



Reward System as a Motivating Tool, Case K- Group Grocery Store

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The objective of this thesis project is to investigate the rewards that are most motivating for grocery store employees. A motivated workforce can provide numerous benefits to an organization, such as increased productivity and profitability. By identifying what motivates their employees, organizations can build a work environment that promotes motivation and engagement.

The theoretical background of the project consists of two sections: employee motivation and reward. This background knowledge helps to conduct qualitative research through structured and semi-structured interviews.

The study found that employees in the organization are generally motivated and enjoy their work, value financial rewards, and have a positive working atmosphere while trusting their employer. However, employees believe they do not receive enough feedback and appreciation from their employer. The company's orientation process was also considered ineffective, and both the employer and employees agreed that skills mapping would be an excellent addition to the orientation process to assist the entire team in becoming more productive. It was also suggested that the orientation process should have a designated employee or team of employees to handle the entire process.

Overall, the organization has created a positive working atmosphere that encourages staff satisfaction and well-being. However, to continue promoting a positive work environment and retaining employees, the organization needs to address the lack of sufficient feedback and an ineffective orientation process.

Keywords: Employee Motivation, Motivation, Rewards, Benefits, Recognition

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1 Introduction

Employee motivation is crucial to organizational success, as it drives job performance, productivity, and satisfaction. Rewarding models are one of the most used strategies to motivate employees in organizations. These models include both financial and non-financial rewards, such as bonuses, promotions, flexible work hours, and employee benefits. However, not all rewards are equally motivating for all employees, and what works for one organization and an employee may not necessarily work for another. Therefore, understanding which types of rewards are most motivating for employees is crucial for organizations to optimize their reward systems and increase employee motivation, job satisfaction, and performance. (Hertzberg et al, 2011.)

In this thesis, I will explore the different types of rewards and their effectiveness in motivating employees in a grocery store setting. I will examine the impact of financial and non-financial rewards on employee motivation and job satisfaction. The research results can help the grocery store improve its reward system and increase employee motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational success.

As the author, I am interested in this topic for several reasons. Particularly because the subject has received a lot of public attention recently, as demonstrated by the thanks letter for the hardworking HUS staff during the pandemic. Several different types of appreciation and incentives have been on display, and individuals have argued why employees do not receive proper recognition for their efforts. Based on my interest in human resources and leadership during my studies, I believe that workers should receive appropriate rewards in addition to their salaries because money alone only goes so far in motivating employees.

1.1 Research Question

What rewards promote work motivation best in a grocery store?

The research question aims to investigate the most effective combination of financial and non-financial rewards that can be used to increase employee satisfaction and productivity levels in a grocery store. The research aims to identify which rewards are most valued by employees and have the greatest impact on their satisfaction and productivity levels.

By answering this research question, the grocery store can potentially use the findings to optimize its reward system and improve employee motivation and job performance, which in turn could lead to better customer service and increased profitability for the organization. (Schooley 2023.)

To answer the research question, The author will need to conduct semi-structured interviews with the employees and a structured interview with the employer, and thus determine which rewards are most valued by the employees and have the greatest impact on their satisfaction and productivity levels.

1.2 The Benefits of this Research Project

A motivated workforce may provide several benefits to an organization. Employees that are motivated are more focused and interested in their job, which leads to increased productivity. These employees are more likely to be content with their jobs and to see their work positively. Employees that are motivated are also more likely to stay with the company in the long run, minimizing employee turnover. In a grocery store, motivated employees typically provide excellent customer service, which in turn boosts customer satisfaction and loyalty. (Schooley 2023.)

Understanding what motivates employees is essential for achieving these advantages. When an organization identifies what motivates its employees, it can build a work environment that promotes motivation and engagement. This may be accomplished through techniques such as giving possibilities for career growth, granting incentives and rewards, recognizing, and appreciating good performance, and establishing a positive workplace culture. Organizations can create a motivated and engaged workforce committed to achieving the company's goals by identifying what motivates their employees. (Schooley 2023.)

1.3 Case Company

The case company for this bachelor's thesis wishes to stay anonymous during the research project. It is a K-group grocery store located in Helsinki. The company is currently employing 20 permanent workers, excluding the retailer. The employer has been in the industry for 22 years and has been a Kesko retailer for nearly 10 years. The organization's objective is to be a modern grocery store with great food and excellent customer service. In the store, you will see a variety of fresh, delicious food items that follow current trends and seasons, as well as customer service that prioritizes the customers, which is one of the company's strengths.

The company's customer base includes families with children, adult households, young couples, and senior citizens. Customers appreciate high-quality, nutritious food, ethical and environmentally friendly products, a broad selection of fruits and vegetables, easy-to-prepare meals, new products, bargains, the store's brands, and unique goods, among other things. Customers are aware, demanding, price-conscious, and enthusiastic about the products they purchase.

1.4 Research Process and Thesis Framework

During the research, qualitative methods are used to gather empirical data to thoroughly understand what motivates employees. This thesis project begins with a theoretical background that contains secondary data from books, online sources, and academic papers. Semi-structured interviews were the primary approach for gathering data from the employees. Interviews were held with the case company's management and employees. This thesis project helps determine if any potential recommendations may be applied in the workplace by integrating the theoretical framework with the method of qualitative research.



Figure 1: Thesis Framework

The framework of this thesis project began with a literature review to better understand the concepts of employee motivation and reward. The author needed to have a comprehensive understanding of the meaning of the subjects to study the research question and topic further. Motivation was explored through different aspects, such as gender differences, well-being, workplace orientation, and communication. To understand rewards, the author had to study financial and non-financial rewarding and the importance of a reward system.

After the literature review, the author conducted interviews with the case company's employer and its employees to later in the thesis answer the research question. The knowledge of both subjects was beneficial in defining the framework for the interviews. The interview questions were formulated to ask the employees if they are content with the current rewards and if they wish for rewards that do not exist in their reward system. The

company also requested that the author explore the opinions of the current workplace orientation, which was done briefly in addition.

After carefully studying the data from the interviews, the author was able to make a distinction between the various factors that influenced employee motivation and satisfaction with the reward system. The qualitative nature of the interviews allowed for a deeper exploration of the employees' opinions and experiences, uncovering key insights on the factors that influenced employee motivation and satisfaction with the reward system. From the data gathered, the author was able to identify specific rewards that were highly valued by the employees and areas where improvements could be made to the reward system. The qualitative approach to the interviews provided valuable insights that would have been difficult to uncover using other research methods, demonstrating the effectiveness of this approach in understanding employee motivation and reward.

In the final conclusions chapter, the author will answer the research question and provide suggestions based on the findings for how the company could improve its reward system. By implementing these improvements, the case company can increase employee satisfaction, engagement, and productivity.

2 Employee Motivation

Employee motivation is the psychological force that drives employees to work well towards a common goal. Highly motivated employees are also highly engaged in their work, and those who are disengaged are mostly likely to quit their jobs. (Schooley 2023.)

A study conducted in 2021 found that in the United States, nearly 50 percent of employees are actively searching for new job opportunities. To reduce high employee turnover rates, it is key for the workplace to develop the employee experience. Work motivation is critical for creating an enjoyable working environment and boosting organizational success. An organization that works on motivating its staff will see many benefits in doing so. (Schooley 2023.)

There are three levels of engagement: engaged, not engaged, and actively disengaged. When an employer understands all these engagement levels, they can work on improving the motivation of their staff. Understanding the levels of engagement also leads to figuring out what issues the employees have with motivation and how to fix them. Highly motivated employees are hardworking employees. They work harder and concentrate on accomplishing their responsibilities to the best of their ability, resulting in higher productivity for their businesses. (Schooley 2023.)

Understanding employee motivation is important, and by doing so, an employer can increase corporate productivity, performance, and efficiency. Highly motivated employees often provide excellent customer service, which leads to customer satisfaction and higher profits. A motivated staff also creates a great company culture. They work well as a team and inspire others to become more motivated. A well-running team also leads to better productivity, which can again lead to more profit. When the staff is motivated and the company culture is a positive environment, it is highly likely that employees speak well of the company and may even recommend the workplace to others. (Schooley 2023.)

According to MacRae and Furnham (2017, 1-5), motivation is a crucial factor that affects employee performance in a diverse workforce. The difference between thinking about doing something and doing it is motivation. The authors argue that managers need to understand the individual needs and values of their employees to effectively motivate them. People can improve, they can work on improving their abilities and performance and become more motivated. Work may also improve, with the right modifications made to the workplace, it can improve and become less stressful; the workplace does not have to be a challenging environment. (MacRae, Furnham, 2017, 1-5.)

2.1 Generational Differences

Generational differences in the workplace are often portrayed as a significant challenge for organizations. However, research has shown that the idea of distinct generational differences is a myth and that age differences are not significant predictors of work-related attitudes and behaviors. People are unique individuals, and the differences between individuals are greater than the differences between generations. In other words, individual differences are more important than generational differences. The environment in which people work, such as the organization's culture, leadership style, and job demands, has a more significant impact on work-related attitudes and behaviors than age or generational differences. Generations are often defined by the historical events and cultural influences that shape people's lives. However, people within a generation have diverse life experiences that shape their attitudes and behaviors. (MacRae, Furnham 2017, 29-31.)

As people age, they tend to become more similar, regardless of the generation they belong to. This means that the supposed differences between generations tend to decrease as people age and gain more experience. Studies have shown that there is no correlation between age and views on organizational transformation, risk-taking, and innovativeness. (MacRae, Furnham 2017, 26-28.)

In summary, while there may be some differences in the attitudes and behaviors of individuals from different generations, these differences are relatively small and are not significant enough in the workplace. It is more important to focus on individual differences

and environmental factors that have a greater impact on work-related outcomes. (MacRae, Furnham 2017, 26-31.)

The main problem with generational myths is stereotyping. Generational myths often rely on broad generalizations and stereotypes about people based on their age. These stereotypes can be inaccurate, simplistic, and offensive, and they can contribute to prejudice and discrimination. (MacRae, Furnham 2017, 24-26.)

Generational myths also lead to overgeneralizations. They claim that all people of a certain age have the same values, attitudes, and behaviors. However, this is not the case; people are complicated individuals who are influenced by a variety of things other than their age. Many of these myths lack evidence and are not based on research or empirical evidence, but rather on narrative observations or personal opinions. This can lead to false assumptions and beliefs about different age groups. Generational myths often ignore other important factors that influence people's behavior and attitudes, such as socioeconomic status, education, gender, race, and culture. Focusing only on age can lead to oversimplification and misunderstanding. (MacRae, Furnham 2017, 24-26.)

