



The hybrid working models impact from an employee perspective and its effects on the employee experience.

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Abstract

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This research thesis is a commissioned paper for Suomen Osuuskauppojen Keskuskunta (SOK) Sales Service Department. This research aims to comprehend the new employee perspective in-depth to improve their employee experience at the workplace. The hybrid working model is an emerging trend and has only been used for less than a year in SOK when conducting this research in autumn 2022.

The COVID-19 pandemic urged companies to find alternative ways to offices due to social distancing, and using a hybrid working model has become more common. Because the commissioning department has recently recruited 17 new employees, their interpretations of the hybrid model trend were examined. Employee perspective was valuable to understand and observe to develop the employee experience.

Therefore, mixed research methods were used in this thesis to gather primary data from the employees and their perception of how the hybrid working model has affected their employee experience. The survey consists of 19 questions, and the interview was conducted in a semi-structured format. Finally, the data collection aims to summarise the findings and present the commissioner's solutions for the key objectives arising from the survey and interviews.

The literature review and background research explain previous research in-depth about the hybrid working model, job satisfaction, employee experience, and recruiting through social media. In the summer of 2022, to recruit new employees, the author was a part of a project team who created a recruiting campaign on the social media platform TikTok, which is also included in the research.

According to the survey and interview results, the employee experience while working in a hybrid working model is conducted well in the commissioning department. However, the research discovered development areas that need to be addressed. The study displays the advantages and disadvantages of the hybrid working model and gives suggestions on how to advance further.

Keywords

Hybrid working model, employee experience, job satisfaction, social media, recruiting.

Table of contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Background of the topic.....	1
1.2	Research question, objective, and purpose statement	2
1.3	Delimitation of the study.....	3
1.4	The commissioner	4
2	Literature review and background	5
2.1	The commissioner in-depth.....	5
2.2	The hybrid working model	6
2.3	Job satisfaction.....	7
2.3.1	Defining job satisfaction.....	8
2.3.2	Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs	9
2.3.3	The employee experience	11
2.4	Recruiting through social media.....	16
3	Methodology	18
3.1	Research question and goal	18
3.2	Determining the method.....	18
3.2.1	Qualitative research.....	19
3.2.2	Quantitative research.....	19
3.2.3	Mixed research method	19
3.3	Conducting the survey.....	20
3.4	Semi-Structured interview	22
4	Analysis and results.....	23
4.1	Recruiting perspective.....	23
4.2	The perception of the hybrid working model.....	24
4.3	Employee perception of the working environment.....	28
4.4	Interview results.....	31
4.4.1	Background questions	32
4.4.2	Social experience	32
4.4.3	Work experience	33
4.4.4	Organization experience.....	34

4.5	Launching TikTok to recruit employees	35
4.6	Summary and conclusion of results	36
4.7	Recommendations and development suggestions	38
5	Conclusion	41
5.1	Reliability of the research	41
5.2	Future research proposals	42
5.3	Author's learning and self-evaluation	42
	References	44
	Appendices.....	48
	Appendix 1. Survey form sent to respondents.....	48
	Appendix 2. Answers to question 3.....	52
	Appendix 3. Answers to question 6.....	53
	Appendix 4. Answers to question 8.....	53
	Appendix 5. Answers to question 10.....	54
	Appendix 6. Answers to question 12.....	55
	Appendix 7. Answers to question 16.....	55
	Appendix 8. Answers to question 18.....	56
	Appendix 9. Main TikTok video.....	58

1 Introduction

This paper is a bachelor's thesis commissioned by Suomen Osuuskauppojen Keskuskunta Sales Service department. In this introductory chapter, the author will present the thesis topic, the background of the subject, and the research question and purpose statement in detail. In addition, the commissioner SOK is introduced in this chapter. This paper is a research-oriented thesis making use of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, which the author will discuss further in the following chapters.

The topic presented in this paper is chosen cooperatively by the commissioner and the author of the thesis. The purpose is to find a valuable understanding of the current trending topic of hybrid work and how that influences the company's employees in the future. The findings from this research will be used to enhance the experience of the new employee's integration into the team and better understand their emotions and needs. As modern solutions like hybrid work are rising after the COVID-19 pandemic, it is crucial to examine how that affects the workforce and the company as a whole. This research will present the topic's opportunities and challenges and provide the commissioner with the latest viewpoint.

The succeeding chapters present the literature review for this thesis, exhibiting the key concepts and previous research around the key themes. After that, there will be the methodology chapter, where the empirical part of the research is discussed with research methods, research question, the survey and interviews for new employees, tools used, and research design, also addressing the reliability and validity of the research. Next, the analysis and results chapter includes data analysis and evaluation going through the survey results, and methodically summarising the findings. Finally, in the concluding chapter, the researcher reflects and presents conclusions about the thesis process and future research proposals.

1.1 Background of the topic

According to a recent McKinsey (2021) survey of 100 executives across industries and regions, nine out of ten organizations will combine remote and on-site working in the post-pandemic workplace. The majority of businesses previously expected employees to spend the majority of their time on-site before the COVID-19 crisis, which started in 2020. Executives predict that the hybrid model, in which workers divide their working hours between the office and a remote location, for example, home, will become much more prevalent as the pandemic progresses. The majority of directors anticipate that employees will spend between 21 and 80 percent of their time or one to four days per workweek on-site at the office (McKinsey 2021).

As an example, an actual case is presented. One of the largest IT companies, established in 1935 and with its headquarters in Tokyo, Fujitsu Limited is a Japanese multinational corporation that manufactures and provides tools and services for information and communications technology. By annual revenue, Fujitsu ranks 10th globally and first in Japan in the IT services industry in 2022 (Fujitsu 2022). In a Harvard Business Review Article (2021), the Global Head of Human Resources, Hiroki Hiramatsu, discussed the evolution of the working models at Fujitsu.

Although flexible work options were a company priority for some time, little had changed pre-pandemic. In-person communication and lengthy office hours were still valued by the majority of managers in the Japan offices, and more than 74 % of all employees agreed. These results are according to an internal study conducted just before the global pandemic hit the beginning of 2020. Although around 80,000 of Fujitsu's employees in Japan operated from home by the middle of March 2020, it did not take long to recognize their increased adaptability benefits (Harvard Business Review 2021).

In a subsequent study conducted in May of the same year, it was discovered by the researchers that only 15 % of Fujitsu staff members thought the office would be the best place to work. About 30 % of respondents felt their homes were the ideal workplace, and the remaining 55 % preferred a hybrid approach that combined working remotely and office (Harvard Business Review 2021).

As staff members became accustomed to their new routines, Hiramatsu realized something significant was taking place (Harvard Business Review 2021). After over a year of existing in a pandemic, Hiramatsu declared that the company was not returning to the previous organism, working mainly at the office. Instead, stating that individuals could use that time to exercise, education, or family time and that the company requires multiple new strategies for making remote jobs effective, their approach to work and life is changing (Harvard Business Review 2021).

1.2 Research question, objective, and purpose statement

This chapter presents details about the research topic and the research question. The sub-questions follow the main research question in the following:

- What is the hybrid working model's impact from recruiting and new employee standpoint, and what are its effects on the employee experience?
- How could the new employees integrate better into the department and improve the working environment and employee experience?

-How to use social media to recruit more talent, and how does hybrid working opportunity influence the willingness to apply?

The main objective of this research-oriented thesis is to research the Hybrid Working model from the perspectives of the new employees. They have recently started working in the commissioning company within six months or less. In addition, the sales service department has conducted multiple surveys previously about the matter with the employees who have worked there since the pre-pandemic. Therefore, the perspective of the new staff members can give additional insight into how they feel about the working model and how it affects their adjustment to the new workplace environment.

The commissioning party has highlighted the question of how the new employees could improve integration into the department and therefore enhance the working environment and job satisfaction or employee experience at the workplace. This angle is one of the two sub-questions researched in this paper. The second angle is the hybrid work model's desirability in recruiting. The topic will be studied in this thesis as well to utilize the findings in the future possibly.

Other angles discussed in this paper are promoting the hybrid working model in recruiting new talent to the department and how that has influenced the number of applicants and reaching new possible candidates. The researcher launched a recruiting campaign for the commissioning party through social media to promote the open vacancies in the Sales Service department. The paper aims to understand if the hybrid working model is desirable for job applicants and how they feel about that opportunity to help the commissioner excel at their potential recruitment in the future.

1.3 Delimitation of the study

The writer of this thesis has carefully chosen the study's scope to focus on the research question and provide a meaningful conclusion to the commissioning company. This study is limited to researching the emotions and outlooks of the new employees in the commissioning company's sales service department. The following has been excluded from the survey to keep the scope concise. The employees who have been working in the company for over six months are not able to participate in this research. As mentioned previously, the company has already surveyed them on a similar theme.

Another excluded topic of research and a possible solution for the company in the future is the prospect of starting a team in the sales service department that would be working fully remotely without any mandatory office days. That subject could be researched in the future,

as the company could benefit from this opportunity to present in the recruiting process and reduce turnover caused by, for example, moving. However, this research question did not fit into this research thesis's scope.

The Limitation of this study is the number of new employees. While the researcher can send the survey to all of them in a digital form, eliminating the problem of being in different cities around Finland, it poses the risk of the employees not answering the survey and, therefore, not getting enough answers for the analysis. This risk is mitigated by crafting a carefully written e-mail invitation that would appeal to the respondents and sending them reminders before the deadline.

1.4 The commissioner

The commissioning department is a part of the S Group, a customer-owned network of retail and service companies with more than 1800 locations throughout Finland. It has almost 40 000 employees. S Group is composed of cooperatives and Suomen Osuuskauppojen Keskuskunta (SOK) with its subsidiaries, which, among other things, operate in the travel and hospitality industry in Finland and Estonia. In addition, it provides services in the hardware industry, the travel and hospitality industry, the department store and specialty store business, the service station store and gasoline sales market, and the supermarket sector. Additionally, several cooperatives have agricultural and automobile outlets in their local regions (S Group 2022).

The S Group aims to be a one-stop shop for its co-op members and provide services. For example, through S-Bank, S Group offers all co-op members a full range of banking services. Enterprises that operate in accordance with cooperative principles are known as cooperatives. Their clients or co-op members are also their owners. S Group consists of 19 independent regional cooperatives and SOK, owned by the cooperatives.

Additionally, S Group consists of six local cooperatives. In addition to covering all of Finland, the network has a strong regional focus. The cooperatives own SOK, their major company, which provides expert support and procurement services. Furthermore, SOK oversees leading S Group's strategic development and the development of numerous chains (S Group 2022). The student will describe the commissioning party in additional detail in the next chapter.

2 Literature review and background

This chapter presents the background and literature review of the central topics around the thesis subject. The student researched the key concepts to gain a more in-depth understanding of the thesis subject and present the other researchers' previous findings in the field. The terms pre-pandemic and post-pandemic used in this paper refer to the COVID-19 outbreak, which has enormously impacted all industries. Firstly, the initial background and more in-depth introduction of the commissioning department. Then, continue the chapter by defining the key objectives used in this research.

2.1 The commissioner in-depth

SOK's commercial operations supplement the services offered by S Group in Finland and the surrounding areas. SOK and its subsidiaries make up SOK Corporation. In addition to its local companies, SOK operates in Estonia's travel and hospitality industry and the supermarket sector. Finnish co-op members gain from the activities in the neighboring regions in the form of, for example, higher procurement volumes and lower prices (S Group). S Group's travel and catering business is a growing and developing industry.

SOK Travel and catering trade chain management (MaRa) is responsible for developing and managing the Sokos Hotels hotel chain, Radisson Blu hotels in Finland, and the S group chain restaurants in Finland and nearby areas. The goal is to create and maintain stimulating product and service concepts that meet many different needs, producing motivating job opportunities for professionals in the field and creating well-being throughout the country (S Group 2022).

In recent years, especially with the help of digital service development, efforts have been made to create even more experiential services that add value to the customer. Responsibility has also been a guiding factor in development projects. As a result, MaRa is integrally involved in implementing the entire S group's "Better place to live" sustainability responsibility program, according to the S group (2022) article.

