



Gen Z & Millennials work-engagement, challenges & possibilities

The motivation explaining low engagement numbers among young employees

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Young employees work-engagement, challenges & possibilities. Specified implementation plan for adapting young employees.

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Abstract:

Employee engagement plays a critical role in an organizational performance. A good employee engagement prevents large personnel costs and helps the company to follow their strategy effectively. The employee's replacement can cost a fortune for the business. The higher engagement the better employee satisfaction and commitment towards common goals. As the workforce dynamics evolve, organizations struggle with lower engagement numbers among young employees such as Gen Z and Millennials.

This research aims to identify and understand the numerous factors that influence low engagement and commitment among these specific groups. The study includes a mixed-method approach, surveys, interviews, and case studies to capture a holistic understanding of the expectations and motivations of Gen Z and millennials. Key themes explored include the importance of purpose driven work, the role of organizational culture and possibilities evoked by innovative strategies tailored to the preferences of the target group.

Ultimately, this research contributes to the development of targeted solutions to foster a more engaged and satisfied experience for organizations' young talent.

Keywords:

Work engagement, Gen Z, Millennials, Human resources management, well-being, employee engagement, career expectations

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1 Introduction

Employee engagement plays a critical role in an organizational performance. A good employee engagement prevents large personnel costs and helps the company to follow their strategy the more employees they get engaged for it. The employee's replacement can cost a fortune for the business. The higher engagement the better employee satisfaction and commitment towards common goals. People are the competitive advantage of organizations today.

The aging population in Finland can be seen in the age distribution of companies and therefore companies must focus on sustaining their people. Only five percent of the Finnish population in 2020 were underaged (0-17 years), the rest of the population are on a working age until retirement. (Statistics Finland, 2023). Older workers retire from the same company they entered years ago, and younger employees are swapping between companies more often than ever. Multinational company Deloitte, known for providing integrated solutions to complex business challenges, made a survey in 2023 for 22,000, - professional young employees specialized for Millennials and Gen Z (Deloitte Global 2023 Gen Z and Millennial Survey, as defined in the study, Gen Z respondents were born between January 1995 and December 2004, and millennial respondents were born between January 1983 and December 1994.). The aim of the survey was to get a better understanding of these target groups' attitudes towards work and the world. The research showed that employees under 30 years change their workplace within one-to-three years and are not engaged for longer. The survey summarizes some of the key takeaways for leaders to take better care of their young assets.

“While these positive trends show Gen Zs and millennials are slightly more satisfied with their own employers, they are not convinced that business more broadly is having a positive impact. And new setbacks are hampering their ability to plan for their futures.” (Deloitte, 2023).

Work engagement itself has changed a lot among younger employees and altered matters are affecting the engagement than before. Especially Gen Z has diverse and different expectations towards work life than older employees. Gen Z is interested in career development and more about what you do than where you do it (Jayanthi, R., & Mathews, S. 2023). Work is not just the way to get bread to the table and provide for your family, it has a bigger role, and it can be an enormous part of a lifestyle and define an individual's awareness and values.

1.1 Background

Job mobility statistics show that the average worker entering the workforce today will change positions twice as frequently in the first five years of working than new employees did 30 years ago (Berger, 2017). When I personally was working as a specialist, I changed employer before my thirties. Now I work as a team lead and naturally, I witness low engagement very closely when it comes to younger employees. I work in such a field that it is very natural for an employee to continue their career path after few years, but how to make sure that the career path continues in the same company is a challenge for many companies when it comes to younger employees.

This research focuses on employees under 30 years and will be conducted as an implementation plan for a Finnish company who wants to engage their young employees even better. This research concerns finding answers from employees who have already changed company before their thirties. The main reasons will help to put up a sustainable plan for any company to take better care of their young assets. In this research young employees can be identified as workers under 30 years, now or when they decided to change their employer. This research will focus on the financial industry and its employees.

1.2 Definition of a target group

Millennials and Generation Z dominate Company X workforce approximately 60%, and this should have a significant impact on how to design young people's career paths and courage their work-engagement. Millennials and Gen Z expect completely different things from their work than previous generations Borukhov, S. (2021). According to findings from Deloitte's Millennials survey this target group values well-being, flexibility and learning much more than previous generations. The challenge will be staying relevant for every working generation in the same workplace at the same time.

1.3 Gen Z

Generation Z comes after the Millennial generation and typically it is described to include individuals born the mid-1990 and the mid-2010s. The generational characteristics may not apply to every individual, but Gen Z is said to be digital natives – mobile first. They want everything personalized when they need it, they have an 8 sec attention span and want to choose

what they learn themselves. They learn by doing, by video and from each other, together. Prefer hybrid learning solutions. **Some more key factors are:** *Digital natives, tech-savvy, diverse and inclusive, entrepreneurial spirit, global awareness, short attention spans, financial pragmatism, mental health awareness, political engagement & educational preferences.*

1.4 Millennials

Millennials, also known as Generation Y (typically includes individuals born between the early 1980s (about 3 and a half hours) and the mid-1990s). Want on-demand, whenever and wherever they may happen to want it. They learn best in an experimental and realistic environment with real world examples. They prefer social, collaborative, gamified, agile, micro, mobile, visual, interactive learning. Key factors to explain Millennials; Technology adoption, economic challenges, education, social consciousness, diversity, and inclusion, entrepreneurship, digital communication, work-life balance & health and wellness (Twenge, J. M. (2017).

1.5 Definition of employee engagement

Employees' work engagement is impacted by work-related factors and other aspects that define the work engagement level. Employees with higher work well-being are more engaged in the company they work in (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Employee engagement can be defined as an emotional, cognitive, and behavioral dimension. Employee engagement will release the potential in people and set them to their right positions to perform their fullest.

High or at least a decent job engagement can lead to increased profitability in both productivity and company personnel cost. When the employee is satisfied with the work tasks as an outcome there can be multiple positive things such as better customer satisfaction and co-operation at the workplace. Employees are more engaged and satisfied with their careers when provided with learning opportunities and in turn their commitment level within the organization increases (Khalid and Khalid, 2015). The ever-changing work environment makes the employees feel more insecure and this has become one of the common psychological problems faced by employees (Greehargh, & Rosenblatt, 1984).

1.6 Work engagement and work- motivation

Work engagement refers to the state of being fully absorbed into one's work or being enthusiastic about it, so motivation is a key factor in work engagement as shown in the Deloitte's survey 2023. (Deloitte, 2023). Engaged employees can be described as deeply committed to their jobs and are willing to invest extra effort to contribute to the organization's success. These types of employees do feel a sense of purpose and dedication in their tasks.

I listened to a YouTube video from 2018 from a World Government Summit, where Emily Esfahani Smith is explaining her research titled: "The Power of Meaning: Crafting a Life That Matters" published in 2012. Emily is well- known for her work on the psychology of happiness, the meaning of life and well-being (The Power of Meaning, 2017). In this video Emily is telling the audience how her research on employee engagement underlies the relationship between meaningful work and personal values. Smith discusses the significance of finding meaning in work and life and how it contributes to overall well-being and engagement. Meaningful work aligned with personal values contributes to higher engagement levels in work life.