2.2 Stress and Well-being in the Workplace

Healthy employees are crucial for the productivity and profitability of a company. However, estimates suggest that over 17 percent of Europeans suffer from mild or severe depression, which can have a significant impact on their work performance. An additional 28 percent of people have experienced work-related stress at some point in their working lives, which has led to further health issues. Just 30 percent of European organizations have policies and processes in place to deal with workplace stress, even though 79 percent of managers say they experience stress-related difficulties at work. Every job comes with its own set of stressors, and it is essential to address mental health issues, especially considering that one-third of our lives is spent at work. (MacRae, Furnham 2017, 37-39.)

In some workplaces, there is a culture of "competitive stressing," where individuals compete to see who is the most stressed out. In this environment, stress is seen as a badge of honor, and those who are not stressed enough are simply not trying hard enough. However, some people are more exposed to stress than others, and as one gains more experience and expertise in their job, stress levels tend to ease. (MacRae, Furnham 2017, 39-40.)

There are many ways to manage stress, including physical exercise in moderation and the use of different time-management tools in the workplace. Reduced stress levels can lead to fewer sick days and increased productivity and overall health. Although moderate levels of stress are normal, excessively high levels can lead to mistakes and problems. When tackled constructively, stress can be a positive motivator. It is essential to identify the sources of

stress and address them proactively. By doing so, stress can be turned into a source of motivation and help individuals in achieving their, and the business's goals. (MacRae, Furnham 2017, 41-45.)

2.3 Benefits of a Good Workplace Orientation

Workplace orientation is a crucial step for a new employee to get familiarized with the work, the environment, and the company culture. In a new job, employees often feel overwhelmed with too much information too fast and need more guidance and help than companies estimate. Orientation not only helps the new employee to understand their new job tasks but also comprehend company values and goals. 28 percent of employee turnover happens during the first six months of starting a new job, often due to poor orientation or the inability of the employee to adapt to the company culture. A complete orientation program lasting from a week up to a month helps in retaining employees and boosts employee productivity as they have a clear understanding of their tasks. The first step in orientation is to give the new employee a tour of the workplace and introduce them to the ways of working. Even within the same industry, each company has its unique method of completing tasks, so make sure to inform the new employee about them. It is also helpful to provide them with a sheet of paper containing information regarding company bonuses and benefits, sick leave, and occupational health care, as these things tend to get forgotten about. (Rabha 2023.)

Introducing the new employee to all colleagues is essential for building relationships. During a fresh start in a new working environment, employees might feel like they cannot ask for things or do not want to be an inconvenience to anyone. Therefore, it is useful to ask the new employee often about how they are doing and feeling. A carefully thought-out orientation program aids the employee in adjusting to their new environment and typically benefits the employee's productivity in the long term. A successful orientation program allows the employees the chance to express their opinions about their jobs and ask questions. This input often assists the company in solving the issues that the staff is having. (Rabha 2023.)

2.4 Improving Internal Communication

Joyany and Martic (2023) claim that employee motivation relies heavily on effective communication within a company. Employees are more motivated and engaged in organizations that prioritize and maintain open channels of communication. Effective communication not only makes it easier to share information but also encourages a feeling of inclusion and belonging among employees.

Employees might get demotivated and disengaged if they feel excluded from critical discussions or are uninformed of organizational changes. Being kept in the dark can lead to frustration, confusion, and a lack of trust in management. Employees who are well-informed

and kept up to date, on the other hand, are more motivated by their jobs and more devoted to achieving the company's goals. Many businesses experience difficulties with internal communication, which makes it difficult for them to build lasting relationships with their employees. These issues might include a lack of transparency, poor communication channels, or a failure to prioritize employee engagement. These issues can result in high turnover rates and lower productivity if not addressed. (Jouany, Martic 2023.)

2.5 Measuring Employee Motivation and Performance

Some organizations emphasize more on what employees cannot do rather than focusing on expanding their skill sets. Employees may find this technique demotivating. Since individuals are aware of how they feel, motivation is a simple and direct human behavior to calculate. (MacRae, Furnham 2017, 55-58.)

Testing is one method of evaluating employees, but it is frequently part of a larger assessment process. While performing tests, three major characteristics must be considered: reliability, validity, and utility. A good test always achieves its goal, measures what it is supposed to measure, and is designed for a specific reason. Testing is always performed for a reason, showing that the object being tested is valuable to the organization. However, it is important to recognize that testing is only one technique of assessment and that it should be used in combination with other methods to build a complete representation of an employee's skills and abilities. Focusing on enhancing individuals' skill sets rather than their weaknesses can result in a more motivated and efficient workforce. (MacRae, Furnham 2017, 55-58.)

Measuring motivation can help a company improve its performance, productivity, and profitability by identifying areas for improvement and tailoring management strategies to meet employees' needs and expectations. (MacRae, Furnham 2017, 73).

Employees usually agree to the company policies on the day they sign their employment contract, and from then on, the company monitors their performance to see if they meet the company's goals. Some employees do only the bare minimum, while others go above and beyond, which is why performance should be measured. Employee monitoring can also motivate employees to work harder because when they know someone is evaluating their performance, they want to perform according to expectations or even exceed them. There are various methods of performance measurement, including performance evaluations, rating systems, or monthly evaluations. After the evaluation, employees can receive positive feedback and recognition or further training if they are not meeting their goals. (Christiansen 2023.)

Employees who consistently perform well should be compensated accordingly, and competitive compensation can inspire others to perform better. Performance can be

measured through punctuality, and employees who complete their daily tasks on time are more likely to achieve desired company performance rates. It is important to keep track of whether tasks are being completed according to standards if poor attitudes are impacting the quality of work, or if staff can set their own goals. (Christiansen 2023.)

An individual employee's bad habits can affect the entire organization and its culture, so it is important to monitor employees who spend excessive time away from work to do other tasks. A great way to find out if an employee's performance is up to standard is to talk to customers, especially regulars. They will let you know if something is not going well, and if they are not treated well, which can be an indicator of poor employee performance. (Christiansen 2023.)

In larger companies, it may not be possible to monitor all employee performances, and there could be an additional tool added for measuring. (Peek 2023). Trello, iDoneThis, and Monday.com are examples of tools that can be used to measure employee performance and tasks. These tools can be used in multiple fields. They measure what tasks were done during the day and what could have possibly been left undone. iDoneThis sends out an email reminder at the end of the day asking what tasks were completed during the day. Monday allows employees to add tasks with high, medium, or low priority to some or even all employees. Trello has a common workboard that tracks progress in various ways, for example, checklists. (Peek 2023.)

2.6 Organizational Culture and Values

Personal values play a significant role in determining an individual's career choices and plans. For example, while financial stability is often not the most exciting aspect of the workplace, it does provide motivation. (MacRae, Furnham 2017, 161-163.)

Intrinsic or internal motivation comes from within a person, and it is the satisfaction one has from doing their job. Intrinsic motivation can have a positive impact on the performance levels of a company. In contrast, extrinsic motivation comes from external rewards or even punishments, which may lower performance levels. (Rose 2022, 30.) Ultimately, all companies aim to create a better working environment and generate higher profits. Despite personnel changes, organizational culture tends to remain constant, and it can be difficult to change. (MacRae, Furnham 2017 161-163.)

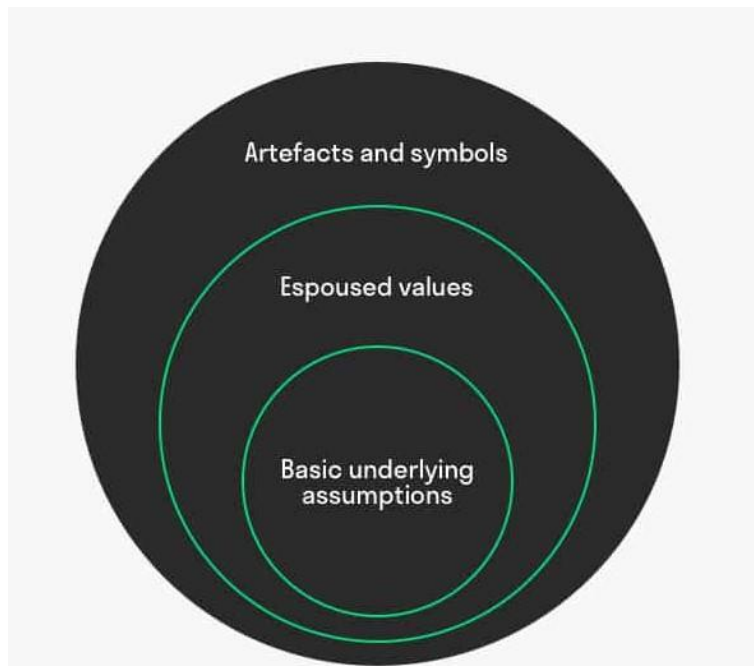


Figure 2: Organizational Culture Model created by Schein (1980)

The manifestation of culture is part of the externally visible aspects of the organization, also known as the artifacts and symbols. According to Schein's organizational culture model, these are, for example, behaviors like, how to talk to customers or how to answer the phone and ways of working, in what order, and on what schedule certain jobs are handled. These are aspects that differ from other places, and they determine how companies stand out from other competitors in the area. (Schein 1980.)

According to Edgar Schein, there are 6 defined characteristics of organizational culture. Culture is a group characteristic: Organizational culture is not just the result of an individual's actions but is a characteristic that is created by the workforce. Culture is a powerful force that guides the behavior and actions of individual employees and the working environment. (Schein 1980.)

Culture is created together: The culture of an organization is created through the active actions or inactions of the group. The outside world can influence the culture, but it is ultimately shaped by the leader of the organization and its value system, actions, and failings. The company management team can guide the culture, but it will only happen as a result of the interaction of the entire group. (Schein 1980.)

Culture is learned and can be taught: New members of an organization automatically tend to adapt to the culture that already exists in that organization. It takes about 2-4 months for employees to adapt to the organization and begin to act following the culture. Culture can be taught and learned through various means such as training programs, workshops, and

mentorship. If a new employee, does not appear to adapt to the organization and its culture, they typically end up leaving. This demonstrates how powerful the organizational culture is. (Schein 1980.)

Culture is shared and it unites group members: Culture exists only when it is shared with others. It forms when the group has common practices, symbols, and other connecting elements. These uniting characteristics might include workplace uniforms, customs, or specific gestures that distinguish the group from other communities and circumstances. Culture unites group members and separates them from other groups. (Schein 1980.)

Culture affects assumptions, values, symbols, and behavior: Culture is not just about visible characteristics like artifacts or symbols, but it also affects the assumptions, values, and behavior of individuals in the organization. Simply copying artifacts or symbols will not change the culture of the organization, as culture is deeply ingrained in the values and worldview of the group. (Schein 1980.)

