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What motivates salespeople?

RauHeat Oy

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Thesis abstract

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The objective of this thesis was to examine reasons behind the high level of motivation among RauHeat Oy's salespeople, to identify any deficiencies or problems, and determine to what extent the company's supervisors and management can do to increase their personnel's motivation further.

The study was conducted with four (4) different employees of RauHeat Oy. The research methodology employed qualitative research in forms of interviews. The interviews were made during the spring 2023. The results were analyzed using Herzberg's two-factor theory.

Based on the study results, RauHeat salespeople are motivated due to several factors. They receive ample recognition and praise from colleagues, supervisors, and customers, which enhances job satisfaction. They take pride in the engaging nature of their work, the quality of the products they offer, and the company's excellent reputation. The presence of challenges and competition keeps their work dynamic and engaging. They can utilize their skills and expertise to provide valuable solutions to customers, making a meaningful contribution. Additionally, the company provides growth opportunities, potential for career advancement, and a supportive work environment that values achievements and encourages responsibility and autonomy.

Keywords: motivation, work motivation, motivation-hygiene theory

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Opinnäytetyön tiivistelmä

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Tämän opinnäytetyön tavoitteena oli selvittää RauHeat Oy:n myyntihenkilöstön korkean motivaation taustalla olevia syitä, tunnistaa mahdolliset puutteet tai ongelmat sekä selvittää, missä määrin yrityksen esimiehet ja johto voivat tehdä henkilöstönsä motivaation lisäämiseksi entisestään.

Tutkimuksessa kuultiin neljää (4) RauHeat Oy:n eri myyntihenkilöä. Tutkimusmenetelmänä käytettiin laadullista tutkimusta haastattelumuodoissa. Haastattelut pidettiin kevään 2023 aikana. Tulokset analysoitiin käyttäen Herzbergin kaksifaktoriteoriaa.

Tutkimustulosten perusteella voidaan todeta RauHeatin myyntihenkilöiden olevan motivoituneita useiden tekijöiden vuoksi. He saavat runsaasti tunnustusta ja kehuja kollegoiltaan, esimiehiltään ja asiakkailtaan, mikä lisää työtyytyväisyyttä. He ovat ylpeitä työnsä innostavasta luonteesta, tarjoamiensa tuotteiden laadusta ja yrityksen erinomaisesta maineesta. Haasteiden ja kilpailun läsnäolo pitää heidän työnsä dynaamisena ja mielenkiintoisena. He voivat hyödyntää taitojaan ja asiantuntemustaan tarjotakseen arvokkaita ratkaisuja asiakkaille, tehden merkityksellistä työtä. Lisäksi yritys tarjoaa kasvumahdollisuuksia, urakehitysmahdollisuuksia ja tukevan työympäristön, jossa arvostetaan saavutuksia sekä kannustetaan vastuullisuuteen ja itsenäisyyteen.

Avainsanat: motivaatio, työmotivaatio, motivaatio-hygieniateoria

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1 INTRODUCTION

The introduction presents a concise summary of the research's background, scope, and objective, including the specific company being studied. The focus of this research is to investigate the work motivation of the salespeople employed by an import company and to identify the factors that influence it. The study's backdrop is influenced by the escalating competition for skilled workers in the present labour market, which drives the examination of work motivation. The research framework is established based on the selected motivation theory, which is Frederick Herzberg's (1959) motivation-hygiene theory.

1.1 The background of the research

The allocation of adults' time and their self-esteem are significantly shaped by their working life, affecting their satisfaction and negative emotions. Enjoyment in work stems from diverse reasons, with financial security and livelihood being one aspect, while intrinsic value and interest in tasks play a role for others. People prioritize factors such as work enjoyment, a positive work environment, flexibility, and personal growth over monetary incentives. (Sinokki 2016, 85)

The importance of workplace motivation varies among companies. While some recognize its value and utilize it strategically, others disregard it and fail to invest in it. Motivation is vital for employee performance and well-being, particularly as society shifts towards a service-oriented model reliant on skilled experts. Retaining the commitment of these experts, with their unique knowledge and skills, becomes crucial in a rapidly changing landscape. (Sinokki 2016, 85)

In the competitive landscape for skilled employees, companies face a potential labor shortage. Therefore, identifying and nurturing employees' motivational factors becomes a crucial competitive advantage. Motivated employees bring numerous benefits, such as increased productivity, stronger commitment, and reduced turnover. Additionally, employees serve as the public face of a company, highlighting the importance of promoting their well-being and motivation to create a positive employer brand. (Sinokki 2016, 85)

1.2 The research problem

The objective of this study is to investigate the factors influencing the motivation levels among RauHeat Oy employees. By addressing the following inquiries, the research aims to shed light on the reasons behind employee motivation:

- What factors influence the motivation of salespeople?
- What are the underlying factors driving the motivation of salespeople?
- What strategies can the company implement to enhance the internal motivation of its personnel?

1.3. The focal organization of the research

RauHeat Oy, established in 1999, is a Finnish HVAC product import company specializing in pre-insulated district heating pipe systems, geothermal pipe systems, and under-floor heating systems. The author, currently employed as a sales manager at RauHeat Oy, undertakes this research to gain insights into the factors influencing salespeople's motivation, driven by a strong personal interest in the subject (Author, 2023).

RauHeat Oy became a member of the international OEM group following a business acquisition in 2017. The OEM International is a prominent technical trades company in Europe, comprising 34 units operating across 14 countries. As part of the group, RauHeat Oy serves as the manufacturer's sales organization, specializing in marketing technical components and systems to the manufacturing and design engineering industry. (RauHeat Oy, 2023).

As of 2023, RauHeat Oy has a workforce of over 20 individuals spread across Finland and Sweden. This research specifically focuses on the salespeople employed by RauHeat Oy in Finland. (RauHeat Oy, 2023).

1.4. The structure of the research

The work comprises two main components: theory and qualitative research.

The theoretical aspect is divided into two sections. The first delves into the concepts of motivation and work motivation.

The second section explores two prominent motivation theories: Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's two-factor theory. Each section concludes with a summary.

The qualitative research segment involves analysing personal interviews and drawing conclusions and recommendations for improvement based on the findings.

2 MOTIVATION AND WORK MOTIVATION

This chapter delves into a scientific exploration of motivation, dissecting its intricate dynamics and examining its impact on human behaviour. It uncovers the mechanisms that fuel sustained engagement and drive towards accomplishment.

2.1 Motivation

The term motivation has its roots in the Latin word “movere”, which signifies movement. Over time, its definition has broadened to encompass a set of elements that direct and energize behavior. (Ruohotie 1998, 36). Motivation finds its etymological origins in the word “motive”, which encapsulates an individual's internal urges, encompassing an array of facets such as needs, desires, drives, and the anticipation of rewards or punishments. These motives play a crucial role in fine-tuning, sustaining, and directing an individual's behavior, dictating its trajectory and guiding their actions towards desired outcomes. (Ruohotie & Honka 1999, 13.)

Motivation, as a complex and multifaceted concept, can be categorized and understood from various perspectives. One way to classify motivation is as a multidimensional and internal state of will, whereby individuals are driven by an innate desire to accomplish goals and fulfill their needs and expectations. This internal state of motivation serves as a powerful force that propels individuals forward, enabling them to channel their energy, focus, and efforts towards specific objectives and desired outcomes. By tapping into this intrinsic drive, individuals can overcome challenges, persevere through obstacles, and maintain a steadfast determination to achieve personal growth and fulfillment. (Hellriegel & Slocum 2004, 117.)

2.2. External and internal motivation

Motivation can indeed be categorized into two primary forms: internal motivation and external motivation. External motivation stems from external factors, such as monetary rewards, recognition, or the avoidance of punishment. In this case, individuals engage in activities primarily due to the consequences or incentives associated with those actions. They are driven by external rewards and penalties, which serve as extrinsic motivators shaping their behavior. (Luoma, Troberg, Kaajas & Nordlund 2004, 21.)

On the other hand, internal motivation revolves around an individual's intrinsic desires and personal fulfillment. It is characterized by engaging in activities for the inherent satisfaction and enjoyment derived from the action itself. Individuals who are internally motivated find fulfillment, pleasure, and a sense of purpose in the tasks they undertake, regardless of external incentives. This form of motivation is driven by personal values, passions, and a genuine interest in the activity at hand. (Luoma, Troberg, Kaajas & Nordlund 2004, 21.)