The concept that states that engaged employees are more likely to stay with an organization is supported by numerous studies and research in the field of organizational psychology and management. The higher the engagement numbers are, the more employees are engaged in their daily work life. When employees are deeply engaged in their work, they tend to feel a strong connection to their roles and even towards the organization. This emotional attachment can lead to increased loyalty, better team spirit and longer tenures. Additionally, engaged employees are more likely to refer others to join their organization, which can help with talent acquisition and retention. Lack of engagement can lead to higher turnover rates, which all in all can be very costly in terms of recruitment.

2 Aim and research question

My research question is why young people do not engage, how to prevent it and which actions do really work and which one's younger employees value the most. The aim is to find answers to deficiencies with actions other than increasing salary, working hours or the structure of work task. In this research I will focus on finding the keys of the people who have changed companies within 1-3 years while being under their thirties.

In this paper my research question will try to explain why some individual young employees do not engage in their workplace referred to the Deloitte's survey and engagement numbers. My research implies that there is a connection with mental health when comparing Deloitte's survey and my interviews. The underlying factors for the survey are stated to be the following:

“The survey of more than 22,000Zs and millennials across 44 countries examines their shifting relationship with work, how they continue to make lifestyle and career decisions based on their values, and underscores continuing concerns about finances, climate change, and mental health.” Deloitte. (n.d.). Global millennial survey 2020: Millennials and Gen Z resilient in the face of adversity.

The aim of this research is to find solutions for company X to engage their young employees better and to find reasons behind weak commitment through qualitative interviews. The end-result will be an implementation proposal to the company for engaging their young employees better. The research outcome will not only contain Millennials (1981-1996) or Zen z (1997-2012), but also young employees yet to come.

The goal with engagement plan is to achieve business goals more efficiently and create a culture of improving employee retention as people and human resource management in the center.

3 Literature review

This literature review will give a better understanding on why it is important to asset on younger employees and what they expect from employer to be engaged. By having employees that are initiative-taking and committed to perform on a high-level, the employer gets the most out of their employees (Bakker & Leiter, 2010).

The articles and research in this paper explain what the effect on work well-being is, what employees think of work engagement and what young employees value the most in work life. How younger employees see and think of career opportunities and what are their expectations in this matter from the organization. All the articles are based on qualitative research methods and data is gathered by interviewing individuals.

Gilsdorf,K., Hanleybrown, F. & Dashell, L. (Harvard business review, 2017) made an article about young people engagement statistics. They conducted a survey for 1200 young employees and interviewed dozens of companies to find out how they have tried to improve young employees' engagement. The research listed five key findings on how employers are trying to improve retention and engagement: improving manager training, diversity and inclusion, better scheduling, and workforce management.

Jayanthi, R., & Mathews, S. (International Journal of Applied Research in Management and Economics, 2023) is calculating on their study, that 44% of the global population in 2025 will be comprised by Gen Z. As the research is clearly stating that Gen Z and young employees do matter now more than ever, on the same sentence they state that it is exceedingly rare that a company has a plan specified for younger employees that matches their needs and hopes. Companies do have various rewards systems, and some might even have designed career paths, but many are planned for a mass of employees- not variety that could match with different generations.

By adapting young generations such as Gen Z, business can gain much more than workforce. Direct quote from the International Journal;

“Gen Z are ambitious lot; they want to work for a company which emphasis on sustainability and have a culture of career growth. Leaders in the workplace must be flexible, adapting their approach to deliver support and motivation in a way that resonates with this

group. Building trust, mentoring, peer feedback, and knowledge exchange are tools which can work well with this Gen Z to be engaged. A fully engaged Gen Z employee is one that accepts organization mission & culture given their innately independent spirit, it is little troublesome to get to that position, but once accomplished Gen Z is far more likely to immerse themselves.” (Jayanthi, R., & Mathews, S. 6(1):1-10, 2023).

Gen Z has described it to be demanding towards the employer but will most probably be worth the effort and an asset in the future. The report lists major topics that Gen Z appreciates which are: social rewards, recognition rewards, status rewards, efficient leaders, fairness, trust, respect & honesty. Gen Z has a high social value and expects employers to provide two-way communication with constant feedback.

3.1 Theories of engagement

The key theories and strategies that could engage this generation are selected in this research to be the following: SDT theory, theory of career choice and RIASEC model. Even though these theories can impact millennials' potential, these can be used for diverse individuals too. I chose John Holland theory and SDT as one of the leading theories when looking into the specific reasons behind low engagement numbers. I chose these two theories because I found a very interesting article comparing SDT and Holland's theory. The other theory that I will refer to is John Holland's theory of career choice (RIASEC) and SDT theory when moving forward into what to do about low engagement numbers. In the data analyzing I also cite Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory that can be seen from the answers from interview.

3.1.1 Self-determination theory

Self-determination theory (SDT) has developed gradually over the last 40 years to become a major theory of human motivation. (Gagne, M. Ed. 2014).

Gagne and Deci (2005) have provided a spirited defense of self-determination theory's relevance to work motivation by 1) acknowledging its problems as a theory of work motivation; 2) arguing its similarities with need hierarchy theory, job characteristics theory, goal-setting theory, and action theory, and 3) emphasizing the importance of satisfying the universal needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Latham, 2011, Self-Determination Theory section). SDT has been proved to guide motivation and career development and growth. SDT

theory should be carefully viewed when creating engagement tools and strategies. Since this paper is aiming to find solutions for better engagement, SDT theory will be part of the solution.

3.1.2 Principles of the theory

SDT is a macro theory of human motivation that has been successfully applied across domains including parenting, education, healthcare, sports and physical activity, psychotherapy, virtual worlds, as well as the fields of work motivation and management (Deci & Ryan 1985a, Ryan & Deci 2017).

Deci and Ryan [the founders of the theory] claim that there are three essential elements of the theory:

Humans are inherently proactive with their potential and mastering their inner forces (such as drives and emotions)

2. Humans have an inherent tendency toward growth, development, and integrated functioning

3. *Optimal development and actions are inherent in humans, but they do not happen automatically.*

The theory focuses on an individual's choice that guides our motivation. SDT theory can be related to work engagement, when looking into the three factors that have an influence on our work-motivation. The self-determination theory can be seen as an experience of the meaningfulness in work life. Does the employee feel the work meaningful; do they feel that their existence in the organization matters?