The commissioning department, the sales services, is a part of the Hospitality, Tourism, and Catering MaRa chain management. The sales service is formed by multiple teams who each have their own area of expertise, working from three central locations, Helsinki, Turku, and Tampere. In all these locations, there are specialized sales representatives handling different types of negotiations, sales, and customer service. In addition, there is the nationwide room sales service, group sales, meeting sales, and restaurant sales. Most communication with the customers and hotels is conducted by telephone and e-mail. The

office has an open office policy which means that all the different department workers blend when working at the office.

The sales service department adopted a hybrid working model at the beginning of 2022. The model in place at the time of the study in the Autumn of 2022 is the 2/14 Dynamic Hybrid working model. That means an employee must fulfill a minimum of two days of working in the office during a fortnight. However, the employees are always welcome in the office. This model was adapted to give the employees more personal freedom to choose when they would like to work at the office while maintaining a structure where the workforce will still enjoy the benefits of working in the office.

In addition, a mandatory training period is conducted at the office to ease the training process, and the new employees would get to know their colleagues around the office face-to-face. One reason mentioned for the mandatory office orientation is that in this line of work, the Employee benefits from hearing other colleagues working and learning from them (S Group).

2.2 The hybrid working model

There are several types of work models that organizations commonly use. These work models can affect how employees interact and where they complete their daily tasks. The models are methods for establishing workspaces and identifying where employees are conducting their working hours (Indeed 2021). Its work model determines the everyday operations of a particular organization. It outlines the plan and organizational structure that employees must follow. To determine which work models are most effective, many organizations have been exploring after the COVID-19 pandemic forced organizations to reconsider their working models (Indeed 2021).

While some have set out new guidelines for working from home, others have urged their personnel to return to the office workplace. Some have established a mix of remote and office work and adopted the hybrid working model. The most common working models are office environment, fully remote, and hybrid (Indeed 2021). This chapter will focus on the hybrid model as it is most relevant to the study.

The workplace employees have historically operated from physical offices, but COVID-19 abruptly disrupted this long-standing reality by placing an unprecedented dependency on remote work arrangements through 2020 and 2021. If there is one major lesson to be learned from the pandemic, there is no consensus over what employers and employees

envision for the future or what is optimum (Evans 2022). Looking ahead, the essence of a hybrid workforce and organization goes beyond binary decisions about whether to work remotely or in an actual office. Hybrid models enable the seamless alignment of in-person and virtual settings within innovative and flexible workspaces designed to strengthen individual and collective performance capacities, in contrast to remote works prior to COVID-19 and predominantly virtual teams during COVID-19 (Roy 2022).

The concept of a work-life balance was straightforward before the global pandemic. One could clearly distinguish between time spent physically at work and home. However, the COVID-19 outbreak, social distancing, and travel limitations have all contributed to a hybrid work environment that gives employees meaningful power in deciding where and how they perform their work, but this does not come without a cost (Evans 2022).

Working from home can be beneficial if the following conditions apply. The conditions consist of but are not limited to the following: The worker needs to be a well-organized and independent individual who needs minimal supervision. The worker cannot be reliant on the social aspect of the office environment with frequent social interaction. Finally, they need to have the required resources, tools, and space to separate work life from home life while working remotely. Many individuals lack the room to set up a separate work area in the case of the last condition. Instead, they work from a spare bedroom, their own bedroom, or the dining room table. Unfortunately, the desire for a social component and the last condition can be challenging for specific individuals (Dawson 2022).

Employees are accustomed to talking with co-workers in a live setting in break rooms, over lunch breaks, while strolling down the hall, and in other group environments. However, today, many meetings and working groups are conducted online through video calls. Although there are more significant restrictions in this circumstance, information can still be communicated. Without body language, the distinctive energy, and the visual signals of a live situation, a lot can be missed. People are also less likely to interact at the same level online than they would in a typical live setting. These unplanned encounters are essential because they promote innovativeness, relationship-building, and trust (Dawson 2022).

2.3 Job satisfaction

This chapter defines the term job satisfaction with various sources about the topic to understand the concept more deeply. As the research question states, this thesis discusses employee experience and job satisfaction from the new employee's point of view. It

comprehends their outlooks while also enhancing their employee experience and job satisfaction.

2.3.1 Defining job satisfaction

According to Basu Mallick (2021), the degree of satisfaction employees experience with their jobs is known as job satisfaction. Beyond their responsibilities and commitments, this includes their relationship with their co-workers and bosses, their perception of the organization's rules, and their work's effect on their personal lives. An unquantifiable metric known as job satisfaction is described as a positive emotional response one has while performing duties or being present at work. With job satisfaction surveys becoming commonplace at most workplaces, leading organizations are now attempting to measure this perception. It's critical to remember that each employee experiences job satisfaction differently. The elements that make one employee feel good about their employment might not apply to another employee in the same workplace under similar circumstances (Basu Mallick 2021).

The article states that this necessitates the requirement to take a comprehensive approach to employee satisfaction that addresses the following areas.

- First, the demanding nature of the job inspires workers to achieve new levels.
- A degree of contentment could include shorter commuting, access to digital tools needed, and flexible working hours.
- Regular encouraging acknowledgment from the supervisors and the corporation.
- Competitive salaries create a sense of economic safety.
- A chance of promotion or advancement per employees' career development goals.

Previously other researchers have stated that job satisfaction is defined as any combination of psychological, physiological, and environmental factors that lead a person to truthfully declare that they are content with their job (Hoppock 1935). More recently, in this century, job satisfaction has been defined as a collection of positive or negative feelings and emotions that employees have toward their work (Karatepe et al. 2006). The Employee Job Satisfaction and Engagement Report from the Society for Human Resource Management (Lee et al. 2016) identifies four advantages of ensuring employees are satisfied with their work as the reason why job satisfaction is so crucial.

The advantages are higher profits, and a positive working environment may increase sales, lower expenses, and strengthen the bottom line. With increased output, employees who are more satisfied at work, whether they are content with the organizational culture, the benefits

they receive, or the recognition they receive, may generate more and do it more efficiently, regardless of their job titles or salaries. With reduced turnover, employees are less likely to quit their jobs if they are more satisfied at work. As new talent views staff retention as a plus, it also helps to attract higher-level talent. The final advantage is loyalty. Employees are more satisfied when they believe there is an opportunity for advancement. They consequently prefer to support the organization's objectives and aims since they believe it has their best interest in mind. When this occurs, staff members could inform their friends or family about how excellent the company is, contributing to the spread of organizational branding and image (Lee et al. 2016).

2.3.2 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a psychological theory that describes why individuals are motivated to pursue different needs at different levels. According to the hypothesis, individuals are driven to prioritize fulfilling their needs. The most fundamental requirements come first, followed by more advanced desires. The fifth level of the pyramid, self-actualization, is the definitive objective of this hypothesis (Maslow 1943).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is divided into five primary levels. The most fundamental needs are first met, followed by the more advanced ones. Maslow previously assumed that before seeking higher levels, one had to satisfy the previous ones fully. However, these levels overlap according to the latest modern theory interpretation. As individuals develop, their motivation is more concentrated on higher levels. However, they will pursue the lower levels with less intensity, regardless of the fact that they primarily focus on the higher levels of the hierarchy (Corporate Financial Institute 2022). The following will deepen the subject and explain figure 1, Maslow's hierarchy levels.

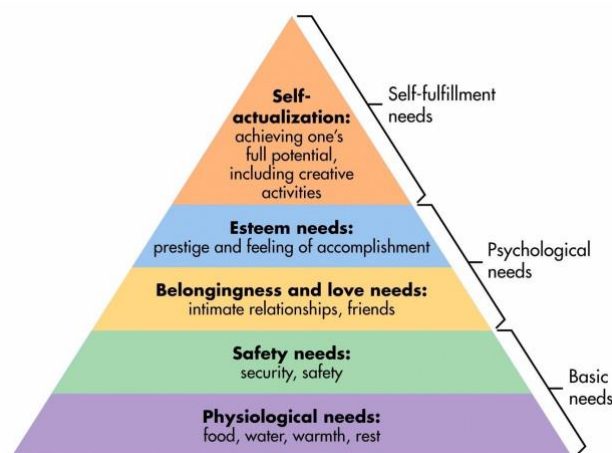


Figure 1. Levels of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

The foundation of Maslow's hierarchy of needs is physiological needs. They are the compulsory things a person needs most to live. They include the need for nourishment, clothing, heat, rest, and healthiness. At this level, a person's motivation originates from their fundamental desire to survive. Safety requirements are found on Maslow's second level of the hierarchy of needs. An individual's need to feel safe and secure in everyday life is their safety or security need. The need for law, order, and protection against unpredictable and harmful circumstances serves as motivation. There are various examples of safety needs in modern society. First, one must think about their physical safety in order to attain stability and security. That entails pursuing defense against the elements, hostile environments, health risks, and disease. Additionally, in order to thrive and survive in contemporary society, a person requires financial stability. That speaks to the importance of having stable employment, steady income, and savings.

Love and belonging desires are at the third level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Humans are social creatures who crave social interaction. This hierarchy level outlines the significance of love, family, intimacy, and friendship. Humans require receiving and giving love to have a sense of belonging. Individuals may suffer loneliness or depression when these demands are not met. Individuals may suffer loneliness or depression when these demands are not met.

Esteem needs are at level four of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Esteem demands are associated with a person's desire for respect, status, and acknowledgment. Once a person's requirements for love and belonging have been met, they turn to attain their esteem needs. Maslow classified the necessity for respect for others and the need for respect for oneself into two categories. Acquiring popularity, status, and recognition is related to being respected by others. Respect for oneself is connected to one's self-respect, self-assurance, competence, independence, and freedom.

Self-actualization needs are at the fifth and concluding level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Self-actualization is the achievement of full potential. Individuals want to advance to their maximum potential at this level. For example, one person could strive to be the best friend to everyone and the most outstanding parent. Another person might want to accumulate wealth and engage in philanthropy. Others might aim to become well-known athletes. Self-actualization is, in general, the pursuit of personal growth. Growth needs and deficiency needs are the two main categories of needs Maslow used to differentiate in his hierarchy theory (Corporate Financial Institute 2022). The change in motivation that occurs as needs are satisfied is the primary distinction between growth and deficiency needs. When growth requirements are conformed, an individual's motivation rises.

Contradictorily, while deficiency demands are satisfied, an individual's motivation drops. Self-actualization is the aim of personal development, as was previously mentioned, making it a growth need. The demand for growth results from a drive to improve and advance personally. When a person's requirements for growth are met, their determination rises because they want to get even better. On the other hand, Deficit needs are related to the four stages below self-actualization: physiological, safety, love and belonging, and esteem needs. Deficiency needs are caused by a person's desire to fill gaps or eliminate weaknesses. A person's desire to obtain the things they lack reduces as they acquire them (Corporate Financial Institute 2022).

A person's motivation is typically determined by the level of the hierarchy they are currently pursuing. Here are a few scenarios to understand the theory better. For instance, someone stranded in the woods is probably trying to meet their physiological needs. They might be cold, hungry, thirsty, or without shelter. This person would most likely not be concerned about financial stability or the need to fit in with others. Instead, they are trying to find the things they need to survive.

On the other perspective, we can consider a senior financial analyst in a scenario. This individual possesses a stable, well-paying career, a spouse, a family, and property. In addition, that person holds a respected position within their organization and with their co-workers. Since these demands are obviously met, this person is unlikely to be motivated primarily by their physical or safety needs. They would want to pursue contentment and personal development instead. They would like to satisfy their demands for self-actualization and learn what more the world has to offer and what they may contribute to it (Corporate Financial Institute 2022). One could argue that this theory is at the root of job satisfaction and a base for understanding human behavior in the workplace.

2.3.3 The employee experience

Expectations about the nature of labor and how work is organized have transformed, as every company has noticed since 2020, according to a McKinsey (2021) article. Employees have acknowledged this feeling of disruption. While most individuals considered their organizations were supporting them throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, countless people struggled, according to McKinsey's (2021) research.