Internal motivation is closely tied to a sense of autonomy and self-determination. It is rooted in the belief that individuals have the capacity to direct their own lives and make autonomous decisions. When internally motivated, individuals feel a sense of competence, believing in their own abilities and efficacy to accomplish tasks and achieve desired outcomes. This self-perception of capability and autonomy further reinforces their internal motivation, as they perceive themselves as agents in control of their own affairs. (Luoma, Troberg, Kaajas & Nordlund 2004, 21.)

While external motivation can provide temporary encouragement and reinforcement, it is often internal motivation that sustains long-term engagement and fosters a deeper sense of personal satisfaction and fulfillment. Understanding the interplay between internal and external motivation can help individuals and organizations design strategies that foster intrinsic motivation and create environments conducive to meaningful engagement and achievement. (Luoma, Troberg, Kaajas & Nordlund 2004, 21.)

Previously, a clear distinction was made between internal and external motivation. However, contemporary understanding suggests that the impact of motivational factors on an individual's overall motivation is a nuanced and highly individualized phenomenon. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are now recognized as interrelated and complementary rather than mutually exclusive. It is believed that the same factors can promote both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and these two forms of motivation can coexist within an individual. (Luoma, Troberg, Kaajas & Nordlund 2004, 21.)

Motivation is often viewed as a continuum, where different motivational factors fall along a spectrum ranging from those closely associated with internal motivation to those closely associated with external motivation. At one end of this continuum, factors such as personal values, interests, and the inherent enjoyment of an activity drive internal motivation. These internal factors stimulate individuals to engage in tasks for the sheer satisfaction and fulfillment

they experience. At the other end of the spectrum, external motivational factors, such as tangible rewards, recognition, or avoidance of punishment, play a more prominent role. These factors incentivize individuals to perform tasks due to the external consequences or benefits associated with their actions. (Luoma, Troberg, Kaajas & Nordlund 2004, 21.)

However, it is crucial to note that the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is complex and intertwined. The same factors that enhance intrinsic motivation, such as providing autonomy, fostering a sense of competence, or offering meaningful feedback, can also bolster extrinsic motivation. Likewise, external motivators, when aligned with an individual's internal values and interests, can reinforce and complement their intrinsic motivation. (Luoma, Troberg, Kaajas & Nordlund 2004, 21.)

Recognizing the interplay and interconnectedness of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation allows for a more comprehensive understanding of motivation as a whole. It highlights the need to consider individual differences and unique combinations of motivational factors that contribute to an individual's overall motivation. By embracing this holistic perspective, individuals and organizations can better tailor their approaches to motivation, leveraging both internal and external factors to promote sustained engagement, satisfaction, and goal attainment. (Luoma, Troberg, Kaajas & Nordlund 2004, 21.)

2.3. Work motivation

Motives, whether conscious or unconscious, internal or external, propel individuals towards specific goals, utilizing a portion of their energy. Work motivation, influenced by motives, connects to personal objectives. Highly motivated individuals diligently pursue set goals, investing greater mental and physical resources than those with low motivation. Motives can stem from intrinsic desires for growth and self-fulfillment, as well as extrinsic factors like societal expectations and rewards. Understanding motivation empowers organizations to cultivate environments fostering high work motivation, aligning goals, and providing growth opportunities. Recognizing and nurturing motivation unlocks individuals' potential, driving personal and professional development. (Ruohotie & Honka 1999, 13.)

In the realm of organizational operations, work motivation assumes critical importance as it directly influences productivity, functionality, and cost-effectiveness. The level of employee motivation becomes a pivotal factor in determining the overall well-being of the workforce. A motivated work community operates with efficiency, productivity, and enhances the work well-being and overall quality of life for all its members. An employee who is motivated approaches their work with a sense of joy and enthusiasm, which in turn fuels their performance. Motivation inherently originates from within the individual, making it resistant to external commands. However, there are numerous avenues through which motivation can be fostered and supported. This includes providing meaningful and challenging work assignments, recognizing and rewarding achievements, promoting a positive work culture, facilitating professional growth and development opportunities, and fostering open communication and collaboration within the organization. By prioritizing and nurturing motivation, organizations can create an environment that promotes employee engagement, satisfaction, and ultimately, optimal performance. (Sinokki 2016, 7-8).

According to Ruohotie and Honka (1999, 17), while assessing work motivation, consider three key sources: the employee's personality, job characteristics, and work environment. These factors collectively shape an individual's motivation levels and can offer insights into understanding and enhancing their engagement and performance in the workplace. (Ruohotie & Honka 1999, 17.)

Personality factors, including needs, attitudes, and interests, play a central role in work motivation. Interest, specifically, directs an individual's attention and influences how work-related factors impact their behavior. Research demonstrates that the compatibility between an individual's interests and the characteristic of their work significantly affects their work motivation. When interests align with job tasks and the work environment, motivation tends to be higher. Conversely, a mismatch between interests and work can lead to decreased motivation and job satisfaction. Recognizing the importance of aligning interests with work characteristics can help organizations create a more motivating environment and enhance employee engagement and well-being. (Ruohotie & Honka 1999, 17.)

Among personality factors, attitudes reflect an individual's approach and relationship with work. Attitudes can directly impact an individual's work performance, influencing their engagement, productivity, and overall effectiveness in the workplace. (Moore, 2011).

Negative attitudes and dissatisfaction can significantly undermine work motivation and performance. An individual's attitudes in the workplace can be categorized into two groups: their attitude towards work and the work environment, and their attitude towards themselves. It is important to recognize that an individual's self-concept strongly influences work motivation and performance. Experiences of self-perceived failure can diminish efforts and impact future work performance. Addressing attitudes and fostering a positive self-concept is vital for promoting motivation and enhancing overall job performance. (Ruohotie & Honka 1999, 17.)

In conjunction with personality factors, job characteristics play a crucial role in regulating an individual's motivation and its direction. Job characteristics can be categorized into distinct groups, including job content and growth opportunities. Job content pertains to what the job inherently offers the employee, encompassing not only the actual tasks but also their variability and perceived meaningfulness. On the other hand, growth opportunities relate to an individual's inclination to seek personal development. It is believed that individuals naturally strive for new opportunities to grow and accomplish their goals. By recognizing and addressing job characteristics, organizations can create an environment that fosters motivation, engagement, and continuous development for their employees. According to Ruohotie and Honka, job characteristics significantly influence individual performance by affecting factors such as task engagement, autonomy, feedback, and skill utilization, ultimately determining the level of performance achieved in the workplace. (Ruohotie & Honka 1999, 18.)

An individual's work motivation and behavior are influenced by a variety of needs and expectations. External motivation is characterized by reasons for behavior that are directly linked to the individual's work environment. Motives in external motivation are communicated outwardly, with someone other than the individual acting as the mediator. In the workplace, external motivation may revolve around factors such as salary, position, or working conditions. An extrinsically motivated individual may engage in tasks that lack intrinsic interest in order to obtain external rewards.

However, external motivation does not negate the potential meaningfulness of the job. It simply means that even if the sense of meaning diminishes, the individual will still complete the task because they are motivated by the desire for the reward. External motivators can provide a valuable incentive to achieve goals and fulfill responsibilities, even in the absence of intrinsic interest.

It is important to recognize that individuals may possess a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. While external factors can drive behavior, the intrinsic motivation stemming from personal fulfillment and satisfaction in the work itself also plays a vital role. Striking a balance between intrinsic and extrinsic motivators is crucial for fostering a work environment where individuals can find purpose, maintain engagement, and achieve their goals. (Mullins 2007, 251; Ruohotie 1998, 38.)

Internal and external motivations, as identified by Ruohotie (1998, 38-41), are not entirely distinct but rather interrelated. These dimensions of motivation often coexist and complement each other. Motives can manifest in varying degrees of intensity, with some being more dominant than others based on individual circumstances and the overall direction of motivation. (Ruohotie 1998, 38-41.)

Ruohotie further categorizes motivation into situational and general motivation. Situational motivation is transient, fluctuating, and responsive to immediate circumstances. It is regulated by general motivation, which encompasses the broader orientation, attentiveness, and persistence of behavior over time. (Ruohotie 1998, 38-41.)

Understanding the interplay between situational and general motivation provides insights into the complexity of human motivation. While situational motivation may be influenced by external factors, general motivation represents the underlying drive and direction that guides an individual's overall behavior and actions. (Ruohotie 1998, 38-41.)

Recognizing the dynamic relationship between these dimensions allows for a more comprehensive understanding of motivation and can inform strategies for promoting optimal motivation levels in individuals. By considering both situational and general motivation, organizations and individuals can create environments and practices that support sustained engagement, persistence, and goal attainment. (Ruohotie 1998, 38-41.)