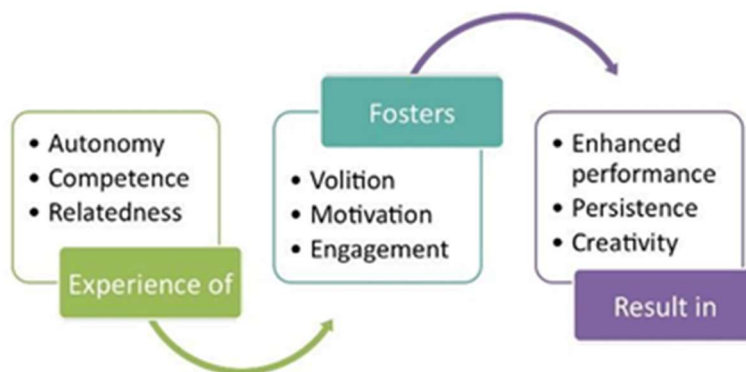


Figure 1. Self-Determination Theory SDT Wayback Machine (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

3.1.3 SDT in work-organisations

A significant percentage of adults in the world work in organizations, and their jobs vary substantially. Some people have careers that are perceived interesting and valued by others. Their work conditions are supportive, and they perceive their pay to be equitable. Others, however, have jobs that are demanding and demeaning. Their work conditions are uncomfortable, and their pay is not adequate for supporting a family. They are likely to look forward to days away from work to feel alive and well (Ryan et al. 2010). Both types of jobs may exist in organizations that are profitable, such as in this study I refer to financial industry.

3.2 Questions to support SDT theory in the interviews

In this work I try to clarify how the SDT theory can be seen in practice through research questions to find out how autonomy, relatedness and competence have been present when not engaging. How did the employee feel the autonomy in work life, what were the reasons behind the lack of autonomy? How about the competence, did the employee feel that support and guidance were available when needed? What about the relatedness, did the company try to find potential in people and aim towards common goals? Van Den Broeck, A., Vansteenkiste, M., Lens, W., & De Witte, H. (2010).

self-determination theory

Deci & Ryan 1971 – 2017



Figure 2. Self- Determination Theory SDT (Ryan & Deci, 1971-2017).

3.3 Theory of career choice

Holland's RIASEC model with the descriptions of the six interest types." Behav. Sci. (2023 Researchgate). The theory of career choice has been made into a RIASEC model, which is based on a framework that classifies individuals and work environments into six personality types. These are realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional. According to this theory, individuals are more likely to be satisfied and successful in careers that align with their personality types.

The theory underlines that work environments that match individuals' personality type contribute to job satisfaction and performance. The RIASEC model is used for individuals to help to make informed career decisions based on their strengths and preferences. This model could also help to engage younger employees better in the organization. Maybe the retail market and financial industry have made too narrow frames for the personalities required to the existing roles. Once conventional and investigative personalities were the perfect match for a financial career, but now the situation might be different. The industry could benefit from different kinds of job seeker profiles to develop and engage young people better. When recruiting new employees, it could be beneficial to find different personality types to find the right people for their perfect matching roles.

3.3.1 Comparing and combining SDT and Hollands theory

John Holland's theory of career orientations advises people to select careers that are congruent with their personalities. Similarly, self-concordance theory, based in self-determination theory, advises people to select personal goals that match their autonomous interests and identifications. The main question of Hollands theory is: does your career match to your personality? Can a person be categorized into one identificatory?

Khazae, Kiamanesh, and Liaghatdar (2020) conducted a systematic review of literature to explore the relationship of Holland Theory in career decision making, that discusses both methodologies RIASEC & SDT and it seems that they share the assumption that individuals benefit from pursuing goals or careers aligned with their personality orientations. The authors of the article argue that combining Hollands personality theory and self-determination theory can lead to a scientific advancement by evaluating their predictive and incremental validity in predicting career choices. The guiding hypothesis in this study is that both the Holland and

SDT measurements would independently contribute to explaining variance in current career selections. The RIASEC model uses concrete measures, presenting participants with specific activities to assess their preferences, while SDT highlight a more abstract measurement of intrinsic motivation along a relative autonomy continuum, considering six motivation types.

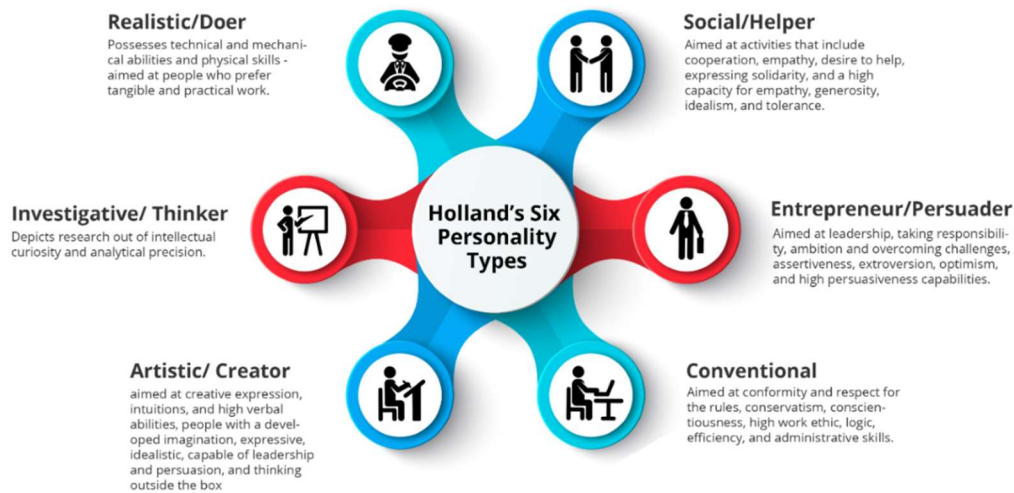


Figure 3. Holland's Six personality types (Holland,J,. 1959).

Above there is a picture that shortly describes the six different personality types briefly. Most probably one person can have a bit from each type, but certainly some of these characters are the leading ones.

When reading through job advertisements in the financial industry, the main personality types between lines are described to be; investigative, conventional & entrepreneur. Exploring this subject matter could potentially evolve into a comprehensive research inquiry within the realm of human resources. Specifically, delving into job descriptions and discerning the types of personalities attracted to these positions could present a compelling research question. At least from my perspective, these adverts are not seeking for creativity, helper, or doer- that many financial companies could benefit from. In the descriptions few things are repeating, such as in every role for financial sector you should have suitable education background and previous experience from the field. Here are some descriptions from job adverts in financial sector from Duunitori & Oikotie:

Credit Officer, Consumer Loans

- We value appropriate education, such as a degree in business or related fields
- In addition, we strongly consider previous experience in the finance, insurance or debt collection industry to be an advantage
- Succeeding in the task requires the desire to take and bear responsibility, to take action and to work with the team to achieve a common goal

Customer Supporter, Personal Customers- Loans

- The words sales-oriented and result-oriented describe you, and you always want to ensure the best possible customer experience
- As a person, you are positive, precise, self-initiative and take responsibility for the work you do. You are able to act thoughtfully and purposefully, prioritizing your work tasks even in the midst of a rush
- We require you to have fluent and up-to-date digital skills so that you can guide our customers in our digital services