Additionally, while some businesses are looking into hybrid working arrangements, many expect a total return to the office, further separating employee concerns from business

expectations. Workers seek social support, purpose, and trust. They want to believe that their team is truly collaborative and that their contributions are appreciated. They desire opportunities to learn and improve and have clear responsibilities. They expect that their sense of purpose will correspond with their company's. Additionally, they seek a suitable physical and digital environment that allows them the opportunity to establish that elusive work-life balance (McKinsey 2021).

After the COVID-19 pandemic, companies face an exodus of burnt-out and overworked personnel. They wonder what work is all about and contemplate their options in the job market. By considering these needs and emotions thoroughly at such a pivotal point, organizations can provide outstanding employee experiences (EX). Providing top-notch EX needs a profound reorientation away from a typical top-down methodology and toward one rooted in the fundamentals of design thinking. This change enables an organization to concentrate on its employees by learning how they perceive their employee journeys, responding to those perceptions, and then providing tailored interventions focusing on crucial times to maximize satisfaction, performance, and productivity. By doing this, businesses may become more motivating, collaborative, and focused on designing engaging experiences (McKinsey 2021).

Social media, changing demographics, and more unpredictable economic circumstances are just a few factors that have driven the transition from traditional employee engagement to a more holistic approach to the employee experience. Companies need to understand the new generations that feel, think, and behave in dissimilar behaviors from the older generations before. The millennial generation expects more opportunities to have their voice heard at their workplace. As a result, the talent competition is stronger than ever before. There are now more candidates than fewer jobs, and employee experience is one of the ultimate ways to differentiate yourself as an employer (Qualtrics 2022).

Organizations are changing more rapidly than ever due to digitalization, disruption, and other economic factors, leading businesses to grow and contract more rapidly. In other words, it's essential to frequently assess the changes' effects on people rather than yearly. Employees now anticipate personalized experiences and expect to be treated as individuals, just as when interacting with top B2C businesses as customers. In addition, workplaces have become more open due to social media development and the possibility for negative reviews to go viral to safeguard corporate and brand reputation (Qualtrics 2022).

The EX factor: Companies can create a positive or a negative employee experience, which in turn affects business performance.

Nine elements to get right

Social experience	Work experience	Organization experience
<p>1 People and relationships</p> <p>Am I seen and treated by my leaders as a significant contributor to the organization?</p>	<p>4 Work organization</p> <p>Do I have clear responsibilities, interesting work, and the resources I need to be successful in my role?</p>	<p>7 Purpose</p> <p>Does my company have a purpose that aligns with mine, as well as processes to which I can contribute?</p>
<p>2 Teamwork</p> <p>Do the people I work with every day trust and care for one another to create a collaborative and innovative environment?</p>	<p>5 Work control and flexibility</p> <p>Do I complete my work efficiently, with flexibility and positive integration in my life?</p>	<p>8 Technology</p> <p>Does my company's technology enable me to work efficiently and without friction?</p>
<p>3 Social climate</p> <p>Am I welcome in this community and do I feel like I belong?</p>	<p>6 Growth and rewards</p> <p>Am I given incentives and opportunities that help me learn, grow, and provide for my family?</p>	<p>9 Physical environment</p> <p>Are my surroundings safe, comfortable, and human centered?</p>

McKinsey
& Company

Figure 2. The EX-Factor (McKinsey 2021)

Employee experience considers what people value in the most significant context, acknowledging how different propositions appeal to other people depending on their age, stage of life, circumstances, and even personality type. Contrary to popular belief, getting paid more salary is rarely the most motivating answer. Instead, employees desire a strong sense of agency, the ability to shape essential outcomes, and a strong sense of identity and community. In other words, having freedom in and regarding one's employment. According to McKinsey's (2020) research, varied experiences in the three primary EX domains of social, work, and organization account for the majority of the diversity in how favorably or unfavorably employees regard their relationship with their employer. According to surveys, most workers, especially Gen Z workers, already felt alienated from their jobs and put greater emphasis on workplace well-being before the pandemic started (McKinsey 2021).

The best talent may be attracted, inspired, and retained by organizations that establish an EX-model that is personalized and supported by digital experiences that increase flexibility. EX is fundamental to how businesses differentiate themselves in a world where many individuals constantly evaluate their reasons for working and where they work. Furthermore, according to McKinsey's recent research, employees at top EX businesses are more likely

to go above and beyond what is required, putting forth a degree of discretionary effort that is 40 % higher (McKinsey 2021).

Firstup (2021) answers about how to improve the employee experience in their blog post about the subject. Put performance management first. Only two of ten workers claim that managing their performance motivates them to produce their best work. Encouraging managers to practice active listening is one approach to achieving that. Another choice is journey mapping utilizing employee surveys, commonly called pulse surveys. The Academy to Innovate HR claims that these "allow supervising the emotion and irritation levels of employees at various points during the day and while working the given work tasks." The information can then be utilized to identify areas for development.

Then, create a framework for the employee experience to establish expectations for the employee journey, create an employee experience framework. Next, do the same for your employee experience strategy after determining how the company's joint mission and values will apply to each of the seven stages of the life cycle. Thirdly, upgrade your tech. Ensure that everyone can use your digital employee experience. This typically only entails better use of the apps you currently have rather than persuading IT to go out and acquire several brand-new ones. In addition, working with the IT team to find a way to integrate all the systems your business utilizes effortlessly, so the staff won't have to switch between programs all day and you can reach them on all channels (Firstup 2021).

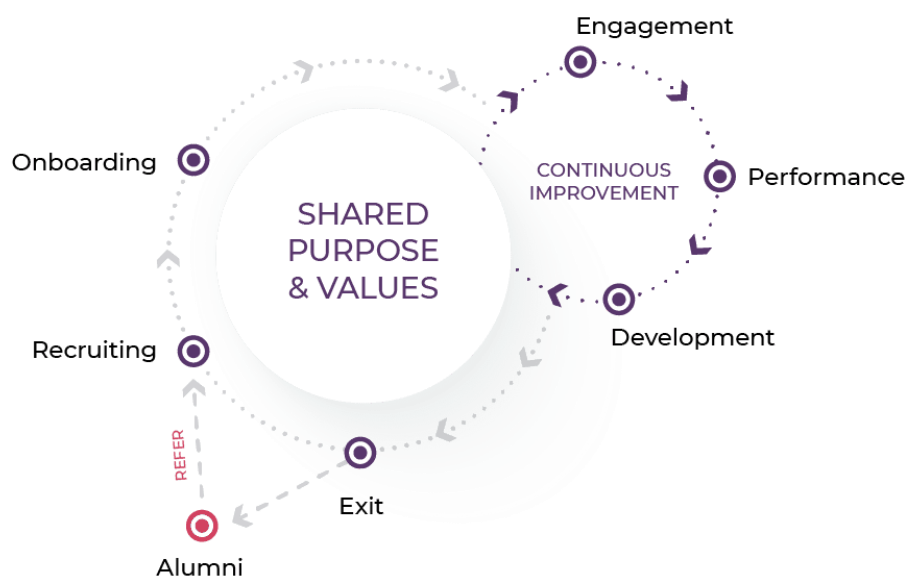


Figure 3. Visualization of an employee journey (Firstup 2021)

The fourth pillar is to create a transparent culture. Creating a culture with transparency might sound complex. However, by establishing a digital source of communication, the employees can trust the information distributed by the relied source. For example, a simple video message from the CEO scheduled for every month could be one approach to creating transparency. However, after establishing this direct line of communication, be sure it works both ways. Make it possible for your staff to provide feedback and for your business to act on it. The time when HR was solely in charge of the employee experience is long past. Today, C-suite managers, internal communicators, and IT specialists must all perform the task of managing the employee experience. They can join the élite 6 % of immersive businesses by cooperating to design the company's technology, culture, and physical workspace (Firstup 2021).

The Plaskoff (2017) study aimed to rethink the conventional method of managing human resources to more appropriately accommodate the needs of the contemporary workplace and promote the empowerment and involvement that businesses urgently need. Organizations must alter the way they interact with their workforce. A fresh way of thinking about human resource management is necessary for the modern, multigenerational workplace. Putting the employee's overall experience first leads to a fundamentally different strategy for engaging the employee in the workplace, one that goes beyond boosting incentives or making the workplace more fun.

According to Plaskoff (2017), the author states that design thinking is used to improve the employee experience in the company. As a result of the research, it was noted that benefits do not guarantee employee engagement. Here human resource management process is becoming more strategic by creating value and meaning for the employee and holistically viewing the relationship as a whole. According to the research, companies should have more of a deeper understanding of each individual employee and co-design their employee experience with them. The design must embrace holistic thinking and comprehensively address the many aspects of the corporation's lifecycle. The process of designing should be acknowledged to be as vital, if not even more important, than the end product (Plaskoff 2017).

Organizations acknowledge the need for change but have challenges motivating their workforce. The foundation of most contemporary employee engagement and retention methods is based on outdated ideas unsuitable for today's workplace. For example, design thinking has been effectively used to improve user and customer experiences, but it has recently been acknowledged as a strategy for improving staff experiences (Plaskoff 2017).

2.4 Recruiting through social media

According to Martic (2022), social recruiting is the process by which recruiters use social media platforms to attract candidates. Other names include social recruitment, social media hiring, and social media recruitment. Furthermore, social media is increasingly utilized for employer branding and recruitment. As a result, employers may optimize their inbound recruitment efforts and communicate information about their employee value proposition through these channels. As a result, social media recruitment has increased in popularity among talent acquisition professionals as social media usage has risen steadily (Martic 2022).

Well-structured social recruitment strategies increase an organization's chances of reaching passive job seekers, better showcasing its corporate culture, saving money on job advertising, focusing on candidate personas, and generating more referrals (Martic 2022). Social networking platforms are some organizations' primary source of new and qualified job candidates. That is because social media recruiting helps recruiters and other talent acquisition specialists more effectively target their audience. Almost all, 94 % of, professional recruiters utilize social media to network and advertise jobs to large communities. And 59 % of workers claim that one factor in their decision to work for a specific company was its social media presence (Betterteam 2022).

As the commissioning company already uses LinkedIn in recruiting, this chapter discusses the upcoming trend of TikTok recruiting. According to Workstream (2022), the widespread use of social media in today's technological society may give the impression that it has always existed. However, only in 1997 was the first widely used social media platform developed. Even back then, the idea of social media did not take off until the early 2000s, as more users began signing up for platforms like Facebook. Some of these websites are still in use today, but others have lost their popularity and have been replaced by new ones (Workstream 2022).

The short-form video software TikTok is one of the newest and most well-known ones available at the time. However, TikTok, which was the most downloaded app globally in May 2021, is mainly used by millennials and members of Generation Z. You know where to go if you're seeking a way to connect with these generations of people because nearly 80 % of TikTok users are under 39 years old (Workstream 2022).

According to Modern Recruiters (2022), social recruiting is more than sharing a trending video to attract qualified applicants. It is all about creating a culture and identity for your

business. When someone watches a Tik Tok video, they are encouraged by what the company has accomplished and what their job will entail. Companies can use social media to build connections with potential candidates and encourage them to apply for open positions at your organization (Modern Recruiters 2022). Also, finding talent using social media platforms is significantly less expensive than traditional recruitment strategies (such as newspapers, podcasts, specialized publications, and paid websites).

Talent is looking to learn more about a company's mission, operations, and internal dynamics from the company's TikTok pages. As a result, candidates are drawn to the opportunity at the organization. Designing and posting content that showcases the nature of the work and, for example, what would a typical day be like at the position, is preferred. Creating content that will promote the brand and the work it is performing in the market. This form of TikTok marketing allows prospective employees to understand how their lives could be by working for your firm because they can experience what it would be like to be a part of the group before applying (Modern Recruiters 2022).

3 Methodology

This chapter presents the methodology behind this paper's research, showcasing the author's thought process and justifying the research methods. The chapter repeats the research question, purpose, and goal. The student discusses the research design process, and a reliability and validity statement is placed at the end of the chapter. Primary data from the employees is used in this research, and it is gathered by a survey, which mixed open-ended questions with closed questions. In addition, a semi-structured interview was conducted with the EX to gain insight into how the employees feel.