According to Hellriegel and Slocum (2004, 117), the purpose of work is to fulfill an individual's needs through the pursuit of specific goals. These goals act as motivators, reducing internal imbalances and driving individuals towards achievement. Motivation is frequently characterized as goal-oriented because individuals align their behavior with the pursuit of these

objectives, leading to improved performance. A goal-oriented individual selects behaviors with the expectation of receiving recognition, whether in the form of rewards or punishments, based on their performance. The presence of goals provides individuals with a sense of direction and purpose, shaping their actions and influencing their dedication to work-related tasks. (Hellriegel & Slocum 2004, 117.)

Rewards serve as indicators to employees when they have exhibited desirable behaviors or achieved desired outcomes. They reinforce and encourage individuals to maintain or strive for specific behaviors and performances. By attaining rewards, individuals experience a reduction in internal imbalances. In contrast, punishments operate in the opposite manner. While punishments communicate the organization's preferences regarding behavior, they leave an internal state of imbalance in place. Punishment guides individuals to select alternative behaviors that align with their goals. Importantly, both rewards and punishments prompt individuals to reassess their needs, prompting a reevaluation of their motivations and driving them towards behavior that supports their objectives. (Hellriegel & Slocum 2004, 117.)

In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on the work motivation of individuals within organizations. The underlying concept is that without the individual's intrinsic desire to work, it becomes challenging to align their actions with the goals and objectives of the organization. Recognizing the significance of individual motivation, organizations are increasingly investing in strategies and initiatives to foster and enhance intrinsic motivation, aiming to create a more engaged and productive workforce. (Salmela-aro & Nurmi 2002, 188-189.)

For organizations to achieve desired results, they must motivate individuals to perform their work effectively. This can be achieved by fostering both intrinsic motivation, which drives individuals to commit to themselves and their work, as well as extrinsic motivation, which encourages efficient work performance. Without commitment or work performance, a company cannot generate the desired outcomes. Conversely, optimal work performance and commitment cannot be attained without motivation. Thus, organizations need to prioritize and cultivate a motivating environment that promotes both commitment and performance to achieve their goals successfully. (Salmela-aro & Nurmi 2002, 188-189.)

The study of work motivation originated from a curiosity about the driving forces behind people's work engagement. In the late 19th century, Frederick Taylor proposed that precise guidance, control, and the prospect of monetary rewards motivate individuals to work towards

desired objectives. However, the dynamics between individuals and work have evolved with the rise of conceptual work, advancements in technology, automation, and increased access to information. Moreover, higher levels of education have shaped new expectations and demands in the workplace. In the modern era, the challenge lies in channeling individuals' energy and creativity to boost productivity while aligning with organizational goals. Consequently, appealing to individuals' thoughts and emotions has become essential for establishing meaningful and worthwhile work, moving away from Taylor's emphasis on strict orders and meticulous supervision. Today, work motivation necessitates a focus on intrinsic factors that inspire individuals to find purpose and fulfillment in their work. (Lämsä & Hautala 2004, 80.)

The work situation encompasses three key factors: the employee's personality, job characteristics, and work environment. Personality factors include interest, attitudes, and needs. Interest refers to the direction of an employee's attention, and the impact of external stimuli, such as monetary rewards, depends on the individual's interests. Studies have shown that the alignment between professional interests and work characteristics significantly influences work motivation. (Ruohotie & Honka 1999, 17-18.)

Attitudes play a crucial role in an individual's performance motivation. If an employee is dissatisfied with their job or supervisors, they may lack the motivation to exert effort. Self-image also holds substantial sway over performance and motivation. Individuals tend to act in ways consistent with their self-image. If an employee attributes their work failures to personal shortcomings, their performance is likely to suffer, reinforcing negative self-perceptions. (Ruohotie & Honka 1999, 17-18.)

In motivation theory, needs have received significant attention. Needs are internal imbalances that drive individuals to strive for internal equilibrium through specific behaviors. Understanding and addressing these needs is essential for fostering motivation and achieving optimal performance. (Ruohotie & Honka 1999, 17-18.)

Work characteristics can be categorized into three key factors: work content, meaningfulness and variability, and achievements and progress. The content of the work pertains to what the work inherently provides to an individual, such as recognition or a sense of purpose. These substantive factors significantly impact an individual's motivation to perform their job effectively. When the work is perceived as meaningful and offers opportunities for variability, it

tends to enhance motivation and engagement. Additionally, the presence of achievable goals and opportunities for growth and progress further contribute to an individual's desire to excel in their work. (Ruohotie & Honka 1999, 17-18.)

The work environment encompasses economic, physical, and social factors. It can be further divided into the immediate work environment and the broader organizational environment. The immediate work environment includes elements such as the work group and the influence of supervisors on an individual's work performance. These factors directly impact an individual's work input and motivation. In contrast, the comprehensive work environment refers to factors that affect the entire workforce within the company. These factors are shared across all personnel and contribute to the overall work atmosphere and culture within the organization. The comprehensive work environment plays a significant role in shaping employees' attitudes, job satisfaction, and overall motivation levels. Both the immediate and comprehensive work environments interact to create the overall context in which individuals operate and exert their efforts towards organizational goals. (Ruohotie & Honka 1999, 17-18.)

2.4 Summary

Motivation, rooted in the Latin word *movere* meaning movement, refers to the elements that direct and energize behaviour. It encompasses internal urges such as needs, desires, drives, and the anticipation of rewards or punishments. Motivation can be classified into two primary forms: internal and external. Internal motivation arises from intrinsic desires and personal fulfillment, while external motivation stems from external factors like rewards or recognition. Both forms can coexist and influence an individual's overall motivation. Understanding the interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is crucial for creating environments conducive to sustained engagement and achievement. In the workplace, work motivation directly influences productivity and employee well-being. Personality factors, job characteristics, and the work environment shape an individual's motivation levels. Motivation can also be goal-oriented, where individuals align their behaviour with specific objectives. Rewards and punishments play a role in reinforcing desired behaviours. Organizations should prioritize fostering both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to create an engaged and productive workforce.

3 MOTIVATION THEORIES

This chapter introduces two of the most well-known theories related to motivation: Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Frederick Herzberg's two-factor theory. Finally, the differences and similarities between the two theories will be compared.

3.1 Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Undoubtedly, Abraham Maslow's theory, formulated in the 1940s, stands as one of the most well-known theories of human needs. Maslow posits that human needs can be categorized into a hierarchical model resembling a pyramid, consisting of five levels, where the fulfillment of lower-level needs triggers the emergence of higher-level needs. (Furnham 1992, 128.)

According to Maslow, the permanent transition from one need level to another is not common. He argues that individuals have a certain underlying structure of needs that remains relatively stable after adolescence. When discussing an individual's tendency towards psychological health, Maslow recognizes a long-term developmental process that leads to transitioning from one need level to another. (Juuti 1983, 71.)

Maslow suggests that this developmental process occurs over an extended period and involves various experiences, learning, and personal growth. It is through this process that individuals gradually achieve the satisfaction of higher-level needs and attain psychological well-being. (Juuti 1983, 71.)

It is important to understand that Maslow's hierarchy of needs is not strictly linear or universally applicable. People may experience different needs at different times and in different environments, and the order of needs may vary from one individual to another. However, Maslow's theory provides a valuable framework for studying human motivation and well-being, helping to understand the factors that influence individuals' needs and their satisfaction throughout different stages of life. (Juuti 1983, 71.)

Maslow's renowned hierarchy of human needs provides a comprehensive framework for understanding and organizing various aspects of human motivation and well-being. According to Maslow, these needs can be categorized into five distinct groups, each occupying a different level within the hierarchy. (Lämsä & Hautala 2004, 82.)

At the foundational level can be found the physiological needs that encompass fundamental bodily requirements such as hunger, thirst, sleep, warmth, shelter, clothing, sexual needs, and other essential biological necessities. These needs form the bedrock upon which higher-level needs are built. (Lämsä & Hautala 2004, 82.)

Moving up the hierarchy, people encounter the needs of security, which entail seeking safety, protection from physical and emotional harm, and the avoidance of potential dangers. Establishing a sense of stability and security becomes paramount at this level. (Lämsä & Hautala 2004, 82.)

In the middle tier of the hierarchy lie the social needs, which revolve around the human desire for acceptance, friendship, love, caring, a sense of belonging, and the need to engage in meaningful connections and collaborations within a group setting. These needs highlight the significance of interpersonal relationships and social interactions for human well-being. (Lämsä & Hautala 2004, 82.)