Culture is stronger than an individual: Organizational culture is always stronger than an individual, as it is a characteristic of the group. It carries with it the history of the organization, for better or for worse, and is often rooted in the way things have always been done. The importance of culture comes from the fact that it guides the behavior and actions of the personnel, and it is difficult to change once it has been established. (Schein 1980.)

3 Reward and Reward Strategy

Armstrong (2012, 82, 99) claims that employees can be rewarded in two ways: financially and non-financially. Financial rewards cover all monetary rewards such as basic pay, bonuses, and sick pay. Non-monetary rewards, on the other hand, are those that emphasize on intangible benefits such as recognition, performance management, and employee growth.

According to Rose (2022, 6-8) there are four elements of rewards. This figure below will help to understand the terminology used throughout this chapter when referring to rewards.

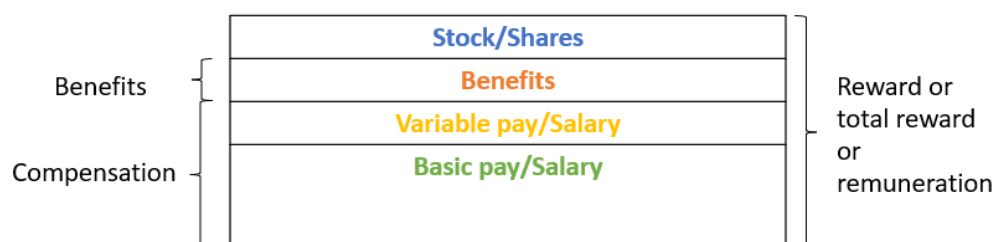


Figure 3: The four components of reward according to Rose (2022)

Basic pay, also known as base pay, is shown at the bottom of the figure and it translates directly to salary. It is often the highest amount of pay an employee earns from their work. (Rose 2022, 6-8.) An employee on hourly pay may earn, for example, 12€ per hour at work, and thus their basic pay will be those 12€ multiplied by the number of hours worked throughout the pay period.

After basic pay, there are different types of variable pay such as performance-based pay, profit sharing, sales commissions, and differential pay. Variable pay is exactly what it sounds like, variable. On top of the basic pay, variable pay is received or not depending on the contract. Extra pay from evening and weekend shifts is an example of variable compensation or more specifically differential pay. (Indeed 2022 & Jones; Perkins 2020, 209.) For example, if an employee works during the weekends or the evenings, they earn more; if they do not work on the weekends or the evenings, they do not receive any further income.

Then there are benefits that are not directly monetary in nature; rather, they are tangible business perks such as a company car or phone, accident or health insurance, and paid vacation time. (Jones, Perkins 2020, 243; Rose 2022, 6-8).

At the top of the figure, there is stock, also known as shares, and company shares are typically only distributed within the private sector. Shares are normally reserved for the most senior members of a company, however, in certain organizations, shares are distributed equally inside the company, making everyone a shareholder. (Rose 2022, 6-8.)

There are many definitions of reward strategy. According to Armstrong (2012, 152), the goal of a reward strategy is to make sure that the reward methods serve their intended function. The reward strategy is meant to serve as a roadmap and to provide reward systems some direction.

Rose's (2022, 10) definition of reward strategy is: a reward strategy is a method of rewarding that is based on a set of consistent principles that support the company's objectives. Organizations must craft a reward system that reflects their culture and values when aiming to attract and retain top employees. While rewards are a way to show employees they are valued, how rewards are given should align with the organization's culture. Therefore, companies must ask themselves what kind of reward system will work best for their unique needs instead of blindly following trends. (Rose 2022, 10-13.)

When modifying or designing a reward system, companies must think long-term since many rewards typically run on annual cycles. Changing the reward system mid-cycle can cause delays in implementation, making careful planning and communication of any changes essential. It is important to remember that a reward system is just one part of the talent management strategy. Creating a culture of recognition that goes beyond rewards is vital to

ensure employees feel appreciated and motivated. While a reward strategy provides a concrete approach, it is the combination of actions that will drive the business forward. (Rose 2022, 10-13.)

3.1 The Importance of Rewarding

Employees staying with a firm for several years used to be a regular phenomenon known as long service. However, in today's fast-paced work environment, this is no longer the norm, and the term has become somewhat outdated. It is important to recognize and reward individuals who have remained with a company for a long time. Paid holiday leave and pension plans are the most typical methods to acknowledge long-serving employees. In the United Kingdom, Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC) enables long-service rewards for workers who have worked for more than 20 years to be tax-free. Companies must show their appreciation for their employees' dedication and commitment with tangible rewards since actions speak louder than words. What companies say sends out a different message than what they pay for. (Rose 2022, 15-16.)

Employee engagement surveys have grown in popularity in recent years, with Work at World showing that 84 percent of companies use some form of survey to assess engagement and motivation levels in 2017. Shorter, more frequent surveys are becoming more common due to cost savings and the fact that employees prefer to fill them out in less time. Exit interviews may also be a useful source of information since employees are more truthful about their experiences and can give insight into areas for development, particularly in reward systems. However, salary is rarely the significant cause for quitting a job, with employees instead looking for new alternatives for growth and progress. High employee turnover rates during the first year might suggest problems with the hiring process, which can be discovered and corrected through exit interviews. Businesses may gain insight into their reward system and make required improvements to ensure consistency with their entire business strategy by evaluating employee turnover rates and exit interview data. (Rose 2022, 24-26.)

3.2 Relationship Between Motivation and Reward

The topic of whether money motivates employees is still being debated, particularly when it comes to reward systems with incentives, bonuses, and performance-based compensation. To understand the function of incentives in motivation, it is necessary to evaluate both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, as also explained in Chapter 2.6 Organizational Culture and Values. Intrinsic motivation is generally long-term, but extrinsic motivation is frequently triggered by short-term negative situations. Previously, managers felt that monetary rewards were the only way to recognize and reward people, causing employees to expect greater monetary compensation for their good performance. But research indicates that positive support and feedback, rather than monetary rewards, are what employees genuinely require. Nelson

(1996) believes that if you just use money to express gratitude to others, money will substitute psychologically for having to put up with a bad job that receives no other recognition. (Rose 2022, 29-31.)

According to the expectancy theory of motivation, employees behave in a specific way in hopes of achieving a desired outcome, such as a promotion. Employers, on the other hand, may suffer negative consequences such as unethical behavior or even the company's destruction in the long run if they rely only on financial incentives to motivate employees. Instead of a reward, effective management, clear business goals, and positive feedback and recognition could all have a greater influence on motivating employees. According to a McKinsey study, praise from managers, leadership attention, and the opportunity to manage projects may be just as effective as monetary bonuses or stock options. Employers must understand what is important to their employees. Towers Watson found that convenient work locations, paid time off, and flexible schedules are frequently overlooked. Motivating employees demands a comprehensive strategy that considers the various reasons that are important to them. (Rose 2022, 35-38.)

3.3 Bonus Plans

According to a study conducted by XpertHR in 2021, 64 percent of organizations offer some form of a bonus to their employees. When devising a bonus plan for a company, it's essential to identify the actions that the company wants to reward first, and then determine the type of bonus plan that aligns with those goals. There are several types of bonus plans that businesses can adopt, ranging from individual performance-based bonuses to group-focused bonuses. (Rose 2022, 153.) Each type of bonus plan has its advantages and disadvantages, and companies should select the plan that best aligns with their overall objectives. The main types of bonuses are listed in the following figure.

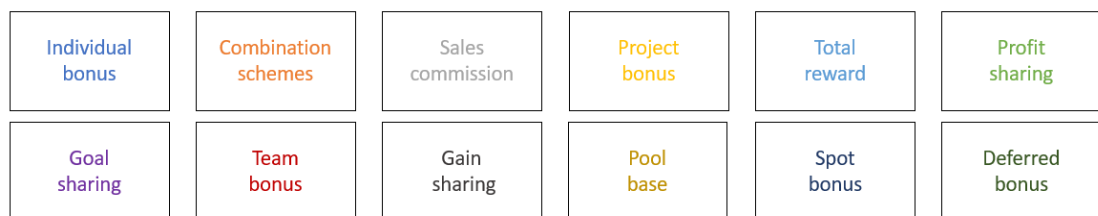


Figure 4: According to Rose (2022), the most common bonus types

According to Rose (2022 155-156) individual bonuses are given to employees based on their performance and achievements. Combination schemes are bonus programs that combine different types of bonuses, such as individual and team bonuses, to encourage collaboration and teamwork among employees. Sales commission is a bonus paid to salespeople based on a

percentage of the sales they make, providing an incentive for them to sell more. Project bonuses are given to employees who have contributed to a specific project and achieved outstanding results or completed the project ahead of schedule. (Rose 2022, 155-156.)

Total reward is a comprehensive bonus program that includes various forms of compensation and benefits, such as salary, bonuses, benefits, and career development opportunities. Profit sharing is another type of bonus where a percentage of a company's profits is distributed among employees, encouraging them to work together to achieve the company's goals. Goal sharing is a bonus program where employees receive a bonus when they achieve specific goals or targets set by the company, motivating them to work towards common goals. Team bonuses are given to groups of employees who have worked together to achieve a specific goal or target, promoting teamwork and collaboration. (Rose 2022, 155-156.)

Gain sharing is a bonus program where a portion of the savings generated by employee-led improvements in productivity, quality, or costs is shared among the employees, motivating them to come up with innovative ideas to improve the company's performance. Pool base is a bonus program where a pool of funds is set aside and distributed among employees based on performance or other criteria, encouraging employees to work hard and achieve specific goals. Spot bonuses are small, one-time bonuses given to employees for exceptional performance or contributions, providing immediate recognition for their hard work. Finally, deferred bonuses are paid out over a certain period, often to motivate employees to stay with the company and continue performing well. (Rose 2022, 155-156.)

While rewards and incentives can be effective in motivating employees, there is a risk that they can lead to unintended consequences. In some cases, employees may become solely focused on achieving the reward, rather than on doing their best work or contributing to the overall success of the company. This can have a negative impact on the business, as employees may start to cut corners and take shortcuts to earn the reward. A study by Desi and Ryan in 2018 showed that this type of behavior can decrease overall performance and lead to a decline in employee morale. (Rose 2022, 160.) Companies must carefully consider the potential consequences of rewards and incentives before implementing them in a way that promotes positive behaviors and outcomes.

3.4 Recognition, Feedback and Non-financial Rewards

Non-financial rewards, such as benefits or recognition, can be given alone or in combination with a bonus to motivate and encourage employees. Recognition, according to Blanchard and Johnson (1993), involves catching employees doing something right and acknowledging their positive actions. Everyone, including managers and other employees, is used to looking for mistakes in their colleagues, but the objective of recognition is to seek for what individuals do properly and let them know how they did. Recognition and positive feedback can range

from a simple individual act to performing well throughout the year. Sometimes, benefits and recognition alone are sufficient to satisfy employees and financial rewards may not be necessary. There are situations where bonuses are not the best choice for employees, such as when the impact of performance is temporary or in other ways short, such as receiving excellent customer feedback, or when intrinsic motivation has already driven outstanding work. While rewards are typically extrinsic motivators, recognition and feedback are intrinsic motivators that may be more effective for intrinsically motivated individuals. (Rose 2022, 185-188.)