Finance manager

- Corporate finance experience from either the financial sector or the SME sector and insight into the corporate finance market
- Experience in analyzing SMEs and building versatile financing solutions
- Experience and proof of successful customer work
- Higher university degree

Personal Customers, finance

- We are looking for people who have a genuine interest in personal customer financing and a desire for successful sales work
- Experience in new customer acquisition is considered an advantage.
- You manage, organize and prioritize your work effectively. You bravely take on new things, but you're not alien to routines either
- You have a friendly and approachable approach and strong interaction and cooperation skills. You want to create a memorable service experience for every customer
- The role emphasizes self-initiative, good interaction skills and enthusiasm for active sales work

Customer Supporter, Banking

- We expect from you a self-directed and solution-oriented approach to work, a positive attitude and an appreciative ability to cooperate, as well as an interest in learning new things
- In addition, we expect a customer-oriented way of working and the desire to produce a unique customer experience

Even though the financial sector could benefit from artistic, social, and realistic personalities- these people might not apply since the description is asking for a personality with investigative mindset and conventional touch when it comes to organizational rules and outliners. Most of the job advertisements are seeking for people who already have existing experience from the field, which might sort out the potential and motivated junior level candidates. The company could also benefit from making a clear personality test when looking for people to different roles- instead of having a preference test where measuring intelligence through numbers or reasoning ability. At least for some roles PAPI test have been used and can be proved to be useful to assess personality for the certain role.

4 Method

There is plenty of research done focusing on the actions taken by different companies, but I could not find even one that focuses mainly on the people who have decided to leave the company. For this research I will interview employees who have left the company. I will also conduct a survey of the results with key questions to see if they suit a broader audience.

My research will be conducted with qualitative methods to explain why employees were not willing to continue with their employer back then. “One of the key benefits of qualitative research is that it allows a researcher to see and understand the context within which decisions and actions take place. It is often the case that human decisions and actions can only be understood in context – it is the context that helps to ‘explain’ why someone functioned as they did.” (Myers, 2019).

4.1 Qualitative research design

The main purpose of research design is to provide a road map of the whole research project (Myers, 2019). The aim of this study is to find out how to prevent young employees leaving company X. For this study qualitative research gives a better understanding of the reasons behind the number of employees that left. Qualitative method will give a deeper understanding of experiences and explanations why an employee wanted to change a company.

4.2 Motivational and methodological approach

To analyze my data collection, I will use hermeneutics to understand the outcome from interviews better- since I do ask the same questions from the participants and tell them the same introduction to get familiar with my research aim. “The main purpose of hermeneutics is human understanding: understanding what people say and do and why. The hermeneutic effort consists of an attempt to make clear, or to make sense of, an object of study.” (Myers, 2019).

5 Qualitative interview as a method

Before the interview, it is crucial to consider that the interviews are ethical, and the participant knows what to expect from upcoming sessions. Participants are given information detailing what involvement will entail and the potential benefits and consequences of participation (King et al., 2018, Process of negotiation section). I have told each participant that they are mentioned in the research as anonymous. All the participants also know the aim of my research.

In this research all the participants will be participating and presented as anonymous and will not be able to be recognized from the study and results. The people to interview are specially chosen and asked for an interview. All the interviews are held remotely and recorded and done one person at a time to make sure that participants stay anonymous. I have used transcription provided by remote interview system to gather information and in order to get back at it later. For this research I have interviewed six people from retail industry -who have changed employer before they were in their thirties. I used the same interview questions (Appendix 2.) for each participant depending a bit on where the conversation leads.

5.1 Data gathered

This research will focus on key words and topics around engagement and finding the key points of changing to another company and not engaging. By the comprehensive approach to data gathering, this study aims to unravel the complex interplay of elements that contribute changes in employment and engagement levels.

In my thesis I use the data that I find relevant to my topic and research questions about work engagement. The interview questions do vary a bit in each interview depending on the story and answer from the participant. My interview questions focus on young people's commitment to employers, particularly in the financial sector. Interview questions involve questions to explore the reasons behind the lack of commitment and motivation. I have tried to gather results from the interviews by discussing the interviewee's background, work history and current motivational factors. I have tried to encourage people to share experiences with open questions to find out as much as possible and get an overall picture of young people's commitment to employers in the financial sector.

5.1.1 Thrustworthiness

The research faces limitations due to its small sample size, making individual interviewee responses more influential. Single case studies are generally not easily generalized, but findings may apply to similar research and psychological approaches.

The researcher's dual role as an employee/team manager may impact trustworthiness, yet it aids in understanding company culture. While efforts were made to maintain neutrality during interviews, personal biases might have influenced responses. Also, the questions and the order might have influenced the responses. Privacy measures were taken, but there's a risk of dishonesty in answers also since the interviewed individuals are introduced as anonymous individuals in the final work. Some questions, especially regarding salary, closest manager, and career choice, made interviewees uncomfortable at some points.

The interviewed were encouraged to express and explain their honest thoughts and experience of what made them demotivated or disengaged from their previous workplace.

6 Summary of interviews

The interviews provide a vivid portrayal of the challenges and aspirations of employees within the financial industry, revealing: **A Disconnect in Career Development:** Many interviewees expressed frustration over unclear career paths and lack of developmental opportunities, mirroring the literature's emphasis on the need for alignment between personal growth and organizational support. **Stress and Well-being Concerns:** Echoing the literature on work stress's impact on well-being, interviewees highlighted the stress from unrealistic sales targets and a desire for better work-life balance. **Desire for Recognition and Meaningful Work:** Consistent with SDT and Generation Z's values described in the literature, interviewees sought recognition, feedback, and work that aligns with their personal goals and values.

This qualitative case study delves into the experiences of eight young professionals to gain insights into the dynamics of work engagement and the challenges they face in the contemporary workplace. The study employs in-depth interviews to capture the unique perspectives of each participant, shedding light on the multifaceted nature of work engagement among the younger workforces. Participants want continuous learning and career development opportunities as essential components of work engagement. Limited growth prospects and a lack of professional development programs are identified as barriers to sustained engagement.

Among the myriad challenges highlighted by the participants in this qualitative case study on work engagement among young professionals, three predominant themes emerged as critical obstacles: unclear career paths and discussions on possibilities, salary concerns, and poor leadership. These findings shed light on fundamental issues that impact the engagement and satisfaction of young workers in the contemporary workplace.

Every participant expressed *frustration* with the lack of clear career paths within their organization. The absence of transparent discussions about career possibilities inside the company was the focus of each interview. The participants expressed a shared desire for meaningful career development and advancement, which they perceived as integral to a fulfilling professional journey.

In conclusion, the findings underscore the significance of aligning employee expectations with organizational practices in career development. It was surprising that the expectations towards

the organization and for example the closest manager were up high on how another person should plan and implement ready to action plan for each employee. In few interviews there was also stated that a good leader should know how to encourage individuals in their career paths in such matter that a good leader knows which path to recommend and actively approaches employees with conversations on how to continue the career path and where.