As ascending further up the hierarchy, individuals encounter esteem needs, which encompass aspects such as self-respect, independence, receiving thanks, recognition, status, achievements, and earning respect and appreciation from others. Fulfillment of these needs is closely linked to developing a positive self-image and garnering external validation and acknowledgment. (Lämsä & Hautala 2004, 82.)

Finally, at the pinnacle of the hierarchy, people find the need for self-actualization. This highest level represents the pursuit of one's full potential and personal growth. It involves self-fulfillment, realizing one's own achievements, fostering spiritual development, expressing creativity, and expanding knowledge and understanding of the world. (Lämsä & Hautala 2004, 82.)

By delineating these five distinct levels of needs, Maslow's framework provides a comprehensive lens through which we can explore and analyze the complex interplay between various facets of human motivation, satisfaction, and self-fulfillment. Understanding these needs can guide individuals, organizations, and societies in fostering well-rounded personal growth, fostering healthier relationships, and promoting overall human flourishing. (Lämsä & Hautala 2004, 82.)

3.2. Herzberg's two-factor theory

Herzberg's two-factor theory revolves around the premise that an individual's motivation at work is shaped by two distinct sets of factors: external work factors and internal factors. He labels the external factors as hygiene factors, while referring to the internal factors as motivational factors. It is important to note that hygiene factors are not directly linked to personal hygiene but rather encompass elements pertaining to the work environment. In essence, hygiene factors encompass all the factors that have an impact on work performance and satisfaction. These factors can range from working conditions and compensation to job security and interpersonal relationships within the workplace. They form the foundation upon which job satisfaction is built, but their presence alone is insufficient to cultivate true motivation in employees. To foster genuine motivation, the focus must shift towards the internal factors, often referred to as motivational factors, which include aspects such as personal growth, recognition, responsibility, and the intrinsic value derived from the work itself. By recognizing and addressing both hygiene and motivational factors, organizations can create an environment that not only minimizes dissatisfaction but also inspires and motivates employees to achieve their best performance. (Herzberg 2005, xiii-xiv)

Herzberg's two-factor theory distinguishes between hygiene factors, which address the question "Why do I work here?" and motivational factors, which answer the question "Why do I work harder?" Hygiene factors encompass various elements related to the work environment and conditions, such as salary, job security, and interpersonal relationships. They play a crucial role in ensuring a baseline level of satisfaction and preventing job dissatisfaction. On the other hand, motivational factors arise from the individual themselves and are the outcomes or rewards experienced because of their actions. These factors are intrinsically tied to personal growth, recognition, the sense of achievement, and the meaningfulness of the work performed. They serve as the driving force behind increased effort and engagement in one's tasks. By understanding and addressing both hygiene and motivational factors, organizations can create a work environment that not only meets employees' basic needs but also fosters their intrinsic motivation and satisfaction, leading to higher levels of productivity and performance. (Handy 1999, 38- 39.)

Herzberg made a clear distinction between his own ideas and the traditional theoretical tradition in motivation research. In the traditional approach, job satisfaction was viewed as a

single continuum, ranging from high job satisfaction to high job dissatisfaction. Various points on this continuum were believed to represent different levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. In contrast, Herzberg's two-factor theory posits that the continua describing job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are separate from each other. According to him, job satisfaction is measured on a scale where the upper end represents high job satisfaction, and the lower end represents the absence of job satisfaction. This scale measures motivation. On the other hand, job dissatisfaction is measured on an opposite scale: the upper end represents the absence of job dissatisfaction, and the lower end represents high job dissatisfaction. Importantly, Herzberg's scales are not proportional to each other. (Maidani 1991, 441.) Hence, an individual can simultaneously occupy various positions on different scales.

Herzberg, a prominent researcher in the field of spirituality, skillfully identifies and categorizes six distinct and interconnected aspects that contribute to an individual's profound spiritual growth, resulting in the formation of a comprehensive hierarchical system. This system, meticulously outlined by Herzberg, encompasses a diverse range of essential elements, including but not limited to the stimulation of creativity, the expansion of knowledge, the meticulous organization of acquired wisdom, the development of competence in effectively adapting to novel circumstances, the nurturing of individualization, and the fostering of genuine personal growth, thereby providing individuals with a holistic framework for their spiritual evolution and self-actualization. (Herzberg 1971, 58, 60-62, 65, 68.)

3.3 Motivation and hygiene factors

Based on Herzberg's research findings, he elucidates the intricate dynamics between two distinct yet interrelated components that significantly impact individuals' job satisfaction and motivation. These components, known as motivational factors and hygiene factors, operate in conjunction, shaping the overall work experience. The hygiene factors, comprising fundamental elements such as adequate working conditions, fair compensation, and absence of workplace grievances, lay the groundwork for a baseline level of job satisfaction. However, Herzberg argues that their mere existence cannot be equated with motivation, as an absence of complaints or dissatisfaction does not necessarily imply a state of intrinsic drive and passion among employees. (Handy 1999, 38-39.)

To cultivate genuine motivation, Herzberg posits that additional proactive measures need to be implemented. These measures encompass a range of strategies, including but not limited

to recognizing and rewarding exceptional performance, providing opportunities for personal and professional growth, fostering a positive and inclusive organizational culture, encouraging autonomy and decision-making authority, and ensuring that employees' work aligns with their intrinsic values and aspirations. By actively addressing these motivational factors alongside the foundational hygiene factors, organizations can create an environment conducive to heightened motivation and engagement among their workforce, thereby promoting long-term productivity and overall organizational success. (Handy 1999, 38-39.)

Herzberg offers invaluable insights into enhancing the motivating aspects of work by advocating the implementation of strategic measures aimed at transforming the nature of tasks and responsibilities. One such strategy proposed by Herzberg is job rotation, whereby individuals are periodically exposed to different roles and responsibilities within an organization. This practice not only broadens their skill set and knowledge base but also provides them with a diverse range of experiences, consequently fostering a sense of challenge, growth, and excitement in their work lives. (Herzberg 2005, 133).

Moreover, Herzberg emphasizes the importance of job enrichment, which involves augmenting the depth and scope of tasks to provide employees with a greater sense of autonomy, decision-making authority, and ownership over their work. By incorporating additional responsibilities, opportunities for skill development, and avenues for creativity and innovation, organizations can tap into the intrinsic motivation of their employees, resulting in higher levels of job satisfaction and engagement. (Herzberg 2005, 133).

Furthermore, Herzberg underscores the significance of aligning tasks with employees' individual preferences, strengths, and aspirations. This tailored approach, known as job crafting, allows individuals to shape and personalize their work experiences by modifying and redefining their roles to better suit their unique skills and interests. By fostering a sense of purpose and fulfillment, job crafting enhances motivation and contributes to a more meaningful and satisfying work environment. (Herzberg 2005, 133).

By implementing these multifaceted strategies of job rotation, job enrichment, and job crafting, organizations can harness the full potential of their employees' intrinsic motivation, leading to improved job satisfaction, heightened engagement, and ultimately, enhanced productivity and organizational success. (Herzberg 2005, 133).

The factors that aim to avoid dissatisfaction reflect an individual's relationship with the frame-work or environment in which they work. These factors describe the environment and primarily serve as preventive measures against job dissatisfaction, rather than being closely related to a positive work attitude. They are commonly referred to as hygiene factors. These factors can also be called maintenance factors. Another set of factors are growth or motivational factors. They are given this name because they appear to act as motivators for individuals to achieve better performance and put in effort, leading to personal growth. (Herzberg 1971, 74.)

Growth or motivational factors encompass the internal aspects of work, such as recognition for accomplishments, achievements, the nature of the job itself, responsibility, and opportunities for growth or advancement. On the other hand, dissatisfaction avoidance or hygiene factors pertain to the external aspects of work, including company policies and administration, supervision, interpersonal relationships, working conditions, salary, position, and safety. (Herzberg 1987, 113.)

3.4 The importance of Herzberg's theory at the individual level

Herzberg suggests that employees can be broadly categorized into two groups based on their primary motivations. The first group primarily seeks to fulfill their basic needs and focuses on minimizing environmental discomfort through hygiene factors. These individuals are often driven by the pursuit of security and livelihood. The second group, on the other hand, is primarily motivated by personal growth and seeks fulfillment through engaging tasks and opportunities for advancement. They are motivated by incentives and actively seek out motivation to fuel their progress. (Juuti 1983, 153). Employees can be classified as either livelihood seekers or incentive seekers based on 11 distinct characteristics. (Herzberg 1971, 90).