Recognition programs differ from bonus plans in that the goal is to support and appreciate employees for their exceptional work rather than to reward them for completing tasks or doing their job. The purpose of recognizing exceptional work is to communicate to the employee, "Hey, I saw what you did, that was fantastic, thank you!". A goal of recognition programs is to recognize actions that align with organizational values, such as providing excellent customer service. It may be challenging to identify desired behaviors, and as a result, financial rewards may not be effective in incentivizing such activities. According to Backstrand (2016), 33 percent of employees who receive recognition and feedback are more innovative and productive in their work. (Rose 2022, 185-188.)

Employee competition may arise as a result of recognition since it may be seen by others as a sign that they have not worked well enough to receive it. Some employees may feel unfairly treated at work when they see that some coworkers consistently receive appreciation for their efforts while others never do. (Armstrong 2012, 101.) Therefore, it might not be the best idea to publicly praise the best-performed employees.

Rose (2022, 188) suggests that companies should consider reducing their bonus plans by a small percentage and focusing more on recognition. By acknowledging and rewarding employees for their hard work and aligning their actions with organizational values, companies can improve employee motivation and engagement, leading to increased productivity and innovation. Employees who do not receive enough recognition for their job have more negative feelings about it, according to Herzberg's research (Herzberg et al, 1959). Even though employees are proud of their achievements, they are rarely supported beyond the achievement itself. Maslow argued in the 1970s that people required self-respect, self-esteem, and the esteem of others, which is recognition. These findings emphasize the significance of rewarding employees' efforts and accomplishments in the workplace. (Rose 2022, 185-188.)

It is crucial to understand that there is no one-size-fits-all model for giving recognition and feedback in the workplace. Every individual has their preferences for receiving recognition, with some preferring private recognition while others may prefer public praise. Therefore,

employers need to learn about their employees and their preferences to apply an appropriate recognition model. Simply applying the same recognition model to all employees may not be effective and could result in dissatisfaction among employees. If a company uses the same form of employee recognition for all employees, the job is just half done. By knowing the employees on a personal level, employers can ensure that each employee receives recognition and feedback in a way that is meaningful and motivating to them. (Rose 2022, 193.)

Non-financial rewards have been demonstrated in studies to be more successful than monetary incentives in motivating employees. Jeffrey's 2004 study discovered that those who received non-financial benefits performed twice as well in their jobs as those who received monetary rewards. One reason for this might be that cash rewards are often enjoyed just for as long as the money lasts, but non-financial rewards, such as tangible gifts, can be appreciated for a longer period and remain as a continuous reminder of the recognition received. Additionally, studies show that 76 percent of individuals save handwritten thank-you notes, which are a great method to demonstrate appreciation and recognize employees' hard work. (Rose 2022, 195-196.)

Employee benefits are often developed gradually over time by organizations. This process may begin with legally required benefits such as paid holidays and then slowly expand to include additional benefits. Occupational health care in the private sector is one of the most common benefits provided by companies because it is less expensive for the organization to provide than it is for the individual. Companies may also provide in-kind benefits that benefit both the company and the employee, such as a company car, phone, or accommodation, as well as voluntary staff benefits such as discounts. (Rose 2022, 229, 238.)

Several businesses provide voluntary benefits, which often include extra benefits relating to health and wellness, personal security, and financial wellness. Life insurance, dental insurance, travel insurance, and gym memberships, are examples of popular voluntary benefits that companies provide to their employees. Although these benefits are usually offered to all employees, the cost may vary based on the size of the company and the individual employee. (Rudder, Bottorff 2023.)

Benefits are one of the rewards that organizations provide to their employees, yet they are often underappreciated. Workers frequently miss the fact that benefits do cost the company money. If employees do not recognize the benefits, the organization needs to work on building a more effective rewarding system. According to a survey, 84 percent of employers believe that employees should be more aware of and use the benefits provided, however, just 45 percent communicate and remind employees about the company's rewards. (Rose 2022,

233-234.) This indicates that there often is a communication gap between businesses and employees on benefits.

4 Methodology and Method of Research

The focus of this chapter is the methodology used to conduct the research for the thesis project. For this thesis, qualitative research was chosen as the research method. The study approach was chosen since the topic requires more in-depth responses from respondents describing their feelings, which cannot be gathered through a quantitative survey with closed multiple-choice questions.

Two interviews were done during the research process, one for the employer and one for the employees. On the 18th and 19th of April, all interviews took place at the case company. The goal of the two interviews was mainly to determine whether the employer and employees agreed on the existing reward system. For clarity, the two interviews will be referred to as the employer interview and the employee interview throughout the thesis. Employees who were interviewed are referred to as respondents or employees.

For the employee interview, nine employees were interviewed at the case company as part of this study. During the interviews, the research question "What rewards promote work motivation best in a grocery store?" was explored. The purpose of these interviews was to gain insight into the most effective ways to motivate employees in a grocery store setting. In addition, the company is experiencing some issues with internal communication and orientation. During the interviews, employees were asked about receiving feedback and recognition for their performance, as well as what they thought of the company's orientation process. These issues are related to employee motivation and satisfaction and, therefore, to the research question.

According to Cornell (2023), qualitative research is a research method that focuses on people's feelings and opinions. The primary goal of qualitative research is to understand why people feel the way they do and what reasoning lies behind it. The most effective way of conducting qualitative research is through interviews, which usually involve open conversations about the research topic. It is essential to note that survey interviews generally provide the researcher with numerical quantitative data that may not answer the same questions that qualitative interviews do. (Cornell 2023.)

At the end of qualitative research, the researcher must highlight why the respondents feel the way they do and what the reasoning behind those feelings might be. This information helps the researcher to gain insight into the participants' perspectives and can be used to inform the development of theories or hypotheses. Overall, qualitative research provides a

more in-depth understanding of human behavior and allows researchers to explore complex social phenomena in greater detail. (Cornell 2023.)

4.1 The Philosophy of the Project

The philosophy behind this research is to determine if there are any possible ways of improving the current reward system in the case company. The interview questions were developed to assess employees' satisfaction with the current reward system. Additionally, the questions tried to figure out whether there were any rewards that the employees desired but were not part of the reward system yet.

According to the wishes of the case company's employer, the interviews also attempted to collect data on issues with internal communication, feedback, and perspectives on the workplace orientation process. These are topics that came to the attention of the employer during the Kesko personnel research and need further investigation and development.

4.2 Data Collection

For the collection of qualitative data, semi-structured interviews were the most suitable approach. A semi-structured interview, according to the Indeed Career Guide (2022), is a hybrid of a structured and an unstructured interview. The interviewer has prepared a set of questions, but they are free to ask additional questions based on the answers provided. During a structured interview, the interviewer has all the questions prepared and does not ask any additional questions besides the ones that have been prepared. An unstructured interview does not follow any specific pattern; the interviewer will ask whatever questions they want and based on the answers, will ask additional questions. (Indeed 2022.)

Before the interviews, a set of questions were prepared and carefully thought out, although some of the questions asked varied depending on the previous answers given. Despite this, almost all employees followed a similar pattern during the interviews and answered the questions similarly.

During the employee interviews, an introduction about the thesis topic was given to the respondents so that they had time to reflect on it before the actual interview. The interviews focused on several themes, including the background, lack of motivation and coping, rewards, recognition, and opinions on workplace orientation. The interviews were recorded for the author's personal use and lasted for approximately ten minutes each since they were conducted during working hours. The data collected from the interviews was transferred onto a separate Word document to keep everything organized and easily accessible.

To ensure that the employer and the employees were aligned in terms of employee motivation and reward, a structured interview was conducted also with the employer. The

interview focused on themes such as employee motivation, rewards, recognition, and workplace orientation. The employer interview was also recorded and transferred onto a separate Word document.

5 The Findings of the Research Project

In this chapter, the two interviews conducted at the case company will be presented. The questions asked during the interviews will also be discussed. Furthermore, the findings from the interviews will be analyzed and evaluated. Based on these results, the author will make recommendations for improvements to the case company's reward system.

5.1 Employee Interview

The employee interview started with two background questions, gender, and time of occupation. The purpose of these background questions was to see if there are any correlations between the gender of the respondent or the time of employment and their responses.

Gender?

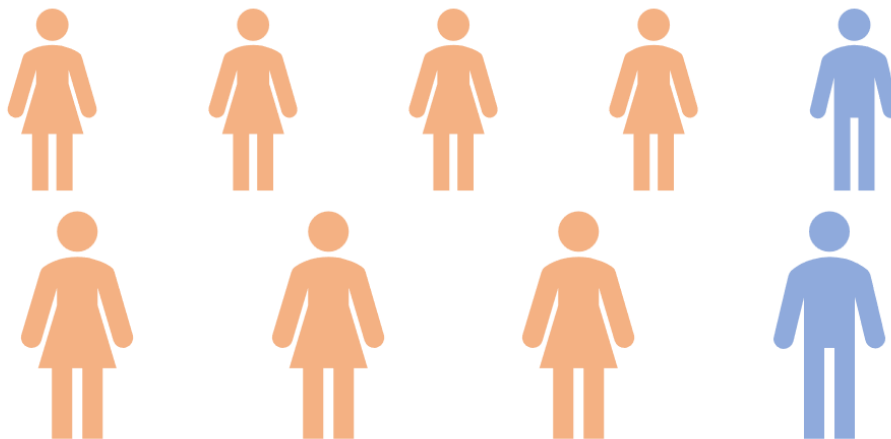


Figure 5: Genders of the employee interview respondents

The interviews conducted consisted of 9 employees from the case company. Out of the 9 respondents, 7 were female and 2 were male.

How long have you worked for the company?