Employers were encouraged to establish clear career paths, foster opportunities for growth, recognize and reward accomplishments, ensure alignment with personal goals, and maintain transparent communication and feedback mechanisms. Failure to address these expectations was noted as a contributing factor to poor work engagement and, ultimately, employee dissatisfaction in previous workplaces. For me the surprising part was how much an employee is willing to externalize the planning process on an individual basis. The responsibility to discuss career possibilities and growth opportunities is completely transferred to the employer. This finding will be the key focus on the following. How to manage great expectations on career development and to point out the importance of the individual voice and effort.

6.1 Data analysis

I begin the data analysis by analyzing within-case analysis to state key reasons from each interview. Cross-case analysis will help to find similarities and differences from the interviews. Cross-case analysis will help see if there are patterns or event chains being repeated. In this research I try to find solutions through SDT and Hollands personality theory to come up with suggestions for the company. I will connect the theory with practice by data analyzing through main points from theory.

6.1.1 Autonomy and engagement

The literature's focus on SDT aligns with interviewees' calls for more autonomy and meaningful engagement in their roles. Organizations could benefit from strategies that enhance autonomy, such as flexible work arrangements and participatory decision-making, to boost motivation and retention.

6.1.2 Recognition and Career Development

The emphasis on recognition and career growth in the theory is mirrored in the interviews. Practical applications might include transparent career pathways, personalized development plans, and regular, constructive feedback to meet younger employees' expectations.

6.1.3 Stress Management and Well-being

The negative impact of stress on employee well-being, highlighted in both the literature and interviews, suggests a need for organizations to adopt comprehensive well-being programs. These could include mental health support, stress management training, and a culture that prioritizes employee health. Younger employees seem to appreciate personal well-being as much as they feel that team dynamics matter. Team building and cooperation was important, but the lack of personal coaching was missing when talking with the people interviewed.

6.1.4 Cultural and Organizational Change

The desire for a culture of career growth and sustainability noted in the literature is echoed in the interviews. Implementing organizational changes that reflect these values, such as sustainability initiatives and leadership development programs focusing on mentorship and support, could bridge the gap between theory and practice. In the interviews, knowledge was there, but it was more spoken on a theory level than done in practice. One of the interviewees mentioned that when they applied for the company, there were many career paths and choices to affect one's daily work flexibly, but in action the work was pretty much settled in advance and there were no influencing opportunities. The interviewed felt that this should be then also clearly stated in the first interview when discussing the big picture. Honesty was mentioned many times in the interviews. Interviewees felt that in some parts, the initial promises made in the beginning of their career never materialized. This created a feeling of dishonesty on the employer's side.

7 Results

Half of the individuals surveyed have shifted away from the financial industry. All the participants worked in the retail industry and in one way or another the work included sales targets and meeting demanding goals.

All the participants stated that they had not had a clear discussion on their career opportunities or regular dialogue with the closest manager or human resources management before they decided to resign. Half of the people interviewed mentioned stress as one of the main reasons for resignation and felt that in the financial industry one employee is expected to perform for two nowadays. Stress and well-being were highlighted in Deloitte's survey as significant factors, particularly in maintaining the mental health of young employees. This correlates with the theory section, where the absence of autonomy can contribute to stress and poor well-being at work, ultimately leading to low engagement.

A few of the people interviewed also mentioned that the goals were set too high up to reach, which decreased the work motivation or engagement. Here the lack of autonomy can be identified to be a key factor.

Two mentioned that after they participated in projects and got to do different kinds of tasks, they realized what they really want to do in the future. Here the individuals' potentials were discovered, unfortunately for another company's favor. By adapting and participating employees for vary projects the employer could discover new talents and seek for the better potential in people and set them for more suitable roles and create more satisfied employees such as engage the young talents for themselves better.

7.1 Interview 1

In the first interview I learned that I needed to come up with a variety of questions, since otherwise the interview did not flow. I adjusted in the situation and changed the questions a bit. The first interview took a bit over 36minutes. In the first interview, the interviewee discusses reasons for switching jobs. The person mentioned that their previous job didn't align with their training and involved constant anxiety and stress due to heavy desk work. The timetable was stressful and there was no choice to influence the upcoming duties and calendar

due to high set goals. The person interviewed found the rewards, particularly bonuses, to be inadequate and dependent on popularity with superiors. They express a desire for a salary based on performance rather than fixed monthly pay. The interviewee also felt unable to influence the high-pressure goals set by superiors and company leaders. Career discussions were limited-mainly there were none, and they believe that better care for employees, including addressing mental health issues, could improve retention. Mental issues were discussed at the workplace very often. They contrast their previous company's slow career development with their current, smaller company, where they see more potential for advancement. They attribute turnover in their previous workplace to the demanding workload and suggest that many young employees are surprised by the intensity of the job. They find motivation in their current role due to believing in the product they sell and finding it interesting.

Analyzing with the RIASEC model: Overall, the interviewee's experiences and preferences align most strongly with the Investigative, Social, and Enterprising aspects of the model. The summary indicates a preference for roles that offer opportunities for personal growth, a supportive work environment, and the chance to make a meaningful impact. It is possible that within the company, this individual could have advanced into leadership positions or into something more creative such as marketing or so if there had been clearer career paths and discussions. By identifying and leveraging the person's strengths towards roles focused on improvement, maintenance, and growth, they could have potentially achieved considerable success within the organization. In the new company the person knows what to strengthen and pursue in order to go forward in the company. The individual is better suited to work in an environment that allows for greater freedom and aligns well with their personality.

7.2 Interview 2

The second discussion was notably longer with its 51minute duration. The interview discusses various aspects related to career and opportunities, particularly focusing on the experiences of new employees and young professionals. It highlights the importance of open-mindedness towards training and development for young individuals starting their careers. The interviewee emphasizes the significance of well-being at work and a balanced life-work dynamic, suggesting that employees should feel valued and cared for by their employers. The negative impact of bad leadership, characterized by fear and a tyrannical atmosphere, is also mentioned.

Open discussions about money, salary, and expectations during the recruitment phase are seen as crucial factors for young professionals. The interviewee expresses a willingness to change jobs if dissatisfied, contrasting with older generations who often stayed in one job for their entire careers. The interviewee advocates for flexible and individualized development opportunities tailored to individual needs and life situations. The hierarchical nature of job duties and the lack of simultaneous internships are also highlighted as areas for improvement in organizational practices.

Overall, the interview highlights various aspects of career development and organizational culture that appeal to different personality types within the RIASEC model. By considering these factors, organizations can better understand and address the diverse needs and preferences of their employees, especially young professionals starting their careers. Organizational culture is mentioned in other interviews as well as being one of the leading reasons for either adapting or leaving the company.