According to this, the interviewed salespeople should be incentive seekers motivated by internal work factors.

3.5 Criticism of Herzberg's theory

Herzberg's two-factor theory is both widely respected and heavily debated. It elicits support from some and opposition from others, shaping the perspectives of stakeholders in the field.

The stance one takes on Herzberg's two-factor theory often plays a significant role in determining their position within the field. (Kanungo & Hartwick, 1987, 751-753.)

Since its initial publication in 1959, Herzberg's theory on motivation and job satisfaction has not been exempt from criticism, originating primarily from two main perspectives. The first critique revolves around the research method employed by Herzberg and his team, with skeptics arguing that the methodology may have limitations and potential biases that could affect the validity and generalizability of the findings. (Herzberg, 2005, 23-29.)

The second area of contention lies in the debate surrounding the nature of job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction, as proposed by Herzberg. While Herzberg advocated for these two constructs to be treated as distinct dimensions, some scholars and practitioners question whether they truly represent separate aspects or rather exist as opposing ends of a single continuum that captures individuals' overall attitudes toward their work. This ongoing debate underscores the importance of refining conceptual frameworks and employing rigorous measurement techniques to gain a comprehensive understanding of employees' subjective experiences and attitudes in the workplace. (Herzberg, 2005, 23-29.)

Herzberg used the critical incident method in his research. This involved conducting interviews where participants were encouraged to freely discuss situations or aspects of their work that they found particularly unpleasant or satisfying. The interviews were repeated, with the same individuals now sharing situations or factors they found particularly pleasant or satisfying. Through content analysis, it was observed that the same situations rarely emerged as causes for both satisfaction and dissatisfaction. (Herzberg, 2005, 23-29.)

The Criticism surrounding Herzberg's research methodology revolves around the limitations of the critical incident method and its potential biases. Additionally, some scholars question the validity of categorizing job satisfaction and dissatisfaction as separate dimensions, suggesting that they might be better understood as different points on a continuum of attitudes towards work. (Herzberg, 2005, 23-29.)

As early as 1968, in the article "The Herzberg Controversy: A Critical Reappraisal," Orlando Behling, George Labovitz, and Richard Kosmo presented the idea that employing the same or similar unstructured research method as Herzberg would yield the same results as those underlying his two-factor theory. On the other hand, they contended that employing a more

structured methodology would inevitably yield divergent outcomes compared to Herzberg's conclusions. According to them, the technological variation in research outcomes is already significant. (Behling, Labovitz & Kosmo, 1968, 105-107.)

In their article, Shipley and Kiely emphasize that Herzberg's two-factor theory significantly simplifies motivation. However, rather than outright rejecting the theory, critics acknowledge its potential usefulness in defining the starting points of research. They recognize that Herzberg's theory can provide a valuable framework for initial exploration and understanding of motivational factors in the workplace. By using the theory as a foundation, researchers can build upon and refine it through additional studies and investigations, ultimately contributing to the advancement of knowledge in the field of motivation and job satisfaction. However, based on their research, the division of content and environmental factors created by Herzberg is not maintainable. According to them, motivational factors cannot be clearly separated from dissatisfaction factors either, because some of Herzberg's motivational factors also act as hygiene factors and vice versa. (Shipley & Kiely, 1986, 15.)

3.6. Summary

Maslow's theory can be interpreted in such a way that an individual strives to fulfill needs in order according to the hierarchy. When the lower level is satisfied, the individual moves on to the next need. According to Maslow, only the fulfillment of self-actualization needs leads to the achievement of full potential and personal happiness.

Herzberg's theory can be thought of as emphasizing that reducing dissatisfaction (hygiene factors) does not automatically lead to an increase in work motivation, but increasing motivation requires consideration of separate motivational factors.

Critics of Herzberg's theory question the research methodology used and the distinction between job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. They argue that the critical incident method employed by Herzberg may have limitations and biases. Some also suggest that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction might be better understood as different points on a continuum of work attitudes.

Although Herzberg's and Maslow's theories deal with motivation from different perspectives, their connection can be seen in that the higher level needs of Maslow's hierarchy of needs,

such as esteem and self-actualization, are more closely related to Herzberg's motivational factors. Both theories emphasize the importance of need satisfaction in terms of motivation, but Herzberg's theory places more weight on substantive factors, while Maslow's theory includes a wider coverage of different need areas.

4 QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

This section presents an introduction to the context of the chosen research method and outlines the preparations and execution of the study. At the end, a summary is provided to consolidate and encapsulate the various aspects discussed.

4.1 Qualitative approach

This thesis represents a qualitative research study that specifically delved into a single case, emphasizing the need for caution when applying the results to other cases. It is important to recognize the distinctiveness of qualitative studies, as they are characterized by their uniqueness and inability to be replicated exactly. (Koivula, Suihko & Tyrväinen 2003, 31-32.)

The scope of this research is limited to the salespeople employed by the company within Finland, and therefore, the findings cannot be extrapolated to other populations or contexts. To obtain a deeper understanding of the motivational levels, a qualitative survey was conducted using thematic interviews, which facilitated the collection of more truthful and comprehensive responses. In contrast, quantitative surveys typically focus on identifying specific motivating factors. For this study, individuals with considerable work experience were selected as interviewees, and they were informed about the interviews a couple of days in advance. To ensure confidentiality and encourage open sharing, the interview responses were treated with anonymity.

Thematic interviews, which formed the backbone of the research methodology, were designed to foster open and conversational exchanges between the interviewer and interviewees. These interviews revolved around predetermined topics, serving as a foundation for in-depth discussions and allowing the participants to delve into their experiences and perspectives regarding motivation in their sales roles.

Considering the geographical challenges and the advantages of modern technology, the interviews were conducted during working hours in spring 2023 using the Microsoft Teams platform. This enabled face-to-face conversations despite the physical distance between participants. To minimize distractions and create an environment conducive to focused discussions, measures were taken such as ensuring phones were turned off during the interviews.

Sufficient time was allocated for each interview to allow for a comprehensive exploration of the subject matter, ensuring that participants could express their thoughts and insights fully.

4.2. Summary

This qualitative research focused on a specific case and cannot be generalized to other cases. The goal was to understand and interpret rather than explain. Salespeople in Finland were the target of the research, using thematic interviews to gather comprehensive and truthful answers about motivation. The interviews were conducted confidentially via Microsoft Teams in spring 2023, minimizing distractions and allowing for face-to-face conversations despite distance.

5. FINDINGS

The selection of interview themes was guided by Herzberg's two-factor theory. Initially, the focus was on identifying and exploring motivational factors, followed by an examination of hygiene factors. By adopting this framework, the research aimed to gain insights into both the intrinsic motivators and the extrinsic factors that impact the motivation of individuals in the study.

5.1. MOTIVATORS

5.1.1. Recognition

All sales personnel expressed their satisfaction with the level of recognition they receive, as they consistently receive ample verbal praise from their colleagues, supervisors, and customers. Their efforts and achievements are acknowledged and appreciated by those around them.

“Appreciation, if received, is typically expressed through expressions of gratitude, direct conversations, or inclusion in reports. Additionally, customers' appreciation can serve as a form of recognition, such as positive feedback from wholesalers, which indicates a job well done.”

“Customers and colleagues provide praise and recognition for their positive experiences and interactions.”

“Compliments are received through phone-calls, Teams, WhatsApp, email or face-to-face.”

5.1.2. The Nature of the work itself

The salespeople expressed their appreciation for the engaging nature of their work. They felt a genuine sense of pride in the quality of the products they offered and the company's excellent reputation. While early morning starts and travel can be tiring, they acknowledged the occasional discomfort as a small price to pay for their dedication.

“We are fortunate to have a competent and knowledgeable team. With our collective experience, job establishment becomes effortless, allowing ample time for proactive planning and active involvement in company development. Moreover, our company's strong reputation and familiarity facilitate customer interactions, eliminating the need for extensive introductions or clarifications about our affiliation.”

“At times, I extend my working hours to accommodate customers with offers that enhance their convenience. Additionally, when on business trips, I strive to maximize customer visits, making the most of my time in their vicinity.”

“The collective effort of going the extra mile inspires and motivates others within the team to do the same. Everyone's willingness to contribute beyond expectations fosters a culture of mutual support and encouragement.”

Salespeople perceive an adequate number of challenges in their professional lives, which keeps their work engaging and far from monotonous. The presence of competition and the ever-changing nature of business cycles play a significant role in ensuring this dynamic environment.