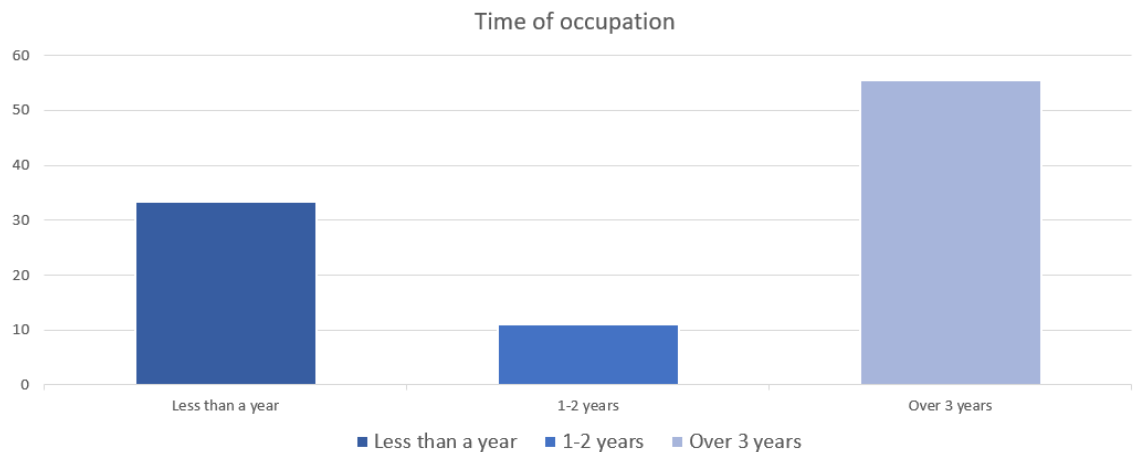


Figure 6: Time of occupation

Most of the respondents, which was 5 out of 9, have been working for the case company for more than three years. Two employees have been working for 1-2 years, while two others have been working for less than a year.

Do you feel that you have experienced a lack of motivation for the past six months?

After the background questions, all nine respondents were asked if they have experienced any lack of motivation for the past six months. Most of the employees, which were 6 out of 9, responded with a straightforward "No". One employee expressed that while everyone experiences short losses in motivation, they consider their job interesting, and they remain motivated. Another employee mentioned that they have experienced occasional small dips in motivation but nothing major. Finally, two employees responded with a positive note stating that they have not experienced a lack of motivation but rather an increase in motivation or that they are overall motivated. Most employees seem to be content with their level of motivation in the workplace.

If the employees would have responded that they are in fact experiencing motivational losses, the author had created a follow-up question for them. The question would have been "What helps you find motivation and strength again in your workplace?" but because the responses were the opposite, it was left out.

5.1.1 Reward Analysis

What benefits does the workplace offer?

At the beginning of the reward section of the interview, the author asked what benefits the employees receive. The purpose of this was to determine if all benefits in the case company are known of and used, as discussed in the theory part of this research, if the rewards are not

used or know of there is something wrong with the company's reward system. Based on the interview responses, the case company offers a range of benefits to its employees. The most mentioned benefits include a commuting benefit, staff discounts, and flexible scheduling.

The Smartum commuting benefit was mentioned by several respondents, which includes a season ticket at half-price or a 35€ discount for full-time employees. This benefit is highly valued by those who commute to work and would not need to buy a season ticket if it was not for work.

Staff discounts were also frequently mentioned, with many respondents mentioning discounts for both their workplace and other Kesko locations. The employer provides a 15% discount on all grocery purchases, and Kesko also provides a 5% discount on purchases made at other Kesko grocery stores. Other bonuses, such as a Christmas bonus and a 5€ bonus for washing work uniforms at home, were also mentioned. The Christmas bonus is available to all employees, and they can spend it on their store up to a maximum of 100€ on the company's account.

Flexible scheduling was another common benefit, with several respondents mentioning the ability to have their scheduling requests for days off or even leaving early granted. This was particularly valued by part-time employees who may be students or have other commitments that affect their ability to work during certain days.

Other benefits that were less frequently mentioned are private occupational health care and a good schedule during shifts that allow everyone to take breaks as needed. The employer also appears to be mindful of its employees' well-being, with a respondent reporting that their employer frequently asks how they are. Overall, the workplace offers a range of benefits that are highly valued and acknowledged by employees.

What do you feel are the most important things here at the workplace that help you cope with motivation loss and stress?

Following a question about employees' knowledge of company benefits, the author asked, about the important things that help each employee cope with motivation loss and stress. This question was similar to the missed question on motivation loss, although it was phrased slightly differently, and thus could be asked instead. According to the respondents, the workplace appears to offer numerous benefits that assist employees in coping with motivation loss and stress, which are not immediately perceived as benefits provided by the employer, but rather benefits of the workplace and the great organizational culture. The most common benefits mentioned include consistent shifts, flexibility from the employer, great colleagues, and job satisfaction.

According to a respondent, consistent shifts can be a great help for employees who struggle with motivation and stress because they provide a predictable routine and allow them to plan their personal life around their work schedule. Another respondent appreciated the employer's flexibility, which enabled them to better manage their work-life balance. Employees value employers who are willing to accommodate their needs and preferences because it helps them cope with work-related stress.

Other respondents emphasized the importance of a positive organizational culture and a supportive work environment. This encourages a sense of unity and teamwork among employees, which can help them feel more engaged and motivated. Job satisfaction has also been identified as a key motivator because it provides employees with a sense of purpose and fulfillment in their work. Lastly, a respondent further appreciated the financial benefits provided by the workplace. While not the most important factor, these benefits can serve as an added incentive for employees to stay motivated and engaged. Overall, it seems that the case company's most important assets for helping employees cope with motivation loss and stress are consistent shifts, flexibility, supportive colleagues, a positive work environment, job satisfaction, and financial benefits. By providing these benefits, employers can help create a workplace culture that promotes employee well-being and engagement.

Would you like to add a reward to your reward system that does not exist in your company yet?

The author asked the employees if they wanted to add a new reward to the case company's reward system and there were numerous suggestions for new benefits the employees desired. Some respondents mentioned the idea of having more physical wellness benefits, such as discounts on gym memberships or a massage provided by the employer occasionally, and a discount for that seemed appropriate as well. Others suggested adding benefits like a Smartum cultural benefit that can be used freely anywhere or even slightly better staff discounts. Some respondents also mentioned they were happy with the existing reward system and did not see the need for any new benefits.

Based on the responses, employees value a balance between financial and non-financial rewards. While staff discounts and commuting benefits are appreciated, it is the non-financial benefits like a supportive working environment, flexible work arrangements, and positive relationships with colleagues that help employees cope with stress and stay motivated. It is important for employers to regularly evaluate their reward system and take employee feedback into account when making changes. By providing benefits that meet the needs of their employees, companies can create a positive work environment and retain their valuable employees.

5.1.2 Recognition and Feedback Analysis

Receiving feedback is an important aspect of professional development and personal growth. It allows us to understand what we are doing well, what we need to improve on, and how we can develop our skills further.

How often would you like to receive some kind of feedback on your work?

The respondents were asked how often they would like to receive feedback. From the responses given, it seems that there is a range of opinions on how often employees would like to receive feedback. Some prefer to receive it weekly, while others are content with a few times a month or even once a month.

It is worth noting that while some employees may feel that they receive enough feedback from their employer, one respondent noted that they would like to receive feedback from their colleagues as well. This can provide a more well-rounded perspective on one's performance and work dynamics. Additionally, some employees would like to receive feedback continuously rather than waiting for a formal message or even a feedback discussion.

As discussed in the theory section of this thesis in Chapter 3.4 Recognition and Non-financial Rewards, receiving regular feedback and recognition is important for employees to feel engaged and motivated in their work. It is also important for employers to provide feedback to employees to help them improve their performance and feel valued in their roles. Therefore, employers should strive to provide regular and constructive feedback to their employees, in a way that is meaningful and helpful to their professional growth.

Because employees have varied opinions about how frequently they would like to, it is the employer's responsibility to discuss the matter with their staff. According to Rose (2022, 193), if an organization continues to use the same method of recognizing employees, the task is just half done. An employer must get to know their employees on a personal level to ensure that each employee receives recognition and feedback. (Rose 2022, 193).

How could the employer show that they value you as an employee?

The responses to the question about how the employer could show that they value their employees reflect the importance of feedback and recognition in the workplace. Many employees mentioned that they appreciate receiving feedback on their work, as it helps them stay motivated and improve their performance. Some employees also mentioned that recognition of their good work is more important to them than monetary rewards, although they would also appreciate a well-designed reward system that acknowledges their efforts.

One common theme across the responses is the need for consistent communication from the employer. Employees want to feel that their work is being seen and valued, and regular feedback can help achieve that. This communication should work in all directions, and feedback should be easily received from both the employer and colleagues. Another point raised by some employees is the need for development and feedback discussions regularly. This can help employees understand how they are performing in their jobs, identify areas for improvement, and set goals for their future growth.

Finally, some employees mentioned that the presence of the employer during shifts would be beneficial, as it gives them the opportunity to see and talk to the employer more. This can help build a stronger connection between the employees and the employer and create a sense of unity and shared purpose.

Do you feel like you have received feedback on your work for the past six months?

Based on the responses to the question if the respondents receive enough feedback, it seems that there is a mixed level of satisfaction with the feedback received on their work over the past six months. Some employees feel that they have received enough feedback, while others feel that they have not received enough.

For those who have received feedback, it is often appreciated, and it makes them feel valued as an employee. However, some respondents feel that it takes too long for their employer to recognize their good work, and they would like to receive more feedback to keep them motivated. On the other hand, some respondents have not received any feedback, or they feel that the feedback they received is not enough. This can be demotivating and make it difficult for employees to understand how they are performing in their roles. It seems that employees appreciate feedback on their work, and it can have a positive impact on their motivation and performance.

What kind of feedback have you received on your work? Has it been positive, negative, or constructive feedback?

The majority of respondents who thought they had received enough feedback said it was mostly positive, usually in the form of praise and recognition. The respondents agreed that they have never received negative feedback and have only received constructive feedback to help them improve their work. Others have received both positive and constructive feedback, as well as recommendations to be more careful when performing tasks. Through constructive feedback, the employer has mainly provided suggestions on how the employees can improve their work. These suggestions are often framed positively and are designed to encourage and motivate the employees to continue performing at a high level.

How does it make you feel when you receive feedback?

When asking the respondents about how they felt about receiving feedback, the responses varied a bit, but many expressed that receiving feedback, especially positive feedback, made them feel valued and noticed at work. They appreciated knowing that their work was being acknowledged and recognized by their employer. Some even mentioned that receiving great feedback made them perform better at work and had a positive boosting effect on their motivation. A study conducted by Jeffrey (2004) found that rewarding employees with non-financial rewards last twice as long as financial rewards, as discussed in Chapter 3.4 on recognition, feedback, and non-financial rewards.

However, not everyone had such a positive reaction to feedback. Some respondents felt neutral about it, while one respondent admitted that they were not the best at receiving feedback, particularly if it was constructive. They noted that their reaction to feedback depended on how it was given and the context in which it was delivered. Another respondent also mentioned that they tend to reflect on all feedback, regardless of whether it was positive or negative.

According to the findings of the interviews, feedback appears to have a significant impact on how employees feel about their work and their job satisfaction. Constructive feedback can help employees improve and grow in their roles, whereas positive feedback can make them feel valued and motivated to perform better. Employers, on the other hand, must be mindful of how they deliver feedback and ensure that it is constructive and supportive.