7.3 Interview 3

The interviewee shares their experience at a job where they felt they learned most of their skills within the first month. The third discussion took 53 minutes and I managed to find out a variety of reasons for termination. In the interview, they were dissatisfied with the initial low salary but note that they negotiated a higher salary after gaining experience. They mention feeling limited in terms of career growth within the organization and observing a pattern of hiring external candidates for higher positions by not giving a chance even for interviews for the employees inside the company. Despite their attempts to communicate the value of retaining talent to the company, they feel that the company's board may not prioritize this. They emphasize the importance of effectively communicating job opportunities and express an interest in making the job experience more engaging, such as they are more successful in the career chain in the supermarket chain Alepa.

In summary, the interviewee exhibits traits from multiple Holland Code categories, with a notable focus on enterprising and realistic aspects. They show initiative in negotiating their salary and expressing dissatisfaction with the status quo, while also demonstrating practical

problem-solving skills and a desire for innovation in improving job experiences. By explaining the role better in the first interview, the person could have chosen differently to seek a company that has better career paths and more demanding roles.

7.4 Interview 4

The fourth interview took 41 minutes, and it discusses mainly their career journey and reflections on their current role. Initially considering changing jobs due to dissatisfaction, they found interest in influencing decisions and people while working on project tasks. They highlight the fascination with managing people and the challenges of front-office work in finance. The interviewee reveals the stressful nature of financial expertise and the limited advancement opportunities despite high turnover. They emphasize the importance of organizational change and adapting attitudes towards career growth. The interviewee critiques the lack of a clear career path and claims that higher salaries alone may not retain employees. They stress the significance of workload and the importance of hiring the right people. The interviewee acknowledges the challenges in retaining key personnel and suggests exploring new job opportunities within the organization to increase commitment. They propose initiatives to retain talent but note limitations due to task availability. The interview number four describes pretty much the same challenges such as the first interview.

In summary, the interviewee primarily exhibits traits aligned with the Realistic, Investigative, and Enterprising categories, with some evidence of social inclinations. While there's limited evidence of Artistic and Conventional traits, the interviewee's focus on practical problem-solving, leadership, and proactive approaches to organizational change characterize their career journey and reflections on their current role.

7.5 Interview 5

The interviewee number five lasts for 42 minutes. It describes feeling frustrated with their job due to what they perceive as poor management and lack of creative freedom. They mention being stifled in their role, feeling undervalued with low pay despite handling multiple responsibilities. The interviewee expresses a desire for change and mentions considering leaving the company due to these frustrations.

They discuss their interest in exploring other opportunities within the company but express disappointment with the lack of advancement options, particularly in their desired location. The interviewee reflects on the rigid work structure and desires more flexibility, including remote work options. They also express concerns about the quality of work suffering due to excessive pressure and lack of support from management. Overall, the interviewee expresses a sense of disillusionment with their current job situation and a desire for change and improvement in their work environment.

Analyse with the RIASEC model, the interviewee primarily exhibits traits aligned with the Realistic, Investigative, and Enterprising categories, with some evidence of social inclinations. While there's limited evidence of Artistic and Conventional traits, the interviewee's focus on practical problem-solving, proactive approach to addressing frustrations, and desire for improvement in their work environment characterize their reflections on their current job situation.

7.6 Interview 6

The interviewee reflects on their career development within their current organization, expressing frustration with the lack of support and opportunities for growth. This interview was the longest and lasted for an hour. The person mention feeling neglected in discussions about career planning and finding the internal job search process poorly executed. They emphasize the importance of being able to define their own goals and express disappointment with the organization's focus on meeting numerical targets rather than supporting individual career growth. The interviewee also discusses the impact of budget cuts on employee morale and suggests the need for alternative solutions beyond monetary incentives. They conclude by expressing dissatisfaction with their current situation, feeling trapped in their unit with stagnant salary prospects.

In summary, the interviewee primarily exhibits traits aligned with the Realistic, Investigative, and Enterprising categories, with some evidence of social inclinations. While there's limited evidence of Artistic and Conventional traits, the interviewee's focus on practical problem-solving, proactive approach to seeking change, and concern for employee well-being characterize their reflections on their current career situation.

8 Topics and thematic from the interviews

The challenges highlighted by those interviewed boil down to a few key points: mental health and well-being, creating opportunities for development, prioritizing individual needs in planning processes to unlock people's potential, and setting clearer and more honest expectations straight at the beginning of a career path starting from the first interview to create better and honest first impression. The challenge with closest manager or leadership was also mentioned.

Overall, across all interviews, themes of practical problem-solving, desire for personal growth, initiative-taking approaches to change, and concern for employee well-being are prominent. These align with traits associated with the Realistic, Investigative, and Enterprising categories of the RIASEC model.

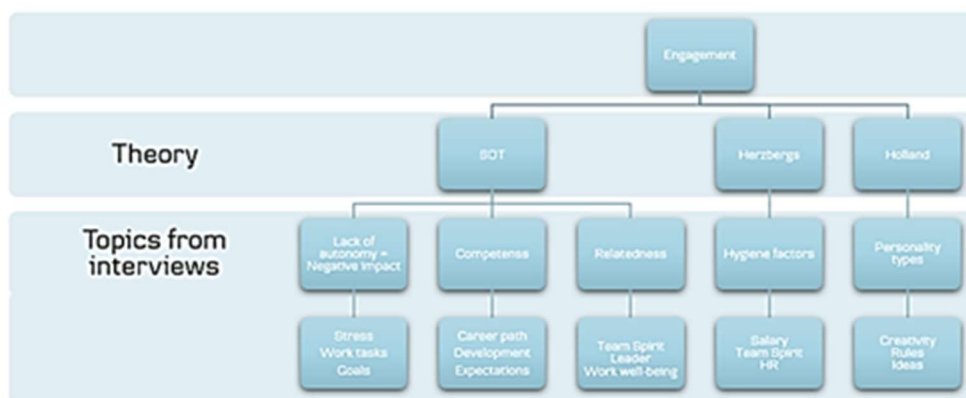


Figure 4. Themes and topics from the interviews connected into theory

In the figure above I listed thematic from the interviews matching theory. In each interview hygiene factors were mentioned at some level, also the lack of autonomy and an extraordinarily strong mindset that the role did not match with the personality.

8.1 Negative characteristics

In the interviews, the workload and lack of autonomy were detailed. In some of the interviews the lack of relatedness and competence were mentioned. Many of the people interviewed also felt that the company did not want to match up with their personalities nor find the potential in

their people. Once you choose a path, you must stick to it. Here are some direct quotes and questions from the interviews:

The main reason for switching?

“Maybe it's just that the motivation wasn't enough. This job didn't quite correspond to the training, and it was so hard and there was a lot of work at the desk all the time that there was constant anxiety and stress. “

“Being burdened by the end of time, I'm not really interested in moving anywhere from home, and then the pressure is there all the time, and that's the pressure.”