“A sufficient level of challenge exists within my work. The primary obstacle in this job lies in effectively managing one’s own time. Without these challenges, the work would become more monotonous.”

“Various challenges are present in my work. Developing strong communication and management skills introduces new hurdles to overcome.”

“I encounter an ample number of challenges in my work. The competitive environment and constantly shifting business cycles provide enough complexity to keep things challenging.”

The salespeople believed their work had a positive impact on enhancing customers' lives and making a difference in the world.

“We have carefully selected reputable manufacturers who provide durable and energy-efficient products. Our extended warranty period gives me peace of mind, knowing that our products are reliable. Our commitment to sustainability is reflected in the energy-saving nature of our offerings, as we believe that the most ecological energy is the one that remains unused.”

“We strive to ensure that the procurement of our products is carried out in a responsible manner, minimizing environmental impact through efficient logistics. We prioritize the use of ecologically produced components, further contributing to our commitment to sustainability.”

The salespeople at RauHeat Oy emphasized the importance of meaningful work, where they can tangibly witness the results of their efforts. They find satisfaction in knowing that their work has a clear purpose and makes a noticeable impact.

“The aftermarket holds significance, as I inquire about project progress and gather feedback from installers.”

“Seeing well-received products showcased in buildings brings satisfaction.”

“During a recent visit to a holiday resort, I recognized the familiar name from our past sale of insulated pipes. The owner's contentment affirmed our success.”

“This work is characterized by its constant variety and absence of monotony. Each day brings new and exciting tasks, making the week vibrant and engaging. The absence of repetitive office work ensures that the job remains stimulating and meaningful.”

“The flexibility and versatility of the role allow for freedom in managing tasks and working at one's own pace. The option of remote work adds to the appeal, providing the opportunity to adapt the working environment to personal preferences.”

“The diverse nature of the job, which involves driving and interacting with new individuals regularly, is something I particularly enjoy. Being able to solve problems and assist customers daily brings a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction.”

5.1.3. Utilization of own skills

Harnessing skills and expertise is crucial. Salespeople at RauHeat Oy emphasized the opportunity to utilize their capabilities effectively. They can leverage their knowledge and experience to provide valuable insights and solutions to customers, thereby making a meaningful contribution in their roles. However, there was also a desire for additional training and self-development. The salespeople at RauHeat Oy recognized the importance of continuously enhancing their skills and knowledge to stay competitive and adapt to evolving market demands. They expressed a strong interest in opportunities for personal and professional growth within the company.

"I consider myself a knowledgeable professional in my field. The experience I have gained has proven to be valuable. I take pride in my work and always strive to achieve excellence."

"While I perform well, I believe there is room for improvement. The nature of the job requires a diverse skill set that can be further developed."

"Improving time management would enhance my overall performance. Utilizing the support of the back-office, I can streamline my operations for greater efficiency."

"My competence continues to evolve daily as I embrace new challenges and opportunities for growth."

"I appreciate the holistic and varied nature of the work. Complacency is detrimental to passion, and I thrive on the continuous pursuit of excellence."

"In my role, I can utilize my computer skills effortlessly, including proficiency in using programs like Excel and PowerPoint. Effective communication and strong organizational skills are also crucial in ensuring success."

"One of my strengths lies in my sales abilities. I excel in interpersonal interactions, and my sociable nature allows me to easily gauge and respond to customers' emotions. I take pride in my mastery of sales pitching techniques."

"I can apply my technical knowledge and logical reasoning skills to the job. Understanding technical concepts comes naturally to me, and I enjoy tackling mathematical problems and engaging in mental arithmetic. Additionally, I possess a natural sense of diplomacy, facilitating smooth interactions in various situations."

"Colleagues in Sweden are good at teaching language skills."

5.1.4. Growth opportunities

According to the salespeople, there are potential opportunities for advancement within the company. However, they expressed that now, these prospects may not appear entirely feasible or realistic. On the other hand, each day brings new opportunities for learning and personal growth.

“While I believe that I could pursue other career paths inside the OEM group if I desired, currently, I don’t see it as a feasible option. I genuinely enjoy my work and have confidence that the company owners value my contributions in the present.”

“On the job, there are continuous learning opportunities, such as enhancing calculation efficiency and utilizing various systems like SAP. The focus on circular economy and responsibility has also necessitated acquiring new knowledge.”

“Continuous learning is a constant aspect, encompassing social skills and technical proficiency.”

“Working with versatile products ensures a perpetual learning experience.”

5.1.5. Advancement in career

Recognizing the potential for career advancement is essential. However, the desire and readiness to pursue management roles or explore opportunities outside the current company heavily rely on personal preferences and aspirations.

“Typically, when seeking a new B2B-sales position, proven track record of successful sales is a crucial factor.”

“My current responsibilities provide valuable experience and contribute to building a foundation for future opportunities.”

The Sellers had well-defined objectives for both their short-term and long-term career aspirations. They also held the belief that the company furnished sufficient resources to facilitate the attainment of these goals.

“In the near future, it involves fostering team cohesion and fully embracing my current role. Looking ahead, the ongoing pursuit is to advance and enhance our operations, recognizing that the process of improvement is a perpetual endeavour. The company ensures the provision of necessary tools, comprehensive support networks, and valuable training opportunities. These resources enable employees to excel in their roles and further enhance their professional capabilities.”

“The immediate objective is to enhance the company's visibility and solidify its market standing. In the long run, the aim is to cultivate a thriving career path and attain expertise through continuous self-education, ultimately becoming a recognized authority in the respective field. Being a part of a prominent conglomerate offers valuable opportunities for further training and access to abundant resources. Moreover, working in my current company enhances my personal recognition and credibility within the industry.”

5.1.6 Achievements and track records

Having a strong track record is crucial for professional success. It demonstrates a history of achievements and accomplishments, which can be highly valued by employers and open doors to new opportunities. A solid track record instills confidence and trust, showcasing one's capabilities and expertise in their field. The salespeople at RauHeat take great pride in their work and derive genuine satisfaction from closing deals. They find joy and fulfillment in the process of securing successful business transactions, which adds to their overall sense of accomplishment and contentment.

“Like the thrill of winning in sports, achieving sales success brings great satisfaction.”

It evokes a sense of accomplishment and even a rush of adrenaline. Frustration may arise when deals slip away, highlighting the direct impact of work motivation on sales performance.”

“Securing a deal is akin to scoring a goal in hockey, the culmination of extensive effort that ultimately leads to the customer choosing your product. The journey from sparking the customer's interest to closing the deal requires persistence and dedication.”

“The feeling of fulfillment and a sense of well-being accompanies successful sales, especially when achieving favourable terms.”

“Certainly, I take great pride in being part of my company! Our team is exceptional, and their dedication is something I deeply value. We strive for continuous improvement, addressing any minor issues along the way. We enjoy a positive work environment, free from excessive supervision, allowing us to thrive and be content.”

“It's truly refreshing that there's no pressure for a "hard sell." We have the privilege of offering the finest products available in the market to our existing clientele. With such exceptional offerings, there's no need for dishonesty. We can simply present the facts and confidently support them.”

“Through responsible, diligent, and honest efforts, we have transitioned from a small enterprise to a significant player in the market. Our remarkable image and reputation, particularly among wholesalers, attest to our accomplishments. We take great pride in the path we have forged, upholding integrity every step of the way.”

5.1.7. Responsibility

According to sellers, they hold ample accountability for their own actions and those of others. They are willing to embrace responsibility, considering it a symbol of trustworthiness.

“Indeed, an adequate amount of responsibility exists. No additional amount is necessary.”

“I possess a sufficient level of responsibility.”

“In the realm of managerial roles, assuming responsibility is imperative, and there is a desire to cultivate it.”

“A considerable amount of responsibility has already been entrusted, and it appears that more will be assigned in the future. Personally, I do not have any reservations about shouldering this responsibility. I perceive it as an indication of trust, and I strive to be deserving of it.”

5.1.8. Autonomy

The individuals being interviewed expressed their belief in their ability to contribute to decision-making processes pertaining to their own work.

“I have the opportunity to actively participate in the planning of tasks related to my work.”

“Although there is already a significant amount of decision-making authority, matters that necessitate broader decision-making power are subject to discussion with the immediate supervisor and colleagues.”

“Various small group meetings are held, providing an avenue for involvement in decision-making processes.”

“During the weekly meetings, one has the chance to engage in decision-making activities.”

The sales personnel expressed a strong sense of being able to function with complete independence in their work.