5.1.3 Workplace Orientation Analysis

What do you think about workplace orientation in general?

When briefly asking the respondents' opinions on workplace orientation, some employees believe that orientation is essential and that the company should invest more resources in it. Others think that the current process is poorly executed and that there is no clear model for orientation.

One common complaint is that the orientation process is too short and not comprehensive enough. Some employees feel that new employees are not well trained and are thrown into their duties without enough guidance or support. This can cause frustration and anxiety for new employees, especially if they are expected to learn multiple tasks in a short period. Additionally, some employees feel that there is no consistent plan or structure to the orientation process, which can lead to confusion and errors. Another issue that was raised by several employees is the lack of time and resources for orientation. Some employees believe that they do not have enough time to properly train new employees because it takes away

from their daily tasks. Others think that some employees are better at giving training than others, which can lead to inconsistent learning experiences for new employees.

However, there were also some positive comments about workplace orientation. A few respondents were satisfied with their orientation process and felt that they received enough support and guidance. Additionally, the respondents mentioned that their colleagues were willing to help and aid when needed. In this case, employees who had been with the case company for less than a year were generally satisfied with their orientation process, but those who had been with the company for a longer period were not. The older employees may believe there are more problems with the process because they are in charge of training new employees.

If you could make a difference, what small actions would you take to change the current orientation process?

All the respondents were asked, how they would change the current orientation process if they had the chance to make a difference. Many respondents emphasized the importance of assigning a designated employee or team to support new employees throughout their first few weeks on the job. This person or team of employees would provide guidance, training, and support, ensuring that new employees feel comfortable and confident in their work.

Several respondents suggested that skills mapping would be an important addition to the orientation process. This involves assessing each employee's strengths and weaknesses to determine what training is needed and where they might fit best within the organization. This would also help managers make informed decisions about which shifts new employees should be assigned to, based on their skills and experience. Some respondents also thought that all employees should fill out a form assessing their skillsets. Thus, the employer would have a more comprehensive knowledge of the staff's abilities, and therefore could provide more training if necessary.

Many respondents felt that the orientation process should be longer, with more time and effort invested in training new employees. This would help them become more familiar with their tasks and responsibilities before being placed into shifts where they are expected to perform independently. It was also suggested that the orientation process should include an introduction to all tasks around the workplace, not just those specific to the employee's role in the beginning. A respondent also mentioned that finding the right person to train new employees is important. While someone may be good at their job, they may not necessarily be great at training others.

5.2 Employer Interview

During the employer interview, the focus was on finding whether the employer had a similar understanding of employee motivation, benefits, feedback, recognition, and the case company's orientation process as the employees did. Even though the interview was brief, it was critical to establish this alignment to ensure that all parties were working toward a shared goal.

It is crucial for employers and employees to agree on these points to create a positive, productive, and motivating working environment. When employers understand what motivates their employees and provide them with the necessary support and feedback, it helps to build a culture of engagement and success. Furthermore, providing proper orientation and training to employees can help to set them up for success while lowering the risk of misunderstandings or conflicts down the road. It may also help in the development of a sense of community and belonging among employees, which is essential for employee satisfaction and retention.

The employer interview may have been brief, but its significance cannot be emphasized. By ensuring that the employer and employees have a comparable understanding of the company's motivation, benefits, feedback, recognition, and orientation processes, the stage is set for a positive and effective working relationship that benefits both sides.

Do you feel that your staff is motivated?

During the employer interview, the first question asked was about the level of motivation of the staff. The employer said that they believed that some of their staff members were motivated, but maybe not all of them. While some employees seemed to be highly motivated and driven to perform their job duties to the best of their abilities, others may only be motivated to come to work and not to exceed company standards.

It is essential to identify the level of motivation among employees as it has a direct impact on their job performance and productivity as discussed in the theory section 2.5 Measuring Motivation. While some employees may be intrinsically motivated and passionate about their work, others may need more recognition and rewards to perform to the best of their abilities. Motivation is not a one-size-fits-all solution, and employees have varying needs and preferences. By providing the right motivation and support, employers can create a work environment that encourages all employees to give their best effort and excel in their roles.

What kind of benefits are available for employees?

The second question intended to find out about the company benefits offered to the employees. As Rose (2022, 233-234) claims, benefits are often underappreciated, and

employees might not even be aware of what the company offers. If the employees of a company do not recognize the benefits, the organization needs to update its reward system. This topic was discussed more widely in Chapter 3.4 Recognition and Non-financial Rewards.

The case company is providing a range of attractive benefits to their employees. One of their newest benefits is the Smartum commuting benefit, which has proven to be a great benefit for many employees. Additionally, employees receive a 5€ bonus on top of their salaries for washing their uniforms at home. Although this bonus is not uncommon in the field, other employers may only provide their employees with laundry detergent. The employer also provides a 15 percent staff discount on all purchases made in the grocery store, which is more generous than other employers who typically may only offer a 10 percent discount.

During the Christmas season, the employer has traditionally provided a gift to all employees, with a limit of 50€. However, last year the employer decided to double the amount to 100€, providing even more generosity to their staff. Some employees get to visit the K-Team Days, a joint professional event of the K group, during which K-traders, K-group staff, and Kesko employees and partners gather under the same roof once a year. (K-Kauppiasliitto 2022).

Employee benefits are an efficient approach to increasing satisfaction and expressing appreciation for their hard work. Employers can differentiate themselves from competitors by providing benefits that go above and beyond the ordinary. This creates a good work atmosphere that inspires loyalty and dedication from their employees.

What are the aims of these benefits?

During the employer interview, it was mentioned that the employer offered benefits to their employees simply because they wanted to. However, it is beneficial to have an aim behind benefits to ensure they are aligned with the company's goals and values. Without a clear aim, it can be difficult to determine the effectiveness of the benefits and whether they are providing a good return on investment for the employer. In addition, employers should then examine the impact of their benefits regularly and alter them as needed to ensure that they are accomplishing their intended goals.

How do you show appreciation to your employees?

The author asked how employee appreciation is now shown, and the employer stated that employee appreciation is demonstrated through verbal feedback. While there was once a reward system, it was outdated and expensive, so it was given up. The reward system was also hard to implement because the reasons for rewarding were difficult to measure. Despite this, the employer acknowledges that there are other reward systems available, and they may even consider trying out something new in the future with a clearer plan for execution. It is

essential to have a clear and measurable plan for a reward system to ensure its effectiveness and to avoid wasting resources on a system that may not provide the desired return on investment.

Reward systems can be beneficial for employers, as they can help to improve employee motivation and engagement. However, they must be carefully planned and executed to ensure that they align with the company's goals and values and provide the desired results. Employers should consider consulting with employees to determine what rewards would be most meaningful to them and implement a system that is fair and transparent to avoid any potential issues. (Rose 2022, 10-13.)

What do you think should be done for the development of the current orientation process?

Lastly, the topic of the current orientation process was discussed, and the employer expressed that there should be a clear plan in place for it as currently there is none. The employer suggested that employees who have received training for workplace orientation should oversee orienting new employees to the workplace, with marked shifts specifically assigned for this purpose.

Additionally, the employer suggested creating a skill mapping checklist that can be used during the entire orientation process. This checklist would help the training employee and the employer see how the new employee is meeting the company's goals, what they already know, what was easily learned, and what needs further training.

The employer also suggested introducing new employees to a variety of tasks and shifts rather than just focusing on the checkout process. This will ensure that new employees are prepared to work independently in various shifts and tasks, which will lead to a more productive and efficient workforce.

As discussed in Chapter 2.3 Benefits of a Good Workplace Orientation, employers need to have a clear and well-structured orientation process for new employees. This will help new employees quickly adapt to their new work environment and become productive members of the team. Employers can ensure that new employees receive complete training and are prepared to manage any issues that may occur in their new responsibilities through implementing tasks such as skill mapping and introducing the new employees to all their responsibilities.

5.3 Comparison of the two Interviews

The main themes of the two interviews, including motivation, reward, feedback, and the orientation process, will be used as a basis for comparison. This will allow for a

comprehensive analysis of the similarities and differences between the two interviews. By examining these key themes, it will be possible to identify areas where the employers excel and areas where there is room for improvement. Ultimately, this analysis will provide valuable insights that can be used to improve the overall employee experience and create a more positive and productive workplace culture.

Based on the observations, it appears that the case company's employees are generally highly motivated. While individual employees' motivation can decrease from time to time, overall motivation appears to be consistently high. This is a positive sign for the employer, as a motivated workforce is essential for maintaining a positive and productive work environment. However, motivation is not a fixed condition and can be influenced by a variety of factors. As a result, it is essential for the employer to continue to provide an environment that supports and encourages employee motivation, as well as remain on alert for any potential issues that may impact motivation levels.

The employees at the case company appear to be well-informed about the benefits provided by the employer, and most employees make use of them. A survey indicated that just 45 percent of companies communicate their rewards regularly, according to Rose (2022, 233-234) and addressed in Chapter 3.4 on recognition feedback and non-financial rewards. This frequently refers to a communication gap between the employer and the workforce.

However, it is worth noting that only one of the respondents seemed to place a high value on the private occupational health care offered by the company. The employer's occupational health care plan provides employees with a free visit to a specialist each year, which is an excellent perk that all employees should take advantage of. In addition to these benefits, the employees also appreciated other aspects of their job, such as consistent shifts, flexible work arrangements, and a positive work environment with supportive colleagues. Ultimately, it is clear that the company's efforts to provide valuable benefits and create a positive workplace culture have been successful in promoting employee satisfaction and well-being.

When the author asked the employees if they wanted to add a new reward to the case company's reward system, the response was mixed. While some employees suggested new benefits like physical wellness benefits, a Smartum cultural benefit, or better staff discounts, whereas others were content with the existing reward system. It seems that the case company could benefit from gathering more input from its employees before deciding on any new rewards or benefits to offer.

According to the employees, feedback and recognition are important for their motivation and job satisfaction. The frequency of feedback desired varies from employee to employee, with some wanting weekly or more frequent feedback and others being content with once or a few times a month. However, one thing that all the employees agreed on was that the feedback

should be regular and consistent. The employees also expressed their appreciation for the quality of the feedback they receive, which is often positive or constructive. They feel that constructive feedback is essential as it helps them to identify areas for improvement and make changes to their behavior or work practices. Overall, the employees value feedback as an important tool for their professional growth and development, and they would like to see more of it from their employer.

The orientation process is a critical component of any company, and it is encouraging to see that both the employer and the employees recognize the need for improvement in this area. It is great that they both seem to agree on the necessary steps to be taken to improve the orientation process.