“Sure, it didn't offer a challenge. I got bored.”

“After all, it's like that, that we tear all the juices out of that person, and so that has been the thing that has caused him to leave and therefore the management of fear. I really have bad leadership experience, leading with fear and such a terribly tyrannical atmosphere.”

Rewarding?

“Not much, of course when the bonuses are received by a ridiculously small percentage. Possibly once a year, if you do continuous good work, and of course it also depends on whether you are popular with your supervisor or not. But if you compare it to my current job, where my salary is based on my results, I do much less work than what I did in my previous role, but the salary was the same every month, so it would definitely be more motivating if, for example, the salary depended on how well I performed. “

Goals?

“I couldn't influence that such hard goals and pressures come from the superiors, that no matter how you try to take it easy, you couldn't influence that rush yourself, when you still want to do a good job. They came as a given that in the future I think you could think

about that too, if you could have a little influence, even on an individual basis, because we are all different and have different strengths. “

Occupational Wellbeing?

“Yes, definitely the number one thing is that the employees should be taken better care of, because it's really like that, or I heard from many colleagues that there is mental health with weak shame. Well, it's not really very nice that research is being done on us, and yes, there is a lot of turnover in the financial sector, so yes, maybe making small changes would make the staff feel better.”

8.2 Positive characteristics and presumptions

To start with, every employee does have expectations of the organization and work life. In my interviews, the expectations were towards the career path, flexibility, and work life balance, such as in the Deloitte's survey. The expectations for an open dialogue around the topics were the number one priority for the interviewed individuals. A lot of the expectations were leaning towards the closest manager, for example on how to continue career path > the expectation was that someone will tell me what to do and which way to proceed. One thing which I was happy to hear still was the passion towards personal growth and development and goal-oriented mindset.

Current position?

“Everyone wants to succeed and the third is probably that I think it's really interesting and I really believe in the product we sell. That's what motivates.”

The problem with these people was not the fact that they did not want to succeed, but they felt that there was not an easy or clear option how to.

Career discussions?

“That after a good couple of years it would then be possible to see where it could go from there, and I know that my own person would have helped in that career

development, but compared to, for example, the current one, which is a much smaller company, I see it as a much more likely and much faster event when its development in an earlier location. It was constantly emphasized that it is not yet timely to discuss the continuation or career prospects. “

“Maybe then the career development discussion, then it will come out better that.

It seems to be a bit like that they don't want to let me out of that unit and the salary isn't raised either, so it's a bit bad. It's a bit bad for that.”

“Well, yes, yes, I say that if it (career discussion) had been more active in our unit, I would have probably stayed.

Well, frankly speaking, zero of the same, which could have been simply titled as a meeting with that name. That career discussion, maybe you'd like it to be lighter then. My point of view was that it was quite narrow that you could even apply.

Well, by changing the unit. Of course, then they would all be new and wonderful again and the possibilities would have increased. But, yes, I feel that too.”

“More internal opportunities to change unit for example depending on life situation. I would have been able to do the same work from another city with another team, but still it was not possible to change there- so I had to resign. “

What could have been different?

“What a good question? What could he have done? That's pretty much it. I said that it is self-built, when you are so invested in the job and so invested in the clients' projects, the pressure doesn't necessarily come from the employer, but the fact that you want to take care of everyone as well and as quickly as possible yourself, and you yourself are easily absorbed in the client's rush, I don't say that it is, it is perhaps more of a self-built it.”

All the people interviewed seemed extremely ambitious towards work life and seemed relieved when they were able to use their strength in the new organization and some even in the whole new industry that they felt to be more suitable for their character and goals in life.

9 Discussion

Since the research is based on individual interviews the data is very narrow to analyze. Also, it is important to state that all the conclusions from the interviews are based on what the interviewed person has said, not too much on their background or on any other details.

However, the key points were pretty much the same in each interview. The career path, possibilities inside the company, well-being and hygiene matters were the focus in each participant's interview. These findings can be understood through the lens of Self-determination theory and Holland's theory of vocational personalities, particularly the RIASEC model.

Career Path and Possibilities within the Company: In SDT, individuals are motivated by their innate psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. When employees perceive their career path and possibilities within the company as aligned with their personal goals, they are more likely to feel autonomous and competent in their work. This perception enhances their intrinsic motivation, leading to greater job satisfaction and engagement.

Well-being: SDT emphasizes the importance of psychological well-being in promoting optimal functioning and development. Well-being encompasses aspects such as feeling competent, connected, and having a sense of autonomy in one's activities. When companies prioritize employee well-being by addressing concerns related to work-life balance, stress management, and mental health support, they contribute to employees' overall satisfaction and performance.

Career Path and Possibilities within the Company: Holland's theory suggests that individuals possess specific vocational interests and preferences that align with their personality types. For example, individuals with a realistic personality type prefer practical, hands-on work environments and are drawn to careers that offer clear career paths and advancement opportunities within the company. Similarly, individuals with other personality types such as investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, or conventional may prioritize different aspects of their career path and possibilities within the organization based on their unique preferences.

Well-being and Hygiene Matters: Holland's theory also acknowledges the importance of environmental factors, such as job characteristics and organizational culture, in influencing individuals' satisfaction and well-being at work. For instance, individuals whose work environment aligns with their personality type are more likely to experience a good fit, leading

to greater job satisfaction and well-being. Additionally, addressing hygiene matters, such as providing a safe and comfortable work environment, fair compensation, and benefits, is essential for maintaining employee satisfaction and preventing job dissatisfaction.

In summary, the findings from the interviews align with both SDT and Holland's Theory, emphasizing the significance of addressing employees' psychological needs, career preferences, and environmental factors to promote satisfaction, well-being, and engagement in the workplace.

There have been possibilities to engage these interviewed people in their organizations, but in all of them no actions were taken, not by employers or on employees' side. By incorporating the RIASEC model into the analysis, we can further understand how individuals' vocational interests and preferences influence their perceptions of career paths, well-being, and hygiene matters within the organization. Overall, the main categories assessed through the RIASEC model reveal a common theme among interviewees: a desire for roles that offer practical problem-solving opportunities, room for personal and professional growth, supportive work environments, and the ability to make a meaningful impact in their careers.

10 Conclusion

Factors influencing work retention both in previous literature and my research align. These include more visibility for career opportunities, more discussion on work-life balance, growth opportunities & open communication that begins already on the recruitment process. Clear guidance on what to expect from the organization and work-tasks. Goals and career development have to be described already in the first interview, so the candidate knows what to expect from the organization.

Since the lack of engagement affects many levels, it is crucial for the organization to lead career expectations and guide both leaders such as employees on their career journey. Open dialogue on how the employee wants to have the discussion about the next steps. Education from human resources management for both leaders and employees on how to find stories of diverse kinds of career paths and journeys. Guidance on how to discuss these matters before ending up to low engagement and lack of motivation. If the employee expresses the need for development, lack of motivation or even applying for another company- this should be tackled with an open discussion about the root issue and reasons, discussion on what can the employer do to turn around the lack of engagement. Discussion on where to head next.