3.1 Research question and goal

The main research question for this thesis is: What is the hybrid working model's impact from recruiting and new employee standpoint, and what are its effects on the employee experience? And the sub-questions are, how could the new employees integrate better into the department and improve the working environment and job satisfaction? And how to use social media to recruit more talent, and how does hybrid working opportunity influence the willingness to apply? This research aims to understand the new employee experience in the commissioning company thus far and how the hybrid working model has affected their integration into the workplace and the employee experience. As well as understanding how hybrid work possibility affects recruiting mainly when promoted via social media.

3.2 Determining the method

In this research, the student combined qualitative and quantitative methods to create a survey and interview questions that best suited the research's purpose. The justification for that choice is presented further with additional information about different research methods. A survey was decided to be the most efficient way of gathering insights without disrupting employees' time and allowing them to stay anonymous.

The unnamed interviews gathered the feelings and views of the employee experience. As the researcher has a lot of information about the topic from personal experience working in the commissioning company, the survey and interview could be designed with expertise. When creating surveys and interview questions, the author needs to understand the subject well enough to formulate the questions understandably so that the responses reach the best outcomes.

3.2.1 Qualitative research

Observational notes, interview transcripts, literary texts, meetings notes, historical records, memoirs, and recollections are a few examples of qualitative data. However, qualitative data cannot be assessed consistently since it requires human interpretation and judgment (Creswell & Poth 2018).

Qualitative data is typically expressed in words rather than numbers because it cannot be precisely measured or quantified (Wallimann 2010). It is impossible to identify and measure precisely human behaviors and qualities like ideas, habits, way of life, and beliefs, which are researched in the research into individuals and their civilizations and cultures, making the sort of data descriptive (Wallimann 2010). Creswell & Poth (2018) claim that qualitative research can be used to understand better a group's culture, way of life, and history, as well as to investigate thoughts, activities, or phenomena.

3.2.2 Quantitative research

Quantitative data can be measured more or less accurately since it has some form of magnitude commonly represented in numbers. Additionally, statistics can be inferential, enabling the researcher to draw conclusions about the general population (Leedy & Ormrod 2010).

Mathematical methods can be used to evaluate numerical data. These procedures might be simple, like counts or percentages, or more complex, like data sets or mathematical models (Walliman 2010). Examples of quantitative data include census, economics, performance, and other scientific measurements (Walliman 2010). In addition, when conducting research this way, one might obtain first-hand narratives from those impacted by specific circumstances (Formplus 2021).

3.2.3 Mixed research method

By applying mixed methods approaches and combining the two types of data collection, quantitative and qualitative, an individual has a more thorough understanding of the research problem than using either alone (Creswell 2011). While qualitative research can provide us with more in-depth perspectives of participants, their voices, and the context in which they engage with the issues, quantitative research can give an understanding of broad patterns, broad generalizations, and specific factors with a large population (Creswell 2011).

The Harvard Catalyst (2022) states that using mixed methods strategically mixes or integrates exacting quantitative and qualitative research methodologies to maximize each's strengths. Combining inductive and deductive thinking, the mixed-method approach enables researchers to use various techniques while overcoming the limitations of using only quantitative or qualitative research. The mixed method is a complementary process that maximizes the best of both research methods. In addition, it gives the researcher a more in-depth understanding of the key concepts and solutions. As an example of this, the data gathered provides a strong interpretation and strong description and similarly focuses on broadening the small-sample qualitative findings.

3.3 Conducting the survey

It was essential to the researcher that the survey form was created with a reliable tool that would be safe to store all the responses but could be filled anonymously. This is why Google Forms was chosen as the primary survey tool, as it is simple but effective. To ensure that only the desired employees would gain access, the student created a list of the new employees and sent the invitation to the form via e-mail. The electronic form had information on how the data collected would be used and that it would be anonymous to gain honest and reliable data. In the survey, the researcher combined both by including open-ended questions and Likert scales or yes/no questions. This was done so that the form would give numerical data about specific issues but then elaborate on the subject with open-ended questions.

As the respondents were all Finnish, the survey was conducted in Finnish to ease the respondent's tasks and mitigate the risk of leaving the study unanswered. The first page of the form with the provided info is shown in figure 3 below. In addition, two of the supervisors of these employees reviewed the survey form to ensure the questions and themes were as discussed and allowed them to comment if necessary. Finally, the supervisors gave the go-ahead as it was, and the survey was sent to the respondents via email. E-mail was chosen instead of Microsoft Teams because the researcher wanted the message to be seen and remembered. Often the Teams platform chat is hectic with numerous conversations.

Hybridityö ja sen vaikutukset työtyytyväisyyteen ja rekrytointiin SOK Myyntipalvelussa.

Kyselyn tarkoitus on ymmärtää uusien työntekijöiden tuntemuksia ja ajatuksia Hybridityöstä, ja kehittää SOK Myyntipalvelun toimintaa tulevaisuudessa. Uusina työntekijöinä tuotte tuoretta ja uudenlaista näkökulmaa joka on erittäin arvokasta, ja toivomme että jokainen uusi työntekijä vastaa kyselyyn.

Tämä kyselyn teettää Karoliina Koskinen osana opinnäytetyötä jonka toimeksiantajana on SOK Myyntipalvelu, vastauksiasi tullaan käyttämään opinnäytetyössä ja mahdollisesti tulevaisuudessa kehittämään työtyytyväisyyttä.

Vastaamiseen kuluu n. 10 minuuttia, ja voit vastata tähän työajalla.

Tämä kysely on täysin anonymi eikä sinua voida tunnistaa vastauksistasi.

Vastaathan kyselyyn 15.10.2022 mennessä.

Suuri kiitos jo etukäteen vastauksestasi,
Karoliina Koskinen - VK Yksittäisten Huonevarausten Myyntipalvelu.

Figure 4. Front page of the survey in Finnish.

The form was sent to 17 new employees that fit the research criteria, which was that they had been employed for under six months in the company. The commissioner provided the list of employees to ensure their supervisors allowed them to be surveyed for the research purpose. The electronic survey form can be found in Appendix 1. For the writer, it was important that the respondents felt secure and valued to answer the survey. Therefore, the front page explained where their answers would be used and that they could not be recognized from their responses.

The survey contains 19 questions, of which 18 are mandatory to respond to. The survey was separated into four sections, the first being the cover page and agreement to participate in this survey. The second section discusses the hybrid working model from recruiting perspective. The third section focuses on employee feelings and perceptions of the hybrid work model. And lastly, the fourth section examines the employee's perception of the workplace community. The sections were designed to help the respondent focus on the questions and theme at hand and not get overwhelmed with the questions on the same page. The number of final responses before the deadline reached 16 replies out of the 17 invited participants. As the goal was to get at least 50 % of the respondents to respond to the survey, the target was exceeded with a 94 % response rate.

3.4 Semi-Structured interview

Semi-structured interviews are a typical technique used in qualitative research (Raworth 2021). In contrast to formal interviews, which adhere to a strict pattern of predefined questions, semi-structured interviews focus on particular themes but are performed flexibly (Brown 2014). As a result, they are typically among the best ways to understand why people make their decisions, what they believe, and how specific policies or events have affected their life (Brown 2014). Additionally, they frequently provide the researcher with essential data they did not anticipate (Raworth 2021).

Before conducting the interview, Saldana (2013) urges considering some of the following actions to guarantee the success of the interviews.

- Developing the interview plan
- Carefully designing and formulating the questions
- Carefully designing and formulating the questions

The chance of an unsuccessful interview will decrease with diligent preparation.

To ensure that the required framework was followed, the research used a semi-structured interview in which the interviewees were given predesigned questions to answer. The questions are formulated in such a way that the purpose of the study is disclosed but simultaneously open-ended, which gives the respondents the freedom to have a broader answer. Furthermore, while being interviewed, the respondents are encouraged to learn more about the topic and ask follow-up questions based on their initial responses to initiate more discussion (Saldana 2013).

This method was chosen for the interviews because it has flexibility but simultaneously helps the discussion to go forward smoothly. Since the employee experience is personal, and all employees perceive it differently, the student chose three persons to participate in the interviews. The interviews were conducted online to minimize the disruptions to their everyday work schedule.

4 Analysis and results

The analysis and results of the conducted survey are presented in this chapter in detail. All 19 questions are analyzed one by one starting from the beginning and working systematically toward the end of the form. The answers will be examined in the process and summarised at the end of this chapter. As mentioned, the survey aims to gain further knowledge about the new employee's emotions and perspectives toward the hybrid working model in the workplace.

4.1 Recruiting perspective

The first section discusses the angle of recruiting. The aim was to understand how the possibility of hybrid work would affect the employees. Employees were asked if they were familiar with working hybrid before entering their current position. Answers showed that the majority, 81.3 %, have not worked hybrid before, and 18.8 % replied that they have. The findings enforce the previously mentioned research (Indeed 2021) that hybrid work is an emerging trend and still relatively new to many industries as COVID-19 pushed many companies who had not even thought about remote work to change their working models and adapt.

The next question is, did the possibility of hybrid work influence your decision to apply for your job? 68.8 % of replies stated that the hybrid work option influenced their decision, and 31.3 % said it did not. Here it is visible that many individuals looking for employment are looking for more flexible working models rather than only working in an office. In addition, researchers (McKinsey 2021) have noticed that the younger generation is thinking a lot more about their role in the workplace and seeking an excellent work-life balance.

As a follow-up to the previous question, if the person replied yes, they could elaborate on the reasoning behind why it affected their decision. Here are examples of the replies:

“Now that I know what a hybrid model is, it will affect my possible future decisions to apply for other jobs.”

“I live in a small town, so I save a lot of money on gas and parking costs.”

“The flexibility of schedules, the so-called extra time to the day.”

“Along with school, it is important that I can also work remotely.”

The common theme from the replies is that the main reasons to choose a hybrid job are saving time, saving costs, and the freedom to work wherever possible. These themes have

been visible in the literature review discussing the hybrid working model, therefore validating Evans (2022) previous findings.

The fourth question asks, how likely would you be to apply for a job in the future where there is no remote work option? One being not likely at all, three being very likely. Most of the replies lie in the middle of the spectrum, indicating that responses are neutral about this subject. One response stated they would not apply if the remote option were unavailable, and three individuals stated they would apply. These answers suggest that people are open to applying to jobs without the remote working option, but the position needs to be desirable in other ways.

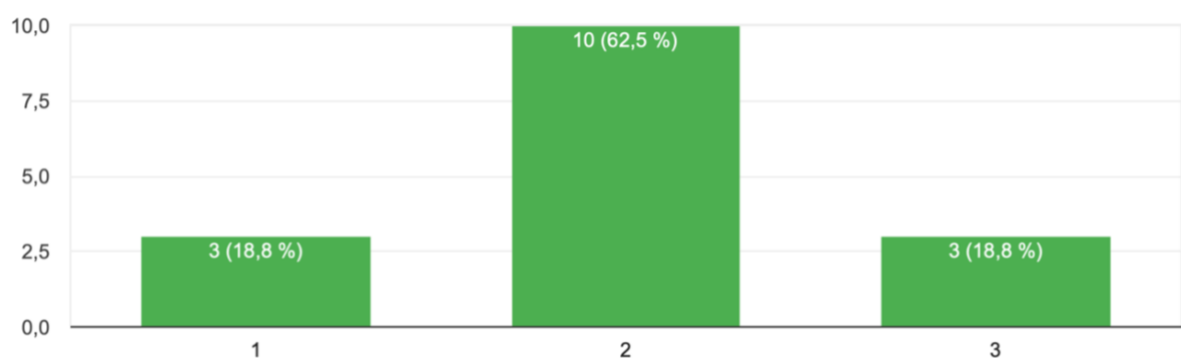


Figure 5. Question 4: How likely would you be to apply for a job in the future where there is no remote work option?

4.2 The perception of the hybrid working model

This survey section focuses on the employee's experiences and emotions with hybrid work. The Likert scale was used in question five to see where the respondents would place how their expectations of working in the hybrid model were met. One being not agreeing and five being totally agreeing. As seen in figure 6, the majority of the answers are on the agreeing side. However, four persons, 25 %, placed their response to the middle neutral. These answers show that introducing hybrid work has not been misleading while recruiting employees, and their expectations have somewhat been met.