“I am primarily responsible for making decisions, and I perceive my work as highly independent.”

“Independence is a key aspect of the role, allowing me to make decisions autonomously, such as determining pricing. We prioritize individual decision-making in our tasks.”

“Indeed, the level of independence is substantial. I have the authority to choose the course of action.”

“The work environment promotes considerable freedom, enabling me to operate with a sense of autonomy.”

As per the sellers' perspective, they have the liberty to choose their workplace, and there is flexibility in working hours. The primary focus lies on completing the assigned tasks effectively.

“I have considerable freedom in selecting my preferred location for work. Additionally, the working hours offer flexibility.”

“In this line of work, achieving a high level of autonomy is practically achievable. Organizing tasks and responsibilities is relatively straightforward.

“I have the responsibility to manage my own working hours and determine my workspace. What matters most is accomplishing the work, regardless of the physical location. This freedom is truly liberating and serves as an indication of trust.”

In addition to the responsibilities and job independence, salespeople also enjoy considerable freedom to influence product development. The organization highly values good ideas, and no suggestion is promptly disregarded.

“Collaboratively, we engage in thoughtful discussions and brainstorming sessions. It is effortless to propose new product ideas, and I have actively contributed to the development of a new product.”

“I have been actively involved in product development, incorporating valuable insights from customer feedback.”

“Indeed, there is considerable latitude to propose ideas without hesitation. Even the smallest reasonable suggestions are typically welcomed and considered.”

“I make a conscious effort to actively put forth new ideas, playing a significant role in the product development process. Ideas are generally not immediately dismissed, but rather given the chance to challenge existing methods or products.”

5.2. HYGIENE FACTORS

5.2.1 Approach to leadership and supervision

All salespeople unanimously stated that they receive adequate support from their supervisor. The managing director also expresses gratitude continually. According to the sellers' perspective, the company embraces a flattened work hierarchy, where managers take on more of an instructional role as experts in their respective fields.

“I receive assistance whenever needed.”

“Sufficient support is provided to me.”

“My manager provides me with support.”

“I perceive support from my supervisor.”

“The CEO cultivates an environment that fosters a desire for success.”

“The managing director occasionally commends and acknowledges my efforts, which is truly gratifying.”

“We maintain a flat work hierarchy, promoting a sense of familiarity and camaraderie among all team members.”

The rules primarily pertain to travel expenses, customer trip planning, and reasonable hotel costs. They are grounded in common sense and accompanied by brief information security trainings. Trust is evident, allowing for freedom and the use of personal judgment while minimizing expenses.

“The guidelines primarily focus on travel expenses, customer trip planning, and maintaining reasonable hotel expenditures.”

We have well-defined rules that are rooted in common sense. Information security trainings are brief and non-intrusive.”

“Our rules encompass practical aspects like efficient business trip planning and responsible management of hotel expenses. Trust seems to be the underlying principle, with minimal restrictions and emphasis on using common sense.”

“I had to reflect on the specific rules we have, but at the very least, transparency in travel plans is encouraged. We also prioritize cost-conscious decisions guided by common sense. However, there is a notable degree of freedom and trust granted to individuals.”

5.2.2 Workplace community

The work community is thriving, with open expression of opinions. Job satisfaction surveys show improvement since previous ownership. Colleagues respect, help, and support each other while finding moments of enjoyment.

“The work community thrives as individuals are encouraged to freely express their opinions and thoughts.”

“There is unanimous agreement that everyone is aligned towards a common goal. Previous job satisfaction surveys indicate positive results. Although there was a less favourable atmosphere in the past, it improved significantly after the previous owners departed.”

“We have a close-knit group that approaches tasks with enthusiasm. We uphold the saying, “You have to have fun, but you have to make money.” Under new ownership, the work environment has become healthier.”

“Colleagues hold mutual respect. We offer assistance, encouragement, attentive listening, and support. And of course, we always find moments to enjoy ourselves.”

“Yes, I get help from my colleagues. I have always been able to ask for help even in small matters.”

Co-workers express a longing for increased interactions and activities, transcending geographical distances, while maintaining a strong team spirit and shared mindset.

“It would be nice to see each other more often. Meetings should be held at least every six months, along with some activities.”

“Life is so busy that it's not even possible to meet co-workers outside working hours frequently. However, it would be nice to do something together occasionally.”

“Everyone lives quite far apart in Finland. But it's good to have more to talk about when we do meet.”

“It would be enjoyable to see each other more often. Sometimes I envy those who live close to each other. However, we have a good team spirit, our own hobbies, and friends in our free time.”

Humour plays a vital role in maintaining a pleasant atmosphere and fostering connections among colleagues. Inside jokes are abundant, and a light-hearted approach to work creates approachability and dissolves stress. Laughter is a frequent occurrence, even in serious tasks.

“Humour holds great significance, as it fosters a delightful atmosphere and adds a playful touch to our work.”

“There is a wealth of inside jokes, highlighting the importance of humour.”

“We approach our work with a subtle sense of humour, making it easier for people to connect.”

“Humour serves as a bridge and diffuses potentially stressful situations. We find joy in our /serious work and share a similar sense of humour, laughing frequently.”

5.2.3. Workload

According to the salespeople of Rauheat Oy, the workload is generally manageable, but handling many requests alone, especially during holidays, can be overwhelming. Delegation is a valuable skill to leverage resources, ensuring a reasonably balanced workload and timely task completion. Collaboration and support among competent sales professionals allow for workload sharing when necessary. Workloads vary, and perceptions of individual effort differ. The team is hardworking, but some may work at different paces.

“The workload is generally manageable.”

“Handling a large number of offer requests alone, especially during holidays, leads to an excessive workload.”

“I have acquired the skill of delegation, allowing me to utilize the resources of others.”

“The workload appears to be reasonably balanced, and I typically complete my daily tasks within the same day. We have competent sales professionals, and if

needed, workload can be shared among colleagues. Reciprocally, I am willing to assist them when I have more time available.”

“It is difficult to ascertain precisely how much others work, but a significant amount of work is accomplished. I believe that everyone contributes to the best of their abilities.”

“At times, I perceive that I work more than others or that not everyone grasps the urgency of certain tasks. Occasionally, I am amazed by the amount of work someone completes within a short time. Nonetheless, we have a diligent and hardworking team.”

Although there are challenging moments, vacations and work variability provide relief.

“I have developed effective strategies for managing my workload and minimizing stress.”

“Occasionally, I experience stressful situations and an overwhelming workload. However, taking vacations and the inherent variability of work contribute to alleviating this stress.”

Leisure time serves to relieve stress and restore balance. While mild stress can be motivating, excessive stress may disrupt work and require intervention. Engaging in activities like socializing, sauna, music, and family time provides respite.

“During leisure time, it is possible to alleviate stress and restore a balanced state.”

“Mild stress serves as motivation, while higher levels require intervention. Free time acts as a reset for work-related matters.”

“Stress can be beneficial, but excessive stress can hinder work and lead to sick leave. Fortunately, no one has experienced this so far. Engaging in activities like spending time with friends, enjoying a sauna, listening to music, and being with children helps divert attention from work.”

5.2.4. Orientation

In the past, the orientation process was lacking, but significant improvements have been made in recent times to enhance its effectiveness.

“I received a comprehensive and thorough introduction when I joined, ensuring a smooth transition.”

“Initially, the orientation process was lacking, but it improved over time.”

“During my own onboarding, there was little guidance provided. However, I was already familiar with the products and the system used was straightforward. Since then, I have developed an orientation plan for new employees.”

Salespeople have access to a specialized vocational sales qualification and conduct product training within our team for new products and development. Job guidance coaching and team-based PUSH leadership training are also offered. New training programs are regularly organized within the OEM group.

“A dedicated vocational sales qualification is available to us, along with product training conducted within our team to enhance knowledge of new products and product development.”

“I have received job guidance coaching and participated in team-based PUSH leadership training.”

“Job guidance training has been provided, and the OEM group continuously organizes new training and degree programs.”

Experienced individuals have a wealth of knowledge, while there is room for improvement through more frequent trainings and leveraging manufacturers' expertise. Developing expertise takes time.

“Experienced individuals often have the answers readily available, as if from a pharmacy shelf.”

“There is potential for improvement, with the opportunity to conduct more frequent small-scale trainings. Leveraging the manufacturers' expertise could enhance the training programs.”

“While most individuals possess this knowledge, those at the early stages of their careers may still need to develop in this area. On the other hand, technical expertise naturally grows with time and experience.”

