "How do you maintain a balance between your well-being and being a high-performer at Netlight?"

45. "How do you restore energy in your life?"

46. "What kind of advice would you give to your colleague who suffers from negative stress?"

Appendix 2. Theme interview

Interview themes

1. High-performance
   - What does it mean to be a high-performer at Netlight?

2. Well-being in self-organizing companies
   - What is the impact of Netlight's organizational structure on individual well-being?

3. Sustainable working methods
   - How can an individual be a high-performer in a sustainable way?

4. Emotions, authentic self-expression, and vulnerability
   - What is the role of emotions at Netlight?

Appendix 3. All quantitative survey results

Items and answering groups	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
I can easily concentrate on my work in my workplace when there is a need for it				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	30	32	7	0
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	1	4	1	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	3	2	1	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	1	0	2	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	1	6	0	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	13	18	5	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	11	11	3	0
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	7	6	2	0
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	5	9	1	0
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	5	6	3	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	2	2	2	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	13	6	2	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	5	12	2	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	4	8	1	0
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	4	3	0	0

Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	1	0	1	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	9	13	2	0
I often feel overwhelmed due to my workload				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	0	19	30	20
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	1	1	4	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	0	2	2	2
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	0	3	0	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	0	1	5	1
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	1	11	17	7
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	0	7	10	8
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	0	2	7	6
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	0	6	7	2
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	1	4	8	1
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	0	3	1	2
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	0	5	11	5
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	0	5	5	9
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	0	6	5	2
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	0	0	5	2
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	0	0	1	1
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	2	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	0	8	11	5

I work on the most attention-rich tasks when I'm the most alert				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	14	41	13	1
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	1	3	2	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	2	3	1	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	0	2	1	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	2	1	2	2
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	8	21	7	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	5	12	7	1
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	4	8	3	0
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	2	9	2	2
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	4	6	4	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	0	6	0	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	5	12	3	1
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	4	9	6	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	2	9	2	0
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	1	6	0	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	0	1	1	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	1	0	1	0
Mentors (N = 24)	3	16	3	2
I often find myself toggling between many different work tasks				

Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	30	29	9	1
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	3	2	1	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	4	2	0	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	3	0	0	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	2	5	0	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	16	17	3	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	14	8	3	0
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	6	6	3	0
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	6	7	1	1
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	9	4	1	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	0	6	0	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	8	8	5	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	11	5	3	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	9	3	1	0
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	2	5	0	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	0	1	0	1
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	12	10	1	1
I'm passionate about my work				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	39	25	4	1
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	4	2	0	0

Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	6	0	0	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	3	0	0	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	7	0	0	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	23	13	0	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	16	6	3	0
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	9	4	1	1
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	11	4	0	0
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	10	4	0	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	4	2	0	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	11	8	2	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	13	4	1	1
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	5	7	1	0
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	7	0	0	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	15	8	1	0
I'm feeling a sense of purpose at work				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	32	33	2	2
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	3	2	1	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	5	1	0	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	3	0	0	0

Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	4	3	0	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	18	17	1	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	12	11	2	0
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	7	6	0	2
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	10	5	0	0
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	8	5	1	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	4	2	0	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	9	10	2	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	10	8	0	1
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	6	6	0	1
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	5	2	0	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	0	2	0	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	13	10	0	1
I focus on performing well in few prioritized tasks, rather than completing as many tasks as possible				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	21	33	15	0
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	1	4	1	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	1	5	0	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	0	3	0	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	2	3	2	0

Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	9	20	7	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	6	11	8	0
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	5	9	1	0
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	5	8	2	0
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	3	9	2	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	2	4	0	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	8	10	3	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	0	10	9	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	6	6	1	0
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	2	4	1	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	10	12	2	0
I continuously strive to increase the value of my work				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	36	33	0	0
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	5	1	0	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	5	1	0	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	3	0	0	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	5	2	0	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	21	15	0	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	17	8	0	0
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	8	7	0	0

Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	8	7	0	0
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	8	6	0	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	4	2	0	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	15	6	0	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	8	11	0	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	7	6	0	0
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	4	3	0	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	2	0	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	15	9	0	0
I'm dedicating time for learning regularly				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	19	23	22	5
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	3	3	0	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	2	3	1	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	1	2	0	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	2	3	1	1
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	10	18	7	1
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	10	9	5	1
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	2	5	7	1
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	5	2	5	3
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	7	5	1	1

Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	0	5	1	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	7	9	4	1
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	6	7	6	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	3	3	4	3
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	1	2	4	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	1	0	1	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	0	2	0
Mentors (N = 24)	6	5	10	3
I reach out to my colleagues for help regularly				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	32	28	7	2
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	3	3	0	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	5	1	0	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	3	0	0	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	6	1	0	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	22	11	3	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	13	9	2	1
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	5	9	0	1
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	9	4	2	0
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	9	4	1	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	4	1	1	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	11	9	0	1

Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	6	10	3	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	6	5	1	1
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	4	2	1	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	2	0	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	14	8	2	0
The meetings I attend are usually effective				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	6	39	19	5
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	2	3	1	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	3	1	2	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	2	1	0	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	2	3	2	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	10	18	8	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	2	13	7	3
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	2	8	4	1
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	1	8	5	1
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	7	5	2	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	1	3	2	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	1	12	5	3
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	2	10	6	1
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	1	7	4	1

Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	1	4	2	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	0	2	0	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	1	1	0
Mentors (N = 24)	2	13	8	1
I choose carefully when I collaborate with others, and when not				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	16	22	27	4
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	0	4	2	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	0	2	4	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	1	1	1	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	3	2	2	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	6	10	20	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	6	8	9	2
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	4	7	4	0
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	4	6	3	2
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	1	5	8	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	1	0	5	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	6	3	10	2
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	1	12	6	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	4	5	3	1
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	3	2	2	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	1	1	0	0

Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	1	0	1
Mentors (N = 24)	8	9	5	2
I get an adequate amount of quality sleep				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	20	26	16	7
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	0	2	3	1
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	3	1	2	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	0	1	2	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	2	2	3	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	9	10	13	4
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	6	8	8	3
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	5	9	0	1
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	5	5	5	0
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	3	3	8	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	2	3	0	1
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	6	5	5	5
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	6	6	5	2
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	3	6	4	0
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	1	5	1	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	6	12	6	0

I have a healthy diet that supports my well-being				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	12	36	16	5
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	0	4	2	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	1	5	0	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	1	1	1	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	0	3	3	1
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	4	22	8	2
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	5	11	9	0
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	3	9	2	1
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	2	7	3	3
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	1	10	3	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	1	5	0	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	5	9	6	1
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	4	9	5	1
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	1	6	4	2
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	1	4	1	1
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	2	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	3	12	5	4
I use meditation or mindful breathing techniques regularly to calm my mind				

Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	5	6	13	45
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	0	2	2	2
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	0	2	0	4
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	1	2	0	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	1	1	1	4
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	1	8	7	20
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	4	3	5	13
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	1	1	3	10
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	1	1	1	12
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	0	4	2	8
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	0	1	1	4
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	4	2	4	11
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	2	3	4	10
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	0	1	2	10
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	0	0	1	6
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	0	1	1	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	0	0	2
Mentors (N = 24)	1	2	3	18
I take regular breaks for relaxation during my working days				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	8	21	26	14

Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	2	1	2	1
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	1	4	0	1
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	0	1	2	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	0	1	4	2
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	6	10	13	7
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	2	7	11	5
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	1	8	4	2
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	2	3	6	4
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	5	2	4	3
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	0	2	3	1
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	1	7	8	5
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	2	8	7	2
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	1	4	3	5
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	2	1	4	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	0	1	1	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	2	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	3	6	9	6
I regularly unplug from technology for the sake of my well-being				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	5	12	23	29
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	1	2	1	2

Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	1	3	0	2
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	0	2	0	1
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	0	1	2	4
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	3	8	10	15
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	2	7	6	10
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	1	3	6	5
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	1	2	4	8
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	2	3	3	6
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	1	2	1	2
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	2	5	5	9
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	0	6	7	6
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	0	1	3	9
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	1	1	3	2
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	0	1	1	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	1	0	1	0
Mentors (N = 24)	2	3	7	12
In my life, strain and recovery are in balance				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	8	37	22	2
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	1	2	3	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	3	2	1	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	0	2	1	0

Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	1	3	3	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	6	17	12	1
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	1	11	13	0
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	3	8	4	0
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	3	10	1	1
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	4	5	5	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	0	4	2	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	2	7	11	1
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	1	14	4	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	3	4	5	1
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	1	6	0	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	2	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	5	14	4	1
I'm aware of my emotions and their impact on others				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	28	35	6	0
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	2	4	0	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	2	4	0	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	1	2	0	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	6	1	0	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	16	19	1	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	7	14	4	0

Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	8	6	1	0
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	8	7	0	0
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	6	8	0	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	0	5	1	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	9	10	2	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	6	10	3	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	5	8	0	0
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	6	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	2	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	14	10	0	0
I feel that I can be my authentic self at work				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	41	21	6	1
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	2	3	1	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	4	2	0	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	3	0	0	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	4	2	1	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	24	10	2	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	12	10	3	0
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	9	4	2	0
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	9	4	1	1
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	9	4	1	0

Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	4	1	1	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	11	7	3	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	10	8	1	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	9	2	1	1
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	5	2	0	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	15	6	2	1
I have colleagues with whom I can talk openly about my concerns				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	46	19	4	0
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	2	3	1	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	3	3	0	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	3	0	0	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	5	2	0	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	26	10	0	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	11	11	3	0
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	11	3	1	0
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	11	3	1	0
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	10	4	0	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	3	3	0	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	11	7	3	0

Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	13	5	1	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	10	2	1	0
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	5	2	0	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	17	6	1	0
I often find myself judging or criticizing myself				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	16	32	16	5
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	1	5	0	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	3	2	1	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	1	1	0	1
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	5	0	2	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	15	18	2	1
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	9	10	4	2
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	0	8	6	1
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	2	4	7	2
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	5	9	0	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	0	6	0	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	9	7	3	2
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	6	10	3	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	1	5	5	2

Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	0	2	4	1
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	0	1	1	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	0	1	1
Mentors (N = 24)	2	7	11	4
I find it difficult to get over my failures				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	3	23	31	12
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	0	2	4	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	0	4	2	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	0	2	1	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	0	3	3	1
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	1	14	18	3
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	1	11	9	4
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	1	6	5	3
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	0	3	9	3
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	0	6	6	2
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	0	2	4	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	0	8	8	5
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	2	9	8	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	1	3	7	2
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	0	2	3	2
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	0	0	1	1
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	1	1	0

Mentors (N = 24)	1	6	11	6
I trust I can overcome the challenges ahead in my work				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	45	20	4	0
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	2	4	0	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	4	2	0	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	2	1	0	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	3	4	0	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	19	16	1	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	16	7	2	0
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	12	2	1	0
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	9	6	0	0
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	8	6	0	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	4	2	0	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	12	8	1	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	12	4	3	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	9	4	0	0
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	6	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	2	0	0	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	2	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	17	7	0	0
To be a high-performer at Netlight, I have to complete as many tasks as possible				

Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	2	13	38	16
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	0	3	2	1
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	1	0	3	2
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	0	1	0	2
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	0	2	2	3
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	0	9	20	7
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	2	7	12	4
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	1	2	6	6
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	0	1	7	7
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	0	3	8	3
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	0	3	3	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	2	3	11	5
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	0	6	8	5
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	1	2	7	3
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	0	0	6	1
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	0	0	0	2
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	0	0	2
Mentors (N = 24)	1	2	11	10
To be a high-performer at Netlight, I don't have to work long hours				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	17	32	17	3

Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	0	2	4	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	4	1	1	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	0	2	1	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	1	0	5	1
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	12	13	10	1
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	7	9	7	2
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	0	11	3	1
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	3	4	8	0
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	4	7	3	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	3	2	1	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	9	6	4	2
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	3	11	4	1
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	0	6	7	0
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	1	4	2	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	0	1	0	1
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	1	1	0
Mentors (N = 24)	3	10	11	0
High-performance at Netlight equals to high stress				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	2	17	27	23
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	0	2	4	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	0	1	1	4

Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	1	0	1	1
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	0	2	3	2
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	2	9	14	11
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	1	7	8	9
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	0	4	6	5
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	0	2	8	5
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	1	2	5	6
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	0	2	4	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	2	5	5	9
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	0	8	5	6
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	0	3	7	3
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	0	0	4	3
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	0	2	0
Mentors (N = 24)	0	3	13	8
Netlight's organizational structure has a positive impact on my well-being				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	42	20	6	1
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	2	3	1	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	2	4	0	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	3	0	0	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	1	5	1	0

Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	19	15	2	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	13	8	3	1
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	8	6	1	0
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	10	3	2	0
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	9	5	0	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	3	2	1	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	10	7	3	1
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	12	6	1	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	7	4	2	0
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	5	2	0	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	2	0	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	15	6	3	0
I have enough freedom in my work				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	38	28	2	1
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	2	4	0	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	4	2	0	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	2	1	0	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	6	1	0	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	21	14	1	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	12	11	1	1
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	8	7	0	0

Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	11	4	0	0
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	7	7	0	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	2	4	0	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	9	9	2	1
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	13	6	0	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	6	7	0	0
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	6	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	2	0	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	17	7	0	0
I have competence to perform in my work				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	45	21	3	0
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	1	5	0	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	5	1	0	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	1	2	0	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	6	1	0	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	21	13	2	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	16	9	0	0
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	9	5	1	0
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	12	3	0	0
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	6	7	1	0

Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	3	3	0	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	14	7	0	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	12	5	2	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	8	5	0	0
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	6	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	2	0	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	18	6	0	0
I feel a sense of belonging at work				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	43	21	4	1
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	1	5	0	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	6	0	0	0
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	3	0	0	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	6	1	0	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	23	13	0	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	15	8	2	0
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	10	3	1	1
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	11	3	1	0
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	8	6	0	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	5	1	0	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	11	8	2	0

Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	12	6	0	1
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	7	4	2	0
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	7	0	0	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	2	0	0	0
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	1	1	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	18	4	2	0
During the past six months, stress has had a negative impact on the quality of my life				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	9	24	20	16
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	2	3	1	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	1	2	1	2
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	0	1	2	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	0	3	1	3
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	3	17	11	5
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	5	9	5	6
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	3	2	5	5
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	1	5	4	5
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	1	5	6	2
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	0	4	2	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	3	10	4	4
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	5	4	3	7

Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	3	3	5	2
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	0	2	3	2
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	0	0	1	1
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	2	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	2	7	8	7
During the past six months, stress has impacted my work performance negatively				
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	4	20	23	22
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	2	3	1	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	0	2	3	1
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	0	1	2	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	0	2	1	4
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	1	10	17	8
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	3	11	4	7
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	1	3	6	5
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	1	4	3	7
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	0	4	8	2
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	0	3	3	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	1	9	3	8
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	3	4	8	4
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	2	2	5	4
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	0	1	2	4

Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	0	1	0	1
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	2	0	0
Mentors (N = 24)	1	6	7	10
During the past six months, how many hours per night have you slept on average?	Less than 5 hours /night	5-6 hours /night	7-8 hours /night	Over 8 hours /night
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	0	23	44	2
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	0	6	0	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	0	1	4	1
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	0	1	2	0
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	0	2	5	0
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	0	12	24	0
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	0	11	14	0
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	0	3	10	2
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	0	7	7	1
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	0	6	8	0
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	0	3	3	0
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	0	9	12	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	0	5	13	1
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	0	5	7	1
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	0	3	4	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	0	0	1	1

	Less than once a week	1-2 times a week	3-5 times a week	Over 5 times a week
Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	0	2	0
Mentors (N = 24)	0	10	13	1
During the past six months, on how many days per week on average have you done a total of 30 minutes or more of physical activity, which was enough to raise your breathing rate?	Less than once a week	1-2 times a week	3-5 times a week	Over 5 times a week
Role at Netlight: Consultant at client (N = 69)	18	16	26	9
Role at Netlight: Internal consultant (N = 6)	2	4	0	0
Role at Netlight: Talent Search (N = 6)	0	4	1	1
Role at Netlight: Engagement Search (N = 3)	1	0	1	1
Role at Netlight: Operations (N = 7)	3	3	0	1
Time at Netlight; less than 1 year (N = 36)	10	11	11	4
Time at Netlight; 1-2 years (N = 25)	4	10	7	4
Time at Netlight; 3-5 years (N = 15)	4	2	7	2
Time at Netlight; over 5 years (N = 15)	6	4	3	2
Level at Netlight: Analyst (N = 14)	5	6	2	1
Level at Netlight: Associate Consultant (N = 6)	0	1	2	3
Level at Netlight: Consultant (N = 21)	6	6	6	3
Level at Netlight: Senior Consultant (N = 19)	2	5	10	2
Level at Netlight: Associate Manager (N = 13)	7	2	4	0
Level at Netlight: Manager (N = 7)	1	3	3	0
Level at Netlight: Senior Manager (N = 2)	0	0	0	2

Level at Netlight: Partner (N = 2)	0	1	1	0
Mentors (N = 24)	8	6	7	3