Having a designated employee or team to handle the orientation process is an excellent idea, as it ensures that new employees receive consistent and comprehensive training. It also means that existing employees do not have to sacrifice their valuable time to orientate new employees. It is also promising to see that many believe that the current orientation process is too short and needs to be longer. This suggests that employees recognize the importance of a thorough orientation process and understand that they may not be able to perform their duties effectively without it.

The use of skill mapping during the orientation process is another great idea, as it can help to identify areas where new employees may require additional training. By using a skill mapping checklist, the employer and the training employee can see how the new employee is meeting company goals, what they already know, what they have learned easily, and what needs further training. This will ensure that new employees are trained in the specific skills that are necessary for their roles, which can lead to better job performance and higher job satisfaction.

Overall, while it may take some time and effort to implement these changes, the benefits of an effective orientation process are well worth it. It can lead to increased employee satisfaction, improved job performance, and ultimately, increased productivity and profitability for the company.

6 Conclusions and Improvements

“What rewards promote work motivation best in a grocery store?”

The research topic given at the beginning of the thesis is crucial since it is necessary to understand what rewards inspire people to work in a grocery store. The qualitative research approach was used to get answers to this question, and it proved to be quite effective.

It was discovered that work motivation can be developed in various ways. While financial benefits, such as employee discounts and commuting benefits, are important for employees, they do not seem to be the primary motivator for employees in a grocery store. Instead, it was found that employees value consistent shifts, flexible work arrangements, and a positive work environment with supportive colleagues over financial benefits.

These aspects have a significant impact on employees' daily shifts, and as a result, they are highly valued by employees. Therefore, the best way to promote work motivation in a grocery store is through a combination of financial and non-financial benefits. Providing employees with financial benefits along with non-financial benefits can create a work environment that is conducive to employee motivation. By understanding the importance of both types of benefits, the leaders of grocery stores can create an environment that motivates their employees. In the figure below are the key findings of the two interviews.

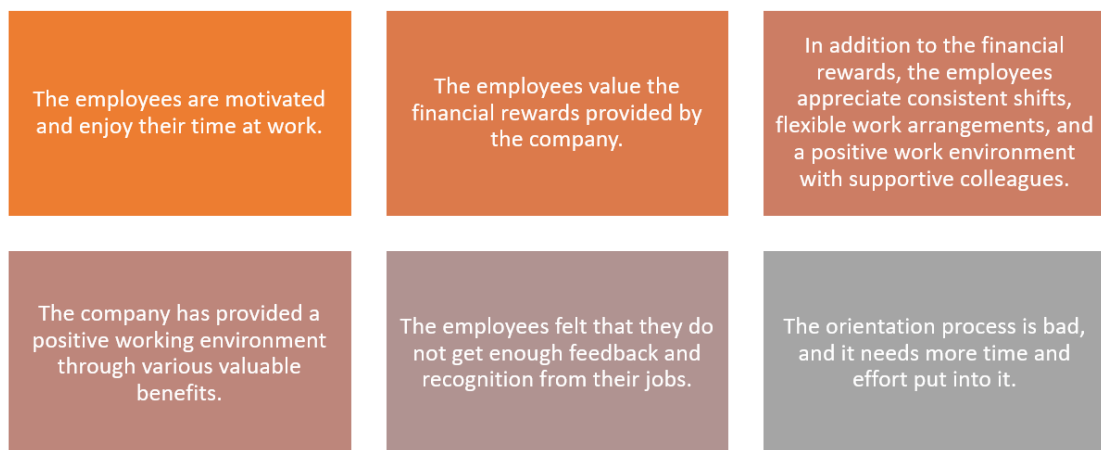


Figure 7: Key findings from the interviews

The top squares indicate that employees are generally very motivated and enjoy their work; nevertheless, a few respondents acknowledged an occasional decrease in motivation, which is completely normal. Employees appreciate and use the financial rewards provided by the organization, which is fantastic. In addition to these perks, employees valued other features of their jobs, and a nice work environment as well as the ability to trust their employer. The organization appears to have created a positive working atmosphere that encourages staff satisfaction and well-being.

However, the last two squares in the figure reveal that employees felt they did not receive sufficient feedback and appreciation. The employer has recently been better at providing feedback, but the employees would still like to receive more, and receiving positive or constructive feedback is usually valued among the employees. Both the employees and the employer are aware that the company's orientation process is ineffective. It requires extra

time and effort. The organization requires a specific individual or a team of employees to handle new employee orientation. Both sides agreed that skills mapping would be a fantastic addition to the orientation process, but it could also be done for each employee who is currently working, allowing the employer to help the entire team to be more productive.

Based on these findings several recommendations can be made for the case company to improve work motivation among its employees. Firstly, it is recommended that the company implement a recognition system for its employees. This system can be used to reward and recognize employees who perform well. By recognizing employees' efforts and achievements, they will feel valued and motivated to continue to perform well. The recognition system can include various rewards, such as gift cards, discounts, or even public feedback on the employee's achievements.

Secondly, it might be better to have a recognition system than bringing back the old reward system with new tweaks made to it. The company should consider what types of rewards and recognition are most meaningful to its employees and tailor the recognition system accordingly. Based on the results from the interviews, recognition and feedback are the most recognized rewards made by the employees.

Thirdly, it is recommended that the company use tools for measuring performance. Because the employer is not always present at the workplace to see what the employees are doing well, they require a performance measurement tool to provide more feedback and recognition to the employees. There are many performance measurement tools available, that the company can use to track employee performance and provide regular feedback to employees.

Fourthly, it is recommended that the company make improvements to the orientation process. According to the findings, there are small things that could be made to improve the current process, such as a designated trainer and skills mapping. Additionally, the company would benefit from an orientation guide that could be made as an additional thesis project. A thorough and effective orientation process will help new employees feel more comfortable and motivated in their new roles, and older employees less stressed about their workloads. By implementing a recognition system, using tools for measuring performance, and improving the orientation process, the case company can create a work environment that is conducive to employee motivation and job satisfaction.

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Unpublished

Schein, E. 1980. Organizational Culture Model

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Appendix 1: The employee interview

All the interviewees will stay anonymous during the research project. To connect the answers to the respondents, they will be marked by numbers 1-9. The questions asked during the interviews are written in bold and the same interview structure in this case almost applied to all respondents, besides the last one, even though a semi-structured interview was initially the chosen method of research.

Gender?

1. Female.
2. Female.
3. Female.
4. Female.
5. Female.
6. Female.
7. Male.
8. Female.
9. Male.

How long have you worked for the company?

1. More than 3 years.
2. More than 3 years.
3. 1-2 years.
4. More than 3 years.
5. More than 3 years.
6. Less than a year.
7. Less than a year.
8. More than 3 years.
9. More than 3 years.

Do you feel that you have experienced a lack of motivation for the past six months?

1. No, I have not.
2. Well, everyone experiences short losses in motivation but anything major no, I have not. I consider my job interesting, and I am motivated.
3. Of course, occasionally something small but nothing major.
4. No, I have not.
5. No, more like an increase in motivation.
6. Not really.
7. No.
8. No.
9. No.

Can you say what benefits the workplace offer?

1. The staff discount and a Christmas bonus, i.e., you can buy purchases on the store's account up until a certain limit. We have, by the way, nowadays a commuting benefit (season ticket at half price for some of the employees), that is a good thing.
2. Commuting benefit, flexibility from the employer is a benefit for me, if I ask to leave early it usually works out and wishes for days off are always granted, so I can, for example, book a weekend trip without any concerns of getting the weekend or certain days off.

3. Besides the employee discounts for our own store and Kesko stores I think that flexibility in the shift planning is a great benefit, because I am still a full-time student which affects my ability to work during certain days. Also wishes for days off are always granted which is great if you want to plan something special.
4. Commuting benefit and staff discounts for own store and Kesko stores.
5. Commuting benefit, employee discount for own store and Kesko stores, bonus for washing your working uniform.
6. I do not know if it is a benefit, but all of the breaks are really well taken care of, the employer is constantly asking how I am doing, and that is not the case at every workplace, so it is really nice. Of course, there are employee discounts for everyone and private occupational health care.
7. Commuting benefit, staff discount.
8. Commuting benefit, in the beginning, we tried to beg for other Smartum benefits but then we agreed on this one because most of the employees commute to work and would not need to buy a season ticket if it was not for work. Also, there are staff discounts, Kesko discounts, and private occupational health care for the employees which even offers to see a specialist once a year.
9. Staff benefits and shifts, days off, and paid leave are all very negotiable.

What do you feel are the most important things here at the workplace that help you cope with motivation loss and stress?

1. Consistent shifts, not having to alternate from morning shift to evening shift.
2. I think it is nice that if I am flexible as an employee, the employer is also flexible towards me and my wishes. I value non-financial benefits more than financial ones.
3. Great colleagues who are all team players. It is nice to come to work when you know that the day will run smoothly no matter what because of your coworkers.
4. If everything worked well at the workplace that would help and motivate me more. The benefits provided do not add any specific value for me regarding this workplace, but they do improve employer image.
5. Coworkers and the job itself, development possibilities, and of course money. I feel like this is my thing and it is good to be here, a suitable rush, but not too overwhelming.
6. Great working environment and organizational culture, and even if the day is tough, with the help of colleagues we will survive well.
7. Staff discount is a great thing that motivates me.
8. I like my job and that motivates me the most. If I would not enjoy it, I would have probably left.
9. The working community here is pretty great and a variation of customers keeps it interesting.

Would you like to add a reward to your reward system that does not exist in your company yet?

1. E.g. that one could go for a massage or something that improves physical well-being since this work is physical after all. In general, some kind of benefits like the Smartum cultural benefit, that can be freely used anywhere, so something like that would be quite nice.
2. Some exercise or cultural benefit would be quite nice, exercising more often would help one's own mental and physical health.
3. Maybe a discount on a gym membership or an occasional discount for a massage would be great since they help with physical health which is needed for this job.
4. A massage occasionally could be really nice because we have a tough job, so it could even be beneficial.

5. A lunch benefit, slightly better staff discounts, or a massage occasionally would be nice additions to the current reward system.
6. I cannot think of anything to add.
7. I think that the existing rewards are good enough and there is no need for other benefits.
8. Other Smartum benefits that would not be tied to anything specific would be great, so that you can, for example, go to the movies, etc.
9. I cannot think of any special benefits that I would need to have.

How often would you like to receive some kind of feedback on your work?

1. Weekly.
2. I feel that my employer gives me enough feedback as it is, but I would like to receive some feedback from my colleagues as well, or information about how well I work with my colleagues from my employer.
3. Monthly at least.
4. Consistently, feedback should be given continuously, it should not need to be a big deal where we need to sit down and discuss the good and the bad, it should be given all the time.
5. Weekly or at least a monthly summary of everything.
6. Sometimes. I have been receiving feedback and having chats with the employer and everything has been well, but it is good to hear feedback from one's work input.
7. A few times a month would be nice to hear something and so far, I have.
8. More often. I see the employer quite rarely so that explains it well. Before we had meetings often with all the departments which would be nice to have again. At least once a couple of months would be great to hear something.
9. Once a month would be nice to hear if you are doing something well, or not, now it is more like once a year.