5.2.5. Working conditions

According to the interviewees, the working conditions are good, especially with the comfortable and modern new office premises available. The tools, including computers and phones,

generally function well. While the replacement interval of three years for phones may seem long, it is deemed acceptable. The internet connections and cloud services are reliable.

“The working conditions are satisfactory, particularly the newly established office premises which provide comfort and modern amenities. There may be high demand for massage services, but their availability is appreciated.”

“The facilities are excellent, including updated office spaces and amenities.”

“We have impressive premises, featuring spacious saunas near a golf course in Rauma. The OEM group has also provided attractive new offices in Turku.”

“The tools are modern enough. At some point, I was always interested in the latest model of the phone, but now I'm not interested. You'll be fine with this too.”

“Tools (computers, telephones) are replaced at least every three years. I think that's good enough. Internet connections and cloud services work well.”

The work environment has been improved with adjustable tables and good office chairs. Additionally, there are suitable screens available. Ergonomics have been prioritized and checked by a physiotherapist. When working remotely, individuals are responsible for ensuring their own ergonomics.

“The physiotherapist has been adjusting the tables. We have good office chairs and good screens that can be adjusted.”

“We have electric desks and okay office chairs.”

“Work ergonomics have been invested in and they have been checked. The older you get, the more interested you become.”

“When working remotely, it is up to you to take care of ergonomics. A physiotherapist has visited the offices to check suitable positions. There are also electric tables in use.”

According to the salespeople, there are no appeals in the systems. Large companies require advanced systems. New systems generally outperform old ones based on experience.

“When you are part of a large, listed company, small programs are no longer enough. It has worked well so far. It takes a little longer to make a sales order, but that's okay.”

“I want to make use of all existing systems. I want to develop these things.”

“I'm probably not the first to always want new systems, but with experience I've noticed that usually new systems work better than old ones.”

5.2.6. Safety

IT security is ensured with training. No involvement with dangerous situations or individuals; work environment is safe. Driving can be tiring, but energy drinks and music help. Salespeople feel capable and prioritize fitness. Their work is mainly non-physical, though driving requires breaks.

“IT-security is well taken care of through training.”

“We do not deal with dangerous situations or people. The work environment is indeed safe, especially when working remotely, unless the spouse is angry.”

“Driving can be fatiguing, particularly after an early wake-up. Energy drinks and upbeat music assist.”

“I am highly capable. It is adaptable and ergonomically sound, exerting no physical strain. I prioritize fitness during leisure time.”

“Driving and extended sitting can feel burdensome, necessitating breaks and stretches. Nonetheless, salespeople's work is primarily non-physical.”

5.2.7. Stability

People are not worried about layoffs. Sales positions are usually the last to be affected. Rau-Heat Oy's success sets them apart in the industry.

“I have no concerns about potential layoffs or dismissals. It hasn't crossed my mind. If salespeople are affected, how can things improve?”

“I remain unconcerned. Sales positions remain unaffected.”

“I'm confident in the situation. Typically, those who contribute revenue are the last to be affected by layoffs or firings. Thankfully, we have been successful and haven't encountered such circumstances. This is exceptional in our industry, and we take pride in it.”

5.2.8. Salary and benefits

Most of the salespeople think their salary is sufficient, but there is room for improvement.

“I find my salary to be insufficient.”

“It's satisfactory, but I always desire a higher pay.”

“It is ok, but there is room for improvement.”

“I currently believe my salary is satisfactory.”

Currently, there is no surplus money available for investments or other purposes. However, the necessity of having such surplus is also questioned.

“At the moment, there is no surplus money available, such as for investments. However, is it even necessary?”

“There are no financial issues. Personal spending can be adjusted to avoid struggling.”

“My finances are sufficient to support my family well. Through my own efforts, I can also contribute positively to my income.”

“The positive atmosphere in the company promotes encouragement, as we have a fixed monthly salary instead of a commission-based structure. This fosters a supportive environment where everyone is motivated, regardless of who makes the sales.”

All the interviewees concur that obtaining a higher salary elsewhere would be feasible. However, they prioritize the flexibility of work and a positive working environment over monetary compensation.

“It is very possible that I would get more salary elsewhere.”

“Yes, I certainly would.”

“Yes surely.”

“I believe it is so. However, I'm not sure how I would enjoy myself in another place. Learning everything new takes time and energy. Would it be worth it? I value flexibility and a good working atmosphere more than money.”

The previous two years have been favourable. The current bonus structure is motivating, fostering a positive work environment with shared objectives. However, introducing personal incentives for top sales performers would be advantageous.

“The collective bonus relies heavily on the performance of others, while individual contributions are only a small part of it. The current bonus structure lacks motivation. A more personalized reward system could be beneficial.”

“The past two years have been favourable in that regard.”

“The existing bonus structure proves to be motivating. Having a shared objective also diminishes envy among salespeople and fosters a positive work environment. Nevertheless, I believe incorporating a personal incentive for the top sales performers would be beneficial.”

Salespeople benefit from staff discounts on quality goods and favourable car loans. Comprehensive occupational health coverage, fitness benefits, and the option for bicycle benefits are appreciated. Exceptional disability insurance is also provided.

“We have the benefit of purchasing quality goods with staff discounts. Additionally, the car loan advantage is favourable.”

“We have access to affordable car loans. There is an opportunity for a new phone. We have comprehensive occupational health benefits, which can help bypass surgery waiting lists, for example. I won't immediately take advantage of the bicycle benefit. We can purchase plumbing and lighting supplies at staff prices.”

“We have comprehensive occupational health coverage, disability insurance, a wide range of fitness benefits through an e-pass, car loans, and I am considering taking advantage of the bicycle benefit as well.”

“The company's occupational health and disability insurance coverage is exceptionally comprehensive. I also highly value the significant number of fitness benefits provided and the favourable car loan option.”

6. CONCLUSIONS

In summary, RauHeat Oy demonstrates several positive factors that contribute to a satisfactory work environment. However, there are areas where further improvements could be made, such as increasing interactions among colleagues, implementing personal incentives for top performers, and addressing the desire for higher salaries. Overall, the company shows a commitment to employee well-being, teamwork, and job satisfaction.

Also, according to the findings, RauHeat's sales team is driven by various factors. They experience high levels of acknowledgment and appreciation from their peers, managers, and clients, leading to increased job satisfaction. They take pride in the stimulating aspects of their job, the superior quality of their products, and the company's outstanding reputation. The presence of challenges and competition keeps their work lively and captivating. They can leverage their skills and expertise to deliver valuable solutions to customers, thereby making a significant impact. Moreover, the company offers opportunities for growth, career progression, and a supportive work environment that values achievements while promoting responsibility and independence.

Again, according to Shipley and Kiely, motivational factors cannot be clearly separated from dissatisfaction factors, because some of Herzberg's motivational factors seem to also function as hygiene factors and vice versa. (Shipley & Kiely, 1986, 15.) I came to the same conclusion in my research results. In particular, the encouraging and open work atmosphere and the work community that supports one's own work also motivate RauHeat Oy's salespeople internally.

As the author of this research, and as the Sales Manager of RauHeat Oy, I was pleased to get to interview my colleagues. The results were positive and will certainly cause discussion in our work community.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the hygiene factors and motivators identified among the salespeople at RauHeat Oy, the following recommendations can be made:

The recognition programs should be enhanced by implementing formal programs that acknowledge and reward salespeople for their achievements, including performance-based bonuses, employee of the month/year awards, and public recognition within the company.

A positive work environment should be fostered by creating a supportive and positive workplace culture that values and appreciates the sales team's contributions, with a focus on teamwork, collaboration, and open communication to boost morale and motivation.

Ongoing training and development programs should be provided to enhance salespeople's skills and knowledge, including workshops, seminars, and mentorship opportunities to stay updated with industry trends and improve sales techniques.

Growth opportunities should be offered by identifying and providing clear pathways for career advancement within the organization, with a framework outlining potential promotions, expanded roles, or opportunities to move into management positions to demonstrate the company's commitment to employee growth and motivate salespeople to strive for advancement.

A feedback system should be established by implementing a mechanism where salespeople can provide suggestions, ideas, and feedback on product development and sales strategies, empowering them to contribute to the company's success and fostering a sense of ownership.

Autonomy and flexibility should be granted by trusting salespeople with decision-making authority and providing them with flexibility in their work schedules and locations, allowing them to tailor their approach to individual customers and increasing their sense of responsibility and motivation.

Implementing these recommendations will further enhance the motivation and satisfaction of the sales team at RauHeat Oy, leading to improved performance and overall success.

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