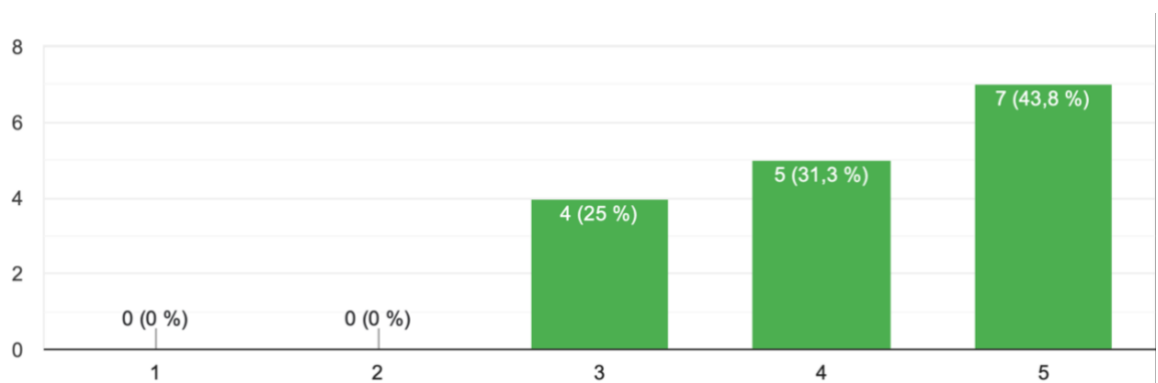


Figure 6. Question 5: Has the Hybrid work lived up to your expectations?

Next, question six asked the respondents what their expectations were for hybrid work, which ties into the previous question. Some of the answers are shown below.

“Saving time in everyday life and reducing expenses.”

“Independent work and peacefulness while working.”

“It brings certain freedom. Able to plan days according to how things are at home or the office. Leisure time is maximized.”

“End of work commuting, better peace of mind at work, quieter.”

The expectations revolve around acquiring more peaceful and quiet surroundings when working remotely. Other themes are freedom of choice and more time after the workday. On the other hand, time spent commuting and getting ready can take up much time from the day. Improving work-to-life balance is one of the main reasons the hybrid working model has been successful and trendier even after the COVID-19 pandemic, as McKinsey 2021 discussed.

Question seven is presented with the Likert scale, mapping the employees' experiences at the office. This question is tied into the following four questions, comparing the office performance to the remote performance and analyzing the open questions attached to the Likert scales. One being very poor, five being very good.

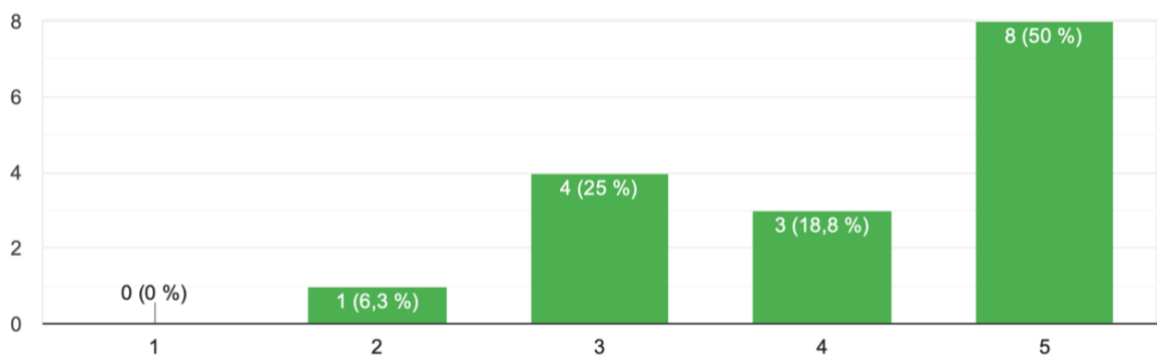


Figure 7. Question 7: What is your experience with work tasks and performance at the office?

The results of question seven show that 50 % of the respondents are pleased with their office work experience in the commissioning department. 18.8 % stated being relatively happy with their experience, 25 % of the responses were neutral, and one person, 6.3 %, said their experience had been rather poor. The following question eight was an open-ended question to elaborate on what influences the experience at the office:

“The positive thing is that help is always nearby, and that makes things easier. But, on the other hand, it might be challenging to concentrate compared to the home office, where it is very quiet.”

“It is nice to work in the office because you can see your colleagues, but it is hard to concentrate on the hustle and bustle of the office.”

“Quick access to help. Fast network connectivity.”

“With background noise, the ability to concentrate becomes more sensitive.”

From the answers, the most common themes are that the staff members value the social aspect of working in the office and that they can get help quickly from their colleagues. On the other hand, some challenges of working in the office seem to be the noise and disturbance in work, as the workers are working in an open office. The open office can get noticeably noisier than working alone from home because the workers can choose their office days freely. Sometimes, many individuals come in on the same day, which creates more noise and commotion in the workspaces.

Next, the same question about remote working was presented with the Likert scale, mapping the employees' experiences working remotely, followed by open-ended questions to elaborate. Again, one being very poor, five being very good.

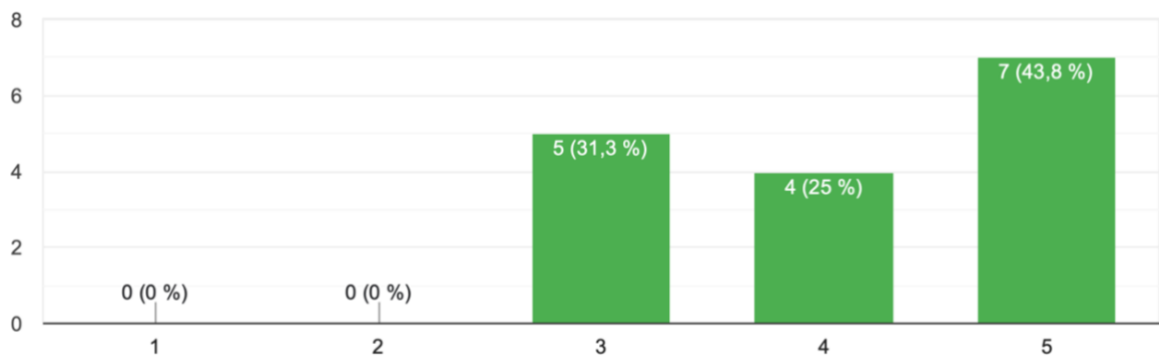


Figure 8. Question 9: What is your experience with work tasks and performance Remotely?

The remote work experiences were distributed on the positive side of the scale. No one stated that they had had a poor experience. On the contrary, 43.8 % have had a great experience, 25 % had a relatively good experience, and 31.3 % remained neutral, neither a good nor bad experience. A remote working option has been a positive addition to many respondents. This data indicates that the transition to remote work has been dealt with the right tools and enough expertise, which results in confidence in working alone from a remote location. The following question ten was an open-ended question to elaborate on what influences the experience when working remotely:

"You have to wait longer for help, but your work is more efficient, and the idea is better included. At home, I'm in the zone."

"You may not get answers or help immediately or at all."

"Things are handled well remotely, but sometimes there are too many stimuli at home that affect work."

"With peace of mind, while working, you can do household chores during your break, which gives you more free time."

As the personnel has a choice of whether they would like to work remotely, four individuals stated that they do not have experience with remote work, which can be perceived from the answers. From the gathered replies, the typical positive attitude is that they have a more peaceful home environment and can concentrate better. However, some state the issue of household things disrupting the focus. As a common phenomenon, the lack of support in remote work is rising from these answers. If there is an issue, the individual cannot just ask a co-worker across the room but has to call someone for help. According to the answers, it takes more time to get help when you are working remotely.

Question eleven asked if the respondents prefer remote or office work. 75 % answered remote working is preferred, and 25 % preferred working in the office. However, some respondents have not operated remotely or chosen to work only from the office, which is suitable to recognize when observing the replies. Question twelve ties into the previous question. The individuals were asked to justify their answers to question eleven of which working model they preferred more.

"I do not know the answer to this because both have advantages. It might be more pleasant to be in the office when support and friends are closer, but within the framework of the commute and time, I still prefer to work remotely."

"Both have advantages. I would do more work at the office if the commute weren't long."

"Remote working is terrific. You can work in your own peace, you don't have to wake up two hours before your shift, and you don't have to travel to the workplace. It brings a lot of freedom and more free time!"

Many replies indicate that they would have chosen that they prefer both if given the option, but they still chose the remote option. From the answers, the appreciation towards remote working is showing. The added free time and time saved when working from home seems to be an important reason people prefer remote days. Individuals appreciate freedom, peace while working, and more free time. In addition, people enjoy the social aspects of the

office, and they can get help much easier there. On the other hand, some stated that working remotely can be lonely.

In the last part of this section, respondents answered a statement, "hybrid work slows down advancement in working life," that they could choose to be either true or false. This statement was added to get an insight into what the employees think about their chances of advancing in their careers while working in the hybrid model and if they think that working hybrid is affecting their chances of succeeding in their career if desired.

Of all the responses, 12 %, which means two replies, thought that the statement was true, and the rest, 88 %, fourteen answers, thought it was false. This shows that the majority of the individuals feel optimistic about their advancement probabilities in working life while working in the hybrid model. Furthermore, this data indicates that the employees trust the company they work for and believe that hybrid work is not negatively affecting their careers.

4.3 Employee perception of the working environment

In the final section, the theme was the adjustment to the new workplace and how the new employees felt about the community at work as they have all started working in the commissioning company reasonably recently.

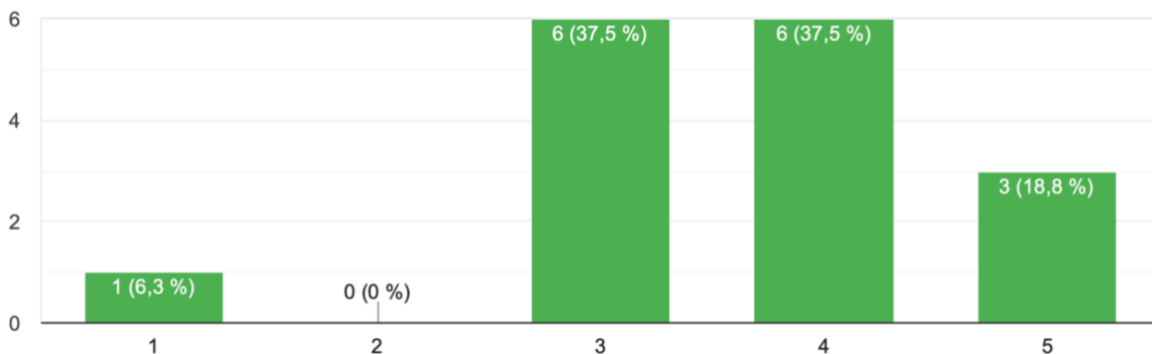


Figure 9. Question 14: How well do you feel you are part of the work community?

The results of this question are spread out in the Likert Scale as follows, two of the respondents, 18.8 % of the replies, answered that they feel they are a crucial part of the work community. 37.5 % of the respondents stated that they feel pretty good about being part of the community, followed by 37.5 % on the neutral middle ground. One person thought they were not a part of the community at all. These numbers show that most new employees have adapted to the working community relatively well. However, there is still work to get all the individuals to feel like they are a fundamental part of the work community. As Maslow's hierarchy theory demonstrates (Corporate Financial Institute 2022), an

individual's sense of belonging is essential. If the person's need for social acceptance and interaction does not meet their expectations, they will not likely meet their fullest potential at work tasks.

Following the previous question, the individuals were asked in question 16, what influenced the adaptation to the work community positively or negatively? The replies are stated below.

"People are kind and helpful. Perhaps the negative is that there is no time for mingling and thus getting to know each other more deeply.

"As soon as the work started, we had a Saturday workday where we could get together with new colleagues, which helped a lot. I have also been very well received at the workplace."