How could the employer show that they value you as an employee?

1. By rewarding, well actually, praises and recognition mean more to me than, say, a monetary reward. Now the employer has given feedback better again, probably based on the feedback, but there should be more of that. However, the employer is very little present here, so it can easily be seen in how they can give us any feedback when they do not know how things are going here.
2. By saying when and what I am doing right, also I think that I would not have received as much responsibility as I do have if the employer would not value me. I think that I receive more responsibilities because I can be trusted as an employee, and that me as an employee and my work is valued.
3. By giving me feedback and recognition of my work. I know that I am a good worker, but if I never hear that work tends to get demotivating from time to time. So yes, feedback really helps with that.
4. By receiving feedback and recognition, that is what I desire the most. Communication should work in all directions and feedback should be received easily.
5. Recognition of good deeds as it has been, but there are currently no specific needs for changes in my opinion.
6. Sometimes we receive messages from the employer or other colleagues through Teams saying great work during that shift. So, I think that is fine if occasionally you receive some positive feedback like that. Both private and public praises are always great to hear.
7. I have received responsibilities in a short time and got to learn loads of new things, so that has been really nice and motivating as well.

8. More feedback and recognition. Also, the presence of the employer during all of the shifts would be nice sometimes, so that everyone gets the chance to see and talk to them.
9. Development and feedback discussions regularly would help one to understand how they are performing in their jobs.

Do you feel like you have received feedback on your work for the past six months?

1. Better now, but in general I have not received enough feedback. Indeed, that would require the employer to be more present here. However, the employer actively follows the reports and if everything has gone well, he will often send a “Hey well done” message. It always makes me feel good and yes, I know I'm doing a really good job, but when you hear it from someone, it is more special.
2. Yes.
3. Yes, better now. Sometimes I think that it takes too long for the employer to recognize my good deeds so I wish that they would give more feedback.
4. Definitely no, some feedback yes for sure, but is it enough no.
5. Yes, I have, we have now started having development discussions and meetings more, so it has definitely shifted for the better.
6. Yes, I have received feedback on my work.
7. Yes.
8. Maybe a few times within the past six months.
9. No. (Since the respondent has not received feedback the following 2 questions were skipped on their behalf)

What kind of feedback have you received on your work? Has it been positive, negative, or constructive feedback?

1. Actually, just positive feedback and praises.
2. Mainly constructive and positive feedback, I have never really received negative feedback, I think that mistakes are well formulated into constructive feedback rather than negative. Sometimes I receive notes from the employer that are more like reminders, such as “You have probably noticed this, and try to be more mindful when doing that the next time” etc.
3. Mainly positive feedback.
4. I have not received negative feedback, but both positive and constructive.
5. Both positive and constructive. There has been nothing to blame me for, but sometimes I have gotten some reminders to be a bit careful in everyday tasks if I have been a bit careless and busy while conducting jobs.
6. It has been positive.
7. Mainly positive but if there have been some tasks left undone, I have heard back from that in a constructive way.
8. Positive feedback, if everything has been running smoothly and for the better.

How does it make you feel when you receive feedback?

1. It makes me feel valued and noticed at work, which feels nice.
2. Generally neutral. Sometimes I feel like the employer sends me too many notes on Kesko reports as if they do not think I check them myself, but they probably do not negatively do this, more like thinking that I have not noticed the reports, etc., but it is also great to know that the employer does keep an eye on the reports.
3. It makes me feel great! I even perform better at work after receiving great feedback, so it really affects me well at the workplace.
4. I am not the best person at receiving feedback either because if it is positive, I get really awkward and if it is constructive, it depends really much on how it is given on how I might react.

5. If it is something constructive it usually causes some reflection and I will give a lot of thought to it, regardless if it was positive or negative.
6. Receiving positive feedback is always nice, of course, I am rather hearing that than negative feedback.
7. It is always nice to hear positive feedback and it usually gets me in a good mood.
8. It is always nice to receive positive feedback and many employees wish to hear it more often. Even if everything is running smoothly it would be nice to hear some mentioning.

What do you think about workplace orientation in general?

1. There is no such thing, and it is a big problem. The company should invest in orientation 150%. Some employees also received great training for workplace orientation here during the fall, but nothing is being done about it. This is where everything should start, but now a new employee comes here and is shown the work for one evening shift. Then they are suddenly put to work independently, it does not work that way.
2. Our workplace orientation is currently very bad. Weirdly, the employer is in charge of workplace orientation when they are not usually present at the workplace and do not know how everything actually goes.
3. Bad and it is way too short. The new employees are helped for only a day and then they are expected to know everything. There should be a clear model on how to handle workplace orientation but there is not. This also affects other employees because with the current model (non-existing model) no additional employee is helping with orientation and it is time off from the other employees who should be doing other tasks during the shift, rather than spending all the time on training.
4. It does not work. Someone teaches the new employee at the checkout for the day and then they are just basically thrown into the deep and try to survive. Employees do not have time for training new employees because it is time away from their daily tasks. There is no time for workplace orientation nor the time to spare for it.
5. Essentially the orientation process is not good because we are too busy and there is not enough time for it. Different employees are also better at giving training than others. Veikkaus and Matkahuolto are usually difficult for new employees so training those also takes more time, so it is better to teach one task at a time, not everything at once because it will be too much for the new employee.
6. The employer helped to get started well with all the accounts and passwords. I had previous experience in the field, so I did not need that much guidance. Although if I needed help with anything colleagues would be more than happy to assist. I was mainly satisfied with my orientation process.
7. On my behalf the orientation process worked even though there was no consistent plan, I have been able to learn simply by doing the tasks, but that does not work for everyone. I have also noticed that in ways that tasks have been forgotten or left undone for various reasons.
8. The orientation process is the weakest link in the company, and it is mainly bad. An employee should learn to do the tasks during the orientation process, not after. Usually, the new employee just sits at the checkout and does not even know how to do anything else, nor are they given the chance to learn.
9. I think that we do not even have an orientation process. A new employee is just thrown here and briefed about the checkout. After the orientation process, they might only know the surface level of how things are done in a grocery store. No one is there to brief the new employee about the differences in tasks during each shift. New employees for sure survive with that method of "training", but the actual briefing part is left to the employees, who do not have time for that.

If you could make a difference, what small actions would you take to change the current orientation process?

1. It is not going to happen because the company does not want to put more money into it. But in an ideal case scenario, there would be one designated employee here to support the new employee throughout the working day. Together they go through the work of the evening shift and show how things are done. It is the same thing with the morning shift, that there would always be someone there to watch and guide a new employee. It feels like no one even bothers to read any to-do lists created for them or if they do, they do not internalize them. It is a different thing to read something than to do the work individually. There should also be a designated evening shift manager, who will see that everything is taken care of here and if there is any problem, it will be reported further. The biggest problems with orientation are in the evening shifts, so there should be a specific person who is responsible for ensuring that everything is well taken care of in the evening shift and that everything goes smoothly.
2. We should have an orientation team consisting of maybe 4 employees who handle the orientation of new employees to the organization. Each of these employees would help with training in specific fields related to their everyday tasks at work. Skills mapping would be a simple but great addition that could be done to every one of the employees. The purpose of this would be to figure out what the employees can do and what could be developed or taught more. This would also help figure out everyone's skills and it would be easier for the employer to make shifts based on the knowledge of everyone's abilities. In this case, for example, a new employee would not be put on a shift alone if they do not have the competence for that. Skill mapping is also a great tool to use when an employee already has experience in the field, and therefore the orientation process may be faster for that employee.
3. There should be a specific team of designated employees who will help the new employee in adapting to our company. One employee would help the new one during one shift, another the next day, and so on so that the new employee really receives training for everything that goes on at the workplace, not just the checkout.
4. It requires nothing else than time. Employees should be able to teach each task with time. A skills assessment should be done in the beginning for every employee to figure out their knowledge of the field and skills they might have from previous jobs. Unfortunately, we employ many young people who do not have previous experience, so they require more intensive training.
5. Investing more time in the orientation process, like a week at least, and having an employee only teaching during all of that time. Introducing the new employee to both morning and evening shifts is important.
6. The orientation process could have been longer, and I could have been taught more of the tasks around the store before actually needing to do them individually. Even though the process in itself was short everyone has been very helpful and guiding me after that in all the new tasks.
7. When a new employee starts working it is important to find a suitable employee to teach the tasks and adapt to the new employee. Even if people are good at their jobs, it does not automatically mean that they are good at teaching tasks to others.
8. The process needs more time and effort, and the employer needs to give thought to who is giving the training to the new employee, is it just a normal employee or someone leading a department, a new employee should be introduced to all tasks around the workplace before placed into shifts, where they need to be able to perform individually.
9. There should be an employee who takes care of and is responsible for the orientation of a new employee. As we have different department heads there should be a designated employee for the orientation of new employees. Their shifts would be made according to the new employee's needs. An alternative way would be that the

employer oversees the orientation process, and they could direct certain employees in different shifts to train the new employee. The employee or employees in charge of training would then make a skills assessment of the new employee, with pros, cons, and what needs to be developed. Thus, it would be a clearer process for not just the new employee but everyone else too.

Additional comments after the interview for the employer.

- I wish that the employer would use this valuable information that the author is now providing for them. Especially, since many of the employees feel that nothing is done with the Kesko personnel research results. Employees have been asking department leaders that should they even respond to the Kesko personnel research since no one is doing anything with the results.

Appendix 2: The employer interview

Do you feel that your staff is motivated?

I feel that some of the staff is motivated, but some are only motivated to come to work but that might be it.

What kind of benefits are available for employees?

35€ commuting benefit, 5€ benefit for washing employee uniform, 15% staff discount from own store, Christmas bonus to make purchases from the store to the company's account for 100€, K-Team days.

What are the aims of these benefits?

It is purely because we want to offer these kinds of benefits to our employees.

How do you show appreciation to your employees?

Mainly through verbal appreciation. We used to have a financial bonus system, but it does not exist anymore, so now it is mainly verbal feedback. The reward system was given up because of financial reasons and the reward system was also very hard to implement and that is why it was left out. Of course, there are smarter reward systems out there.

What do you think should be done for the development of the current orientation process?

It should have a clearer plan, since now it really does not. Employees who have received training for workplace orientation should be the ones giving it and there should be a checklist that can be followed to see if the new employee is meeting the goals, learning the tasks, and if they need further training in something. The new employee should be introduced to all the shifts and their tasks already during the orientation process.