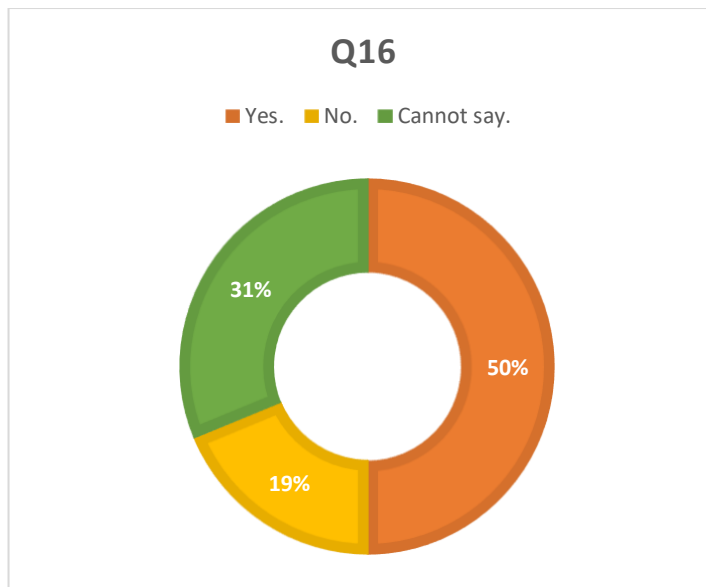
"I participated at the beginning of the employment relationship in summer days when all my colleagues were present and at evening parties. I also met many colleagues during orientation. However, since the beginning of the summer, there have been no evenings together, etc., so seeing new colleagues has not been successful."

"I was part of a marketing campaign for the sales service TikTok with two wonderful colleagues. The joint work project brought my colleagues and me closer, greatly influencing my comfort in the workplace."

"During the training period, I got to know my colleagues."

From the replies, most stated that the colleagues positively impacted their experience of integrating into the team and that the gatherings were highly appreciated as they brought people closer to each other. However, some stated that more of these functions could be arranged to ease the integration process and help the new employees get to know each other. One positive influence has been the training period, where the new individuals are being trained for their position. This common ground helps form a bond that lasts even after training. On the other hand, inexperience was stated by one individual as the reason they do not feel a part of the community. Others noted that remote work reduces social interaction with colleagues to a minimum.

Table 1. Question 17: Do you miss more social interaction while working partially remotely?



When asked if the individuals miss more social interaction while working partially remotely, the majority of 50 % said yes, 31 % could not say, and 19 % stated that they do not miss the more social interaction. So here is a need for a solution to find out how the people who are missing social interaction could get more of it. It is human nature to be social and crave interaction, as Dawson 2022 previous research has shown.

Question 18 was, how could we develop adaptation to a new workplace? The answers are presented below.

“By organizing more events that take place during your free time.”

“More things for teams to do together.”

“Now that much new staff has started, it would be nice to organize a joint evening for everyone.”

“Things to do together and meetings at work and in your free time.”

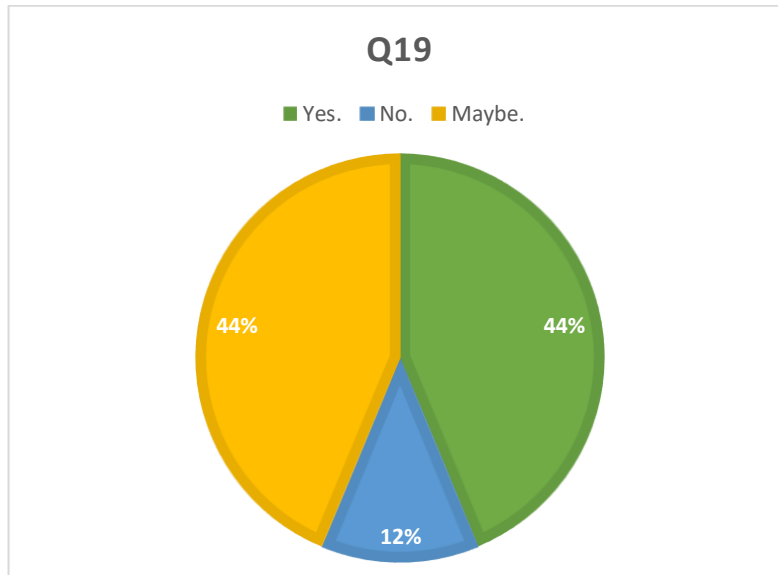
“I think it is also vital that summer workers are invited to workplace parties in the future. Adapting to the new workplace was accelerated because I got to know my colleagues better and relaxed.”

“The training period is a good time to meet new colleagues. It is also good that it is mandatory to come to the office for a team meeting.”

The answers to the question raised a desire for more events or joint activities for the teams to participate together. For example, going out together, more meetings during office hours, parties, and team days. Two of the responses showed direct interest in more sessions at the office where the team could see each other. One suggestion was that the new employees should have short gatherings, for example, once a week, where they could raise questions. And simultaneously, they could converse with co-workers in the same situation,

being new to the role. In addition, it was suggested that there would be an effort to get a calmer environment, for example, own private booths where individuals could work.

Table 2. Question 19: Would you participate if we organized voluntary meetings in your spare time with new employees?



The last question was meant to help map out the interest of the new employees to participate in activities outside of working hours. This data gives an idea of how many new employees would be open to seeing each other outside of office hours to get to know each other better and build team spirit. From the answers, 44 % would participate, 12 % said that they would not, and 44 % were unsure, indicating that it could depend on what kind of activities there would be. The social experience of an employee depends highly on the social climate of the work community, raising the question, "am I welcome in this community, and do I feel like I belong?". A sense of purpose drives individuals to succeed in their work (McKinsey 2021).

4.4 Interview results

The interviews were conducted to get a more in-depth understanding of how the employees perceive the employee experience in the commissioning company. Three of the group of new staff members agreed to the interview. In this section, the results of the interviews are discussed and analyzed. The answers of each individual have been merged under the question headline. The author used figure 2, the EX-Factor (McKinsey 2021), as a guideline in formulating the base questions to understand how the commissioning company is doing.

4.4.1 Background questions

What does employee experience mean to you?

For all three respondents, the employee experience definition was quite similar. Openness, flexibility, and trust were the most important things when considering a good employee experience. A safe atmosphere is something that the employees appreciate, and it is vital that everyone in the workplace feels that way. The respondent's answers were quite similar in what employee experience means, with one stating, "For me, employee experience is the overall experience from start to finish in a workplace. All, even the little details, play a part in what the employee experience is. Therefore, it is important that one can affect how their employee experience will be." Another response stated, "Employee experience for me is all of the experiences during my employment and at the workplace."

How do you think the employee experience is achieved in the workplace?

All three interviewees thought the employee experience is achieved well in the workplace. However, there were comments about inconsistency while employed, with changes happening without consulting or notifying the employees in real-time. Overall, the responses stated that the employees were happy with their experience. They could be even more content with minor adjustments and more collaborative decision-making. One answer said that the well-being of the staff seems to be a high priority to the employer and therefore supports their positive experience so far.

How could the Employee Experience be developed?

For the development of the employee experience, the responses stated that there should be more openness when discussing growth areas and more opportunities for the staff to do so. The reactions also brought up the need for more joint decision-making and doing more activities together to enhance the feeling of community. The answers show that by creating more opportunities and time to listen and discuss, the employee experience would be improved drastically. All three had very similar views on this subject.

4.4.2 Social experience

Are you seen and treated by the leaders as a significant contributor to the organization?

All three employees stated that they feel appreciated and valued in the workplace, and one said that adding more opportunities to discuss things would be valuable and enhance their feeling of being appreciated. The social experience of an employee is critical, and giving them appreciation and showing it can promote the employee experience drastically. As one respondent stated, it feels good to be appreciated and have a sense of security in the workplace. However, more feedback from the management on their performance would

support the positive experience even further. Also, peer feedback is something that the respondents would like to hear more.

Do the people you work with daily trust and care for each other to create a collaborative and innovative environment?

All respondents stated that the working atmosphere and trust among colleagues are great. "Colleagues trust each other and create a good working atmosphere. The coworkers are wonderful and always encouraging each other. I think the atmosphere is good at our workplace." Stated one response. The only point of improvement discussed was that it would be great to have more time doing things together with colleagues to improve and create relationships further. Two of the respondents stated that they had found meaningful relationships in the community while working in the company.

Do you feel like you are welcome in the community? Do you feel like you belong?

The sense of community and belonging was stated to be in a good place. The respondents appreciate the work community and feel they fit the team well. It was also mentioned that joint working days or free time activities promoted that feeling, and those activities could be more frequent. When the employees know their peers better, communication in the workplace is effortless and more relaxed. Overall, the social climate in this work community seems to be in good order.

4.4.3 Work experience

Do you have clear responsibilities, interesting work, and the resources needed to be successful in your role?

When discussing the work experience, the responses state that the job description and guidelines are very clear. Some noted that the job itself could get repetitive. All the respondents said that they appreciate the support team, "The support team is treasured in the sense that if there is something I do not feel comfortable deciding myself, I can ask for reassurance or advice. This helps me in being successful in my role." The tools and resources are in order according to all responses and help the staff to prosper in their role.

Do you complete your work efficiently with flexibility and positive integration in your life?

The responses state that the role is not affecting their free time, which has been much appreciated. The tasks are straightforward what is expected from the employees, and all of the individuals seem to have personal goals to achieve daily. For example, a certain number of processed calls or e-mails seem to be a standard measure for individuals to achieve their

goals. The hybrid model was mentioned to give more freedom and flexibility to the work and where it is conducted.

Are you given incentives and opportunities to learn, grow and earn extra income?

Two of the responses state that they would like an opportunity to earn extra income, which would be greatly valued. The learning and growth opportunities were said to be in an excellent state. The employees can broaden their job description towards other sales service areas, which gives endless possibilities for self-development. Also, the employees appreciate regular coaching with the service model and sales. There are relatively few competitions or other opportunities that would give rewards, or extra income, which could be one way to improve the work experience for the employees.

4.4.4 Organization experience

Does your company have a purpose that aligns with yours **and** processes that you can contribute?

All answers stated that the company's vision and values align with them. The teams and the different departments have common goals and ideas to unify the departments into one. As that process seems to be going well after the COVID-19 pandemic peak has passed, the employees feel optimistic about the company's direction.

Do your company's technology and tools enable you to work efficiently and without friction?

The interviewees stated that they are satisfied with the technological tools they have been given for the role. However, two respondents raised concerns about work ergonomics while working remotely. There were suggestions that an appropriate working chair and a desk would enhance their employment in the long run, as bad ergonomics can lead to injuries in the future. To improve the remote working conditions, the company could, for example, rent office furniture to the employees or allow extra allowance to their income to assist them in purchasing them to promote the well-being of the employees.

Are your surroundings safe, comfortable, and human-centered?

All the responses stated that the employees feel safe and comfortable in their roles, and the workplace atmosphere is promoted by coworkers and managers who are easily approachable. So overall, the organization experience is perceived to be in good shape in the commissioning company, and with some extra investment in remote work, it could be even better.

4.5 Launching TikTok to recruit employees

After the COVID-19 outbreak, the sales service department faced layoffs and lost some of its previous employees due to the global situation. Therefore, recruiting new employees and rebuilding the team was their priority in 2022. In July 2022, the student and her social media team launched a TikTok page and a recruiting video. The video's purpose was to attract new employees to apply for the vacant spots in the department.

The idea of launching TikTok came from the heads of the department, so the social media team was created. The student and two other colleagues had numerous meetings and discussions to determine the feel of the page and the videos. The most crucial video was deemed the first, and the decision was to showcase the work tasks and typical days in the videos. As the *Modern Recruiters (2022)* research states, people love to see what their life would look like while working in the company. So, the concept was to show the job's realistic but fun side. "Five best things in our job" was selected as the theme. The following videos were agreed to be "Day in the life: Office Day." And "Day in life: Remote Day." Which was a great way to get the already interested people to see the page.

The final product was a fully functional TikTok page that could be used again for recruiting. In addition, three main videos plus three "filler" videos to make the page look more aesthetically pleasing and show our company spirits in a fun way. The main goal for this project was to reach at least 10,000 views on the main video, "Five best things about our job," which was well achieved with totaling of 30,000 views in the first month. Altogether all six videos have over 50,000 views after a couple of months of posting them. In addition, the page collected 855 likes and 87 followers on top of the views. The team was pleased with the performance of the posts, and the supervisor later announced that the post flooded her with applications for the vacant roles.



Appendix 2. TikTok recruiting campaign video

4.6 Summary and conclusion of results

To summarize the survey findings, the researcher will highlight the most significant findings of each section. From the beginning of the study, it was evident that the hybrid working model was relatively new but an exciting opportunity for most applicants. As we are all individuals with different life situations, the hybrid working model gives more freedom and flexibility, eases the self-governance of everyday tasks, and provides more time for them.

The main research question is, what is the hybrid working model's impact from the employee perspective, and what are its effects on the employee experience? Overall, the hybrid working model has been perceived rather positively among the new employees, who see the benefits and worth. Hybrid work has been as expected or even better than expected. The office has been a place for social interaction and getting to know colleagues. At home, it is more peaceful, and people enjoy the quiet working environment. However, some of the issues raised were that the office is too noisy and it is hard to concentrate. While working remotely, it is harder to get help, and it takes more prolonged periods.

On the other hand, saving costs in transport and overall time of the worker's day has been appreciated. Most of the responses stated that they prefer remote work to office work. The employees believe that working hybrid does not slow down their career success. However,

the employees raised some themes, like loneliness while working remotely. And the issues of getting help as effortlessly as while working in the office.

As a summary of the results of the interviews, the overall employee experience is conducted well in the commissioning department. All responses in a positive light perceive the social experience. Employees feel appreciated, valued, and essential to the work community. However, the social experience could be enhanced with more allocated time for the employees to discuss and develop and more collaborative decision-making. From the overall responses, more joint activities rose to discussion on multiple occasions, supporting the previous survey findings.

The work experience is conducted well based on the interview responses. The employees are happy with how the work is undertaken and the support given. The hybrid working model was deemed one of the critical reasons for the positive experience because it gives the employee more flexibility and freedom to choose their location. Employees would like more opportunities to be rewarded or earn extra income, which would positively affect their experience. The possibility to broaden the job description gives the staff opportunities to learn and develop themselves, which the respondents appreciated.

The organizational experience is also perceived positively by all respondents. They feel secure, and their vision aligns with the company's vision of the department's goals. This makes development easier since everyone is aware of the common goals and working together towards them. The key issue raised was enhancing remote working tools, such as working desks and chairs. This could be something the company could improve on.

The sub-question, how could the new employees integrate better into the department and improve the working environment and employee experience? The sense of community in the workplace seems to be in the positive spectrum, but the workers feel lonely. They have expressed enthusiasm towards more social events and gatherings at the office and in their free time to get to know each other better. A large number of responses indicated that the staff would like to have more social interaction with their colleagues. Enhancing their social experience will improve their EX, leading to greater job satisfaction.

And another sub-question is how to use social media to recruit more talent, and how does hybrid working opportunity influence the willingness to apply? The survey and project data help the student and the commissioner to find valuable comprehensions and undertake the themes arising from them. From the survey answers and the data collected from the social media launch project, the researcher created a visual mind map that showcases the key

findings of the research. The graphic format can also be used when presenting the thesis to the commissioner to look at how the employees feel about the hybrid work and their experience in the commissioning company as employees. The visual summary of the main findings can be found below in figure 10. The purpose of a mind map is to present the key findings in a colorful, eye-catching way, making it easy for the commissioner and other readers to understand the results better. The conclusion of the research process is discussed in more detail in the last chapter.

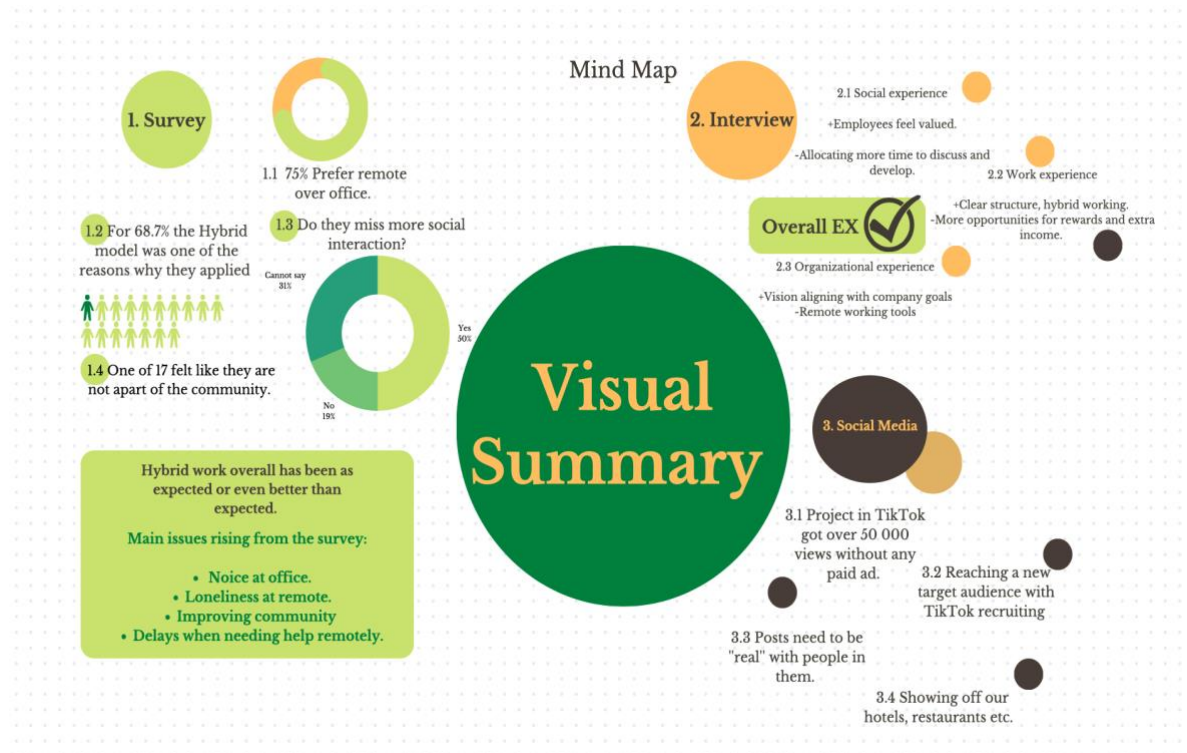


Figure 10. Mind map summary of the results

4.7 Recommendations and development suggestions

This section will discuss the main concerns raised in the survey result data and interview data to give some recommendations on how the issues could be dealt with. The recommendations are based on the theoretical knowledge of the topic and the survey respondents' wishes.

The first issue raised is the delay in getting help while working remotely, as no colleague is sitting close by to give some advice. Although for new employees, support is essential, the sales negotiator's job requires a lot of knowledge of small details, and sometimes the details take time to learn. Some components cannot even be learned by heart, which is when the support team comes in.

As previously, there has been a maximum of two support agents on the line, and there could be a need for exclusive support just for the new employees at the beginning of their work for a certain period. This would ensure no delays in getting help and encourage the staff to ask so there would not be as many mistakes. Or another option is a support chat in Teams where the employees could ask about minor issues from peers and get answers more quickly, taking the load off the telephone queue while lowering the threshold.

The second issue raised was the feeling of loneliness while working remotely, which showed itself repeatedly in the gathered data. When starting the work, the training period has established itself to be quite a path to finding friends and compassionate like-minded colleagues. But after the training, the individual mostly moves to work alone. However, it could be beneficial to encourage the training groups to communicate more even after the training period in teams and create chats for overall catching up.

Another topic that could also help with the feeling of loneliness is that the employees crave more joint activities during office hours and in their free time. They suggested more evening gatherings, such as going out, dinners, or other events. But also, more activities in the working hours. Joining these activities would create a stronger sense of community, and the new employees would get to know each other and the older employees better. Also, joint projects, such as the social media project, are a robust tool when bringing people together. The collaborative way of project work gives the staff stimulating incentives and keeps the job interesting.

One idea of making this reality with a budget in mind is that employees would be encouraged to meet in their free time, on top of the meetings during office hours. The encouragement could be, for example, asking for volunteer individuals to set up a date and a time for after-work activities. These volunteers would promote the after-work event at, for example, a workplace or Teams chat where all interested people could join. This activity could sometimes be sponsored by the department when the budget allows it.

In the interviews, the respondents raised the need for more opportunities for rewards or extra income. This could be achieved by arranging sales competitions which also would help create more feedback. The winners would be announced in joint sessions, and therefore the employees could get some validation and positive feedback from their supervisors and peers in the process.

Lastly, regarding the noise and disturbance in the office and what to do about that, the answer is a bit more complicated as social interactions and hearing others' work are

essential for many. The department already has enforced that in the office working spaces, the noise should be limited, and social interaction should be conducted in the coffee room or the hallways. However, the noise is inevitable as several people are on a call simultaneously. One way of reducing the social interaction noise is to use, as previously mentioned, teams or workplace chat so that the conversation does not disturb others. Another way could be by providing the employees with noise-canceling headsets that would allow them to have a more peaceful and quiet work environment while at the office. However, this would be a bit more expensive but unquestionably effective way.

5 Conclusion

In this chapter, the student reflects on the learning process and professional development during the thesis process. Applying analytic and critical thinking towards the study and reflecting on the choices made in the process. A summary of the findings of the electronic survey was created to bring forward the key results of the research. Suggestions to the commissioner are listed in this chapter.

5.1 Reliability of the research

The author is committing to use statistical approaches to verify the validity and reliability of study findings when conducting quantitative research. When performing qualitative research, the author pursues to devise and implement methodological procedures that ensure the finding's integrity. The following are examples of such approaches presented by Noble & Smith (2015).

- Personal biases that may influence results are taken into account.
- Recognizing sample biases and doing constant critical reflection on methodologies to ensure that data collection and analysis are sufficiently deep and relevant.
- They maintain meticulous records, demonstrating a clear decision history, and ensuring that data interpretations are consistent and visible.
- Demonstrating thought processes throughout data processing and subsequent interpretations.

As the commissioner currently employs the author, she will not participate in surveys or interviews. Nor discuss the research with any participating employees before their responses to ensure that the researcher's opinion does not affect the data gathered from the employees. The results of the survey and the interviews will be summarised in the next chapter.

The research used principles of ethical and good scientific practice. The protection of privacy is regulated by Finnish law. The writer of the thesis must consider the realization of the privacy protection of the research participants (Arene 2019). The researcher wanted to ensure that the anonymity of the interviewees was preserved. The personal data of the interviewees were processed according to the instructions. All transcriptions of the interviews will be kept until the research is published, after which the materials will be destroyed. The survey was conducted in a manner that the respondent remained anonymous.

All different types of theses have certain standard features in terms of reliability. The concepts used in work must connect to the empirical part, concepts of the research text,

theoretical conclusions, and research material. In addition, the results must be accurate and systematic, and consistent work must be considered when evaluating readability. To increase reliability, the survey answers are completed in the Appendices for the reader to see. The interview answers will not be added to protect the respondents' identity.

5.2 Future research proposals

The future research proposals are topics that emerged during the thesis process but were not pursued to keep the thesis scope concise. These could be researched further to add to this thesis research. For example, one future research topic previously suggested is the fully remote team for the sales service department of SOK. This would allow the department to recruit talent from anywhere in Finland and let them have even more autonomy in where they would like to work. Another similar topic to the first one is allowing the possibility to work remotely from overseas. This could also be very attractive while recruiting new talent.

The commissioner could also research the differences between the data collected previously from the employees and determine if there are similarities between this research data and theirs. Because of the limited amount of time, the author was not able to conduct a comparison between the older data and the new one. However, the commissioning department could find similarities or differences and compile the data into a more extensive data set.

5.3 Author's learning and self-evaluation

The thesis writing process started informally in the summer of 2022 when the author discussed their idea for research with the commissioner in the department they worked in. In July 2022, the agreement was made, and the student had the green light to start ideating and pitching possible research topics. The topic chosen for this thesis was a result of the authors own experience as a new employee who had not worked hybrid or remotely before. Therefore, interest in the topic found an angle that had not yet been researched internally. For the author, it was essential to keep the process simple for all parties and work ahead of schedule rather than prepare the thesis in a hurry.

The thesis research and writing process began on the 28th of August when meeting the assigned thesis coordinator. The deadlines were agreed upon, and the preliminary plan was submitted. The author created a working schedule for herself when making the initial deadline plan. After going through the plan with the thesis coordinator, the last deadline had to be moved to an earlier date than the author scheduled. This adjustment allowed more time to grade and correct the thesis if necessary. Other deadlines worked well, and the

author managed to return their work for comments always a bit ahead of time. The student had three months to write the thesis from start to finish, which was a tight schedule. Working with the commissioner was seamless, and they allowed the researcher to look into the topic from various angles and did not set any restrictions or boundaries.

As the student worked full-time the entire period and balanced the workload well, the time management skills from the remote studies came in handy. The student could utilize their previous knowledge emerging from the studies about motivational theories, thesis writing, social media, and job satisfaction. Their personal experience in the company was helpful when designing the survey because it allowed the student to formulate the questions meaningfully. The chosen topic was exciting and motivating, keeping the process interesting till the end. Having a commissioner provided a certain pressure that was helpful to keep the focus and pursue a high grade. However, even though the process went over smoothly, the process required a lot of self-discipline and time management, which was not always easy while working full-time. In the process, the author realized that the number of new employees was smaller than expected, which led to conducting additional interviews with three respondents. The number of responses limited the survey results, but overall, with the interview data, the student is content with the results.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Survey form sent to respondents

Hybridityö ja sen vaikutukset työtyytyväisyyteen ja rekrytointiin SOK Myyntipalvelussa.

Kyselyn tarkoitus on ymmärtää uusien työntekijöiden tuntemuksia ja ajatuksia Hybridityöstä, ja kehittää SOK Myyntipalvelun toimintaa tulevaisuudessa. Uusina työntekijöinä tuotte tuoretta ja uudenlaista näkökulmaa joka on erittäin arvokasta, ja toivomme että jokainen uusi työntekijä vastaa kyselyyn.

Tämä kyselyn teettää Karoliina Koskinen osana opinnäytetyötä jonka toimeksiantajana on SOK Myyntipalvelu, vastauksiasi tullaan käyttämään opinnäytetyössä ja mahdollisesti tulevaisuudessa kehittämään työtyytyväisyyttä.

Vastaamiseen kuluu n. 10 minuuttia, ja voit vastata tähän työajalla.

Tämä kysely on täysin anonymi eikä sinua voida tunnistaa vastauksistasi.

Vastaathan kyselyyn 15.10.2022 mennessä.

Suuri kiitos jo etukäteen vastauksestasi,
Karoliina Koskinen - VK Yksittäisten Huonevarausten Myyntipalvelu.

 karoliinajanina.koskinen@gmail.com (Ei jaettu) [Vaihda tiliä](#)



***Pakollinen**

Suostun että antamiani vastauksia käytetään opinnäytetyöhön ja työtyytyväisyyden kehittämiseen. *

Kyllä.

Ei.

Sivu 2.

Olen aiemmin tehnyt Hybridityötä? *

- Kyllä.
- En.
- En osaa sanoa.

Vaikuttiko Hybridityön mahdollisuus päätökseesi hakea työtehtävääsi? *

- Kyllä vaikutti.
- Ei vaikuttanut.
- En osaa sanoa.

Jos vastasit edelliseen Kyllä, perustele miksi?

Oma vastauksesi _____

Kuinka todennäköisesti hakisit tulevaisuudessa työtehtävää jossa ei ole etätömahdollisuutta? *

- | | 1 | 2 | 3 | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Epätodennäköistä, en hakisi. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Todennäköistä, hakisin silti. |

Sivu 3.

Onko Hybridityön tekeminen ollut odotustesi mukaista? *

1 2 3 4 5

Ei ollenkaan. Täysin odotusteni mukaista.

Mitä odotit Hybridityöltä? *

Oma vastauksesi

Kokemuksesi työtehtävistä suoriutumiseen Toimistolla? *

1 2 3 4 5

Erittäin huono. Erittäin hyvä.

Mikä vaikuttaa Toimistolla työtehtävistä suoriutumiseen? *

Oma vastauksesi

Kokemuksesi työtehtävistä suoriutumiseen Etänä? *

1 2 3 4 5

Erittäin huono. Erittäin hyvä.

Mikä vaikuttaa Etätyössä työtehtävistä suoriutumiseen? *

Oma vastauksesi

Pidätkö enemmän... *

- Etätyöstä.
- Toimistolla työskentelystä.

Perustele lyhyesti valintaasi? *

Oma vastauksesi _____

Väittämä: Hybridityö hidastaa työelämässä etenemistä? *

Totta.

Tarua.

Sivu 4.

Kuinka hyvin tunnet olevasi osa työyhteisöä? *

1 2 3 4 5

En ollenkaan. Erittäin hyvin.

Mikä vaikutti työyhteisöön sopeutumiseen positiivisesti tai negatiivisesti? *

Oma vastauksesi _____

Kaipaako enemmän sosiaalista kanssakäymistä työskennellessäsi osittain etänä? *

Kyllä.

Ei

En osaa sanoa.

Miten voisimme kehittää sopeutumista uuteen työpaikkaan? *

Oma vastauksesi _____

Osallistuisitko jos järjestäisimme vapaaehtoisia kohtaamisia vapaaajalla uusille työntekijöille? *

Kyllä.

Ei.

En osaa sanoa.

Appendix 2. Answers to question 3

“Now that I know what a hybrid model is, it will affect my possible future decisions to apply for other jobs.”

“The commute to work is long, and it is also more comfortable to work at home for me.”

“I live in a small town, so I save a lot of money on gas and parking costs.”

"The possibility to work elsewhere than at home was significant. Working in other remote locations like a cabin is also possible."

"The possibility of remote work makes up for a more free time."

"My partner lives in a different city, so I spent the summer with them. The hybrid work opportunity was essential because I could work from another town."

"Because of my life situation, I felt that a hybrid job is a better option than having to be in an office all the time."

"I wanted the opportunity to work from home."

"It is nice to have the chance to be remote."

"The flexibility of schedules, the so-called extra time to the day."

"Along with school, it is important that I can also work remotely."

Appendix 3. Answers to question 6

"I did not expect anything, maybe that I would be lonelier, but I do not feel lonely when dealing with clients and colleagues via teams and the phone."

"Calmer mornings and the possibility to do more than work in everyday life."

"Saving time in everyday life and reducing expenses."

"Independent work and peacefulness while working."

"Flexible working at home and in the office."

"Freedom to choose."

"I haven't started hybrid work yet."

"Flexibility."

"Occasional relief to work from home without commuting."

"It brings certain freedom. Able to plan days according to how things are at home or the office. Leisure time is maximized."

"I have not switched to remote work yet, but I expect it will make everyday life easier and save time."

"I have not been working remotely yet."

"More peace. I can focus better on my work if, for example, the radio is playing in the background. The silence in the office is killing me inside."

"End of work commuting, better peace of mind at work, quieter."

"More free time, maybe mild concentration difficulties at home."

"I had no expectations for hybrid work."

Appendix 4. Answers to question 8

"The positive thing is that help is always nearby, and that makes things easier. But, on the other hand, it might be challenging to concentrate compared to the home office, where it is very quiet."

"Colleagues around."

"Help is nearby. Social relationships are better."

"You can get things done a little more efficiently at the office. I cannot say why."

"It is nice to work in the office because you can see your colleagues, but it is hard to concentrate on the hustle and bustle of the office."

"The workplace atmosphere is good."

"The office has good chairs and desks, which significantly affects the comfort of working in the office. A coffee machine also brightens up office days."

"Quick access to help. Fast network connectivity."

"The background is busy. At home, I can concentrate better."

"Commotion disturbs me at the office."

"Support from colleagues and getting help."

"With background noise, the ability to concentrate becomes more sensitive."

"Disturbance to work is more frequent."

"Help is close, face-to-face communication."

"Concentrating at the office is a bit more challenging than at home."

Appendix 5. Answers to question 10

"You have to wait longer for help, but your work is more efficient, and the idea is better included. At home, I'm in the zone."

"You may not get answers or help immediately or at all."

"Better concentration and thus efficiency."

"Things are handled well remotely, but sometimes there are too many stimuli at home that affect work."

"With peace of mind, while working, you can do household chores during your break, which gives you more free time."

"Household affairs are affecting remote work."

"I can work in my own peace. I can concentrate better."

"It is calm at home, and you can focus on what you are doing yourself and are not disturbed by sounds."

"Peaceful environment."

"Peace of mind."

"Also, a work-at-home partner. Problem situations are more challenging, although you can get help quickly through teams."

"I'm alone at home, so concentrating is easier."

Appendix 6. Answers to question 12

"I do not know the answer to this because both have advantages. It might be more pleasant to be in the office when support and friends are closer, but within the framework of the commute and time, I still prefer to work remotely."

"Both have advantages. I would do more work at the office if the commute weren't long."

"Both have their good points. However, remote works better for me in my case."

"Remote working is terrific. You can work in your own peace, you don't have to wake up two hours before your shift, and you don't have to travel to the workplace. It brings a lot of freedom and more free time!"

"With the flexibility of remote work, I can work wherever I want. The calm working atmosphere is not noisy. More free time."

"You feel more in the mood for work at the office and get a better grip. But, on the other hand, loneliness is an issue when working remotely."

"Flexibility. You can use your breaks more freely, and you don't have to spend time traveling to work."

"You see your colleagues at the office, but I like the relaxation and the peace of being at home."

"Timesaving, peace of mind. Remote has more free time."

"So far, I've had a good time at the office. There's currently no room for a workstation at home."

"Shorter commutes."

"You don't waste time (and money) on work trips. It's easier to concentrate at home."

"It doesn't take time to get ready and commute. So, remote shortens the working day even though the working hours remain the same."

"I'm more efficient at home. I save time on trips. I can wake up later."

Appendix 7. Answers to question 16

"People are kind and helpful. Perhaps the negative is that there is no time for "mingling" and thus getting to know each other more deeply.

"Inexperience."

"Open atmosphere."

"As soon as the work started, we had a Saturday workday where we could get together with new colleagues, which helped a lot. I have also been very well received at the workplace."

"I participated at the beginning of the employment relationship in summer days when all my colleagues were present and at evening parties. I also met many colleagues during orientation. However, since the beginning of the summer, there have been no evenings together, etc., so seeing new colleagues has not been successful."

"I cannot say."

"Colleagues received me well."

"The fact that we could participate in the sales service's celebration during the first days of summer work had a positive effect. I made a lot of new acquaintances there, from whom I made new friends."

"I was part of a marketing campaign for the sales service TikTok with two wonderful colleagues. The joint work project brought my colleagues and me closer, greatly influencing my comfort in the workplace."

"Positively approachable colleagues/supervisor."

"During the training period, I got to know my colleagues."

"Good atmosphere."

"Colleagues have gotten to know each other in the meetings, and the atmosphere is generally nice."

"Student friends with those who started training simultaneously have become incredibly close."

"Remote work reduces social interaction with colleagues to a minimum."

"On a positive note, the fact that we were in the office for a long time, in the beginning, we got to know people better when we saw them face to face relatively regularly."

"The colleagues are great, so it was easy to adapt."

Appendix 8. Answers to question 18

"By organizing more events that take place during your free time."

"I cannot answer."

"More things for teams to do together."

"Now that much new staff has started, it would be nice to organize a joint evening for everyone."

"More time to see co-workers, go out, etc."

"Things to do together and meetings at work and in your free time."

"I think it is also vital that summer workers are invited to workplace parties in the future. Adapting to the new workplace was accelerated because I got to know my colleagues better and relaxed."

"I cannot say."

"The training period is a good time to meet new colleagues. It is also good that it is mandatory to come to the office for a team meeting."

"I think the adaptation has been easy."

"No ideas."

"A calmer work environment (own little booths, I can't say)."

"After a few weeks of orientation, short "meetings" (e.g., once a week) where you can ask about the work-related things that bother you and chat with colleagues who started simultaneously."

"Maybe a little more to add mandatory attendance at meetings or "team days" when everyone would come to the office. Otherwise, it's in good shape."

"I cannot say."

Appendix 9. Main TikTok video.

URL: <https://www.tiktok.com/@vkmyyntipalvelu>