10.1 Conclusion from data and theory

Findings from the six interviews align closely with the theoretical frameworks of Self-determination Theory (SDT) and Holland's Theory of Vocational Personalities, specifically the RIASEC model. The key themes that emerged from the interviews revolved around issues such as career path clarity, well-being at work, and the need for open communication and dialogue between employees and organizations. When we look through the lens of SDT, it becomes apparent that individuals are motivated by their innate psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Therefore, when employees perceive a clear and promising career path within the company that aligns with their personal goals, they are more likely to feel motivated and engaged in their work.

The importance of addressing well-being at work cannot be overstated, as highlighted in both the interviews and the theoretical frameworks. Creating a nurturing work environment that addresses the overall well-being of employees is essential for promoting job satisfaction and fostering engagement. Moreover, embracing job characteristics and organizational culture that

align with individual personality types, as outlined in Holland's Theory, is essential for promoting job satisfaction and overall well-being.

The interviews also shed light on the significance of hygiene factors in the workplace, such as fair compensation, a safe work environment, and clear job expectations. When these hygiene factors are not met, employees may experience job dissatisfaction and a lack of engagement. Therefore, organizations need to prioritize these basic needs to maintain the satisfaction and engagement of their workforce.

In conclusion, the research suggests that organizations should focus on creating a work environment that supports employees' psychological needs, offers opportunities for personal and professional growth, and fosters and provides open communication channels. By aligning career paths with individual preferences and providing a supportive work environment, organizations can enhance job satisfaction, employee engagement, and overall performance. It is crucial for organizations to address these key factors to create a thriving and engaged workforce that is motivated, satisfied, and committed to achieving organizational goals.

The RIASEC model, developed by John Holland, suggests that individuals are more likely to be satisfied and successful in careers that align with their personality types. When it comes to recruitment, the RIASEC model can be a valuable tool for both employers and candidates. Here's how it could be used in recruitment: Employers can use the RIASEC model to tailor job descriptions to appeal to candidates with specific personality types. For example, if a job requires creativity and innovation, it will align more with individuals who fall under the Artistic category. During the recruitment process, employers can use assessments based on the RIASEC model to evaluate candidates' personality types and determine their compatibility with the job role. This can help in making more informed hiring decisions.

Hiring managers can ask tailored interview questions that relate to the specific personality types identified through the RIASEC model. For example, for candidates with an Enterprising personality type, questions about leadership skills and entrepreneurial spirit could be included. Once hired, employers can use the RIASEC model to guide career development and advancement opportunities for employees. By understanding their employees' personality types, employers can offer growth paths that align with their interests and strengths. Employers can also use the RIASEC model to create diverse and well-rounded teams by considering the different personality types when forming teams. This can lead to more balanced and effective

team dynamics. In summary, the RIASEC model can be a useful framework in recruitment to ensure a better fit between candidates and job roles, enhance employee engagement and satisfaction, and contribute to overall organizational success.

Suggestion for action plan for leader together with human resources: regular career conversations, foster an open dialogue on career concerns and work motivation, create channels for suggestions and discussion in the organization, share success stories within the organization, customized development plans if asked for and most importantly encourage employees to discuss these matters on regular basis. Focus to find the right people for the right tasks already in the recruitment process. Clearly communicate what to expect from the organization and from the work tasks. Provide clarity on the aspects of daily work life that employees can influence directly, as well as those that are inherent to the industry. Offer clear guidance on career development, delineating where the employee's initiative comes into play and where the organization can provide support. Discuss personality types and find the right people into the right roles by searching for characteristics that need to be motivated through different type of tasks.

By implementing the suggestions, organizations can create a culture of openness, support, and growth that empowers employees to reach their full potential and contribute meaningfully to the organization. Ultimately, fostering a work environment that prioritizes the well-being, autonomy, and career development of employees can lead to higher retention rates, increased job satisfaction, and improved overall performance for the organization.

10.2 Final conclusions

Several key themes and challenges were identified from the research and interviews. The main reasons for low engagement and high turnover rates among young employees included the lack of clear career paths and opportunities for development, concerns related to mental health and well-being, issues with management and leadership, and a mismatch between job expectations and reality.

The findings suggest that companies need to prioritize open dialogue around career development, provide flexibility and support for individual growth, and address concerns

related to well-being and stress management. By implementing strategies that enhance autonomy, recognition, and opportunities for growth, organizations can foster a more engaged and satisfied workforce among young employees.

Moreover, it is essential for employers to be transparent about roles, career paths, and expectations, right from the beginning of an employee's journey, to build trust and engagement. Recognizing and leveraging individual strengths and preferences, as well as providing personalized development plans, can help in engaging and retaining young talent effectively.

In conclusion, by aligning organizational practices with the expectations and motivations of young employees, companies can create a more supportive and engaging work environment that values individual growth, well-being, and career development. Ultimately, fostering a culture of open communication, autonomy, and recognition can lead to higher levels of work engagement and satisfaction among young employees in the retail industry.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Consent form

Consent to take part in research

- I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study conducted by Aino Lallukka from Arcada University of Applied Sciences.
- I understand that the reason is to gather information about employees from retail industry to conduct research about work-engagement.
- I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary, and I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the research explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study & research.
- I understand that my participation involves being interviewed by Aino Lallukka from Arcada University of Applied Sciences. The interview will last from 30 minutes to approximately one hour, and I agree to it being audio-recorded and transcribed. Notes can also be taken during the interview.
- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially, that the researcher will not identify me by name and that in any report on the results of this research, my identity will remain anonymous.
- Faculty and administrators from Arcada University of Applied sciences will not take part in at the interview but will have access to raw notes or transcripts if needed. This precaution will prevent my individual comments from having any negative repercussions. The notes and transcripts will not include any personal information that could be used to identify me as respondent.
- I have read and understand the description provided and have had all my questions answered to a level of my satisfaction.
- I have received a copy of this consent form.

Signatures

Name and signature of research participant

Date

Signature of researcher

Date

For further information, please contact AinoLallukka (aino.lallukka@arcada.fi)

Appendix 2. Interview template

Background

Age, Education, the age you changed the company?

What is your current job title? How about previous one?

How long have you worked at the current company?

How long did you work in the previous company that you decided to resign?

What attracted you to this company and this position in the first place?

General

Can you walk me through the reason behind your resignation from the previous company?

How would you describe your overall experience there?

General 2.0

Do you have a personal career goal that you hope to achieve within the next few years?

Could you describe some examples of good things about your current job?

How meaningful do you feel your work is to you?

What do you value in a work life & from employer?

What do you think, which are the main reasons for people generally to resign or change an employer?

Engagement

How do you feel about your current job, in what level you feel engaged to your current employer in a scale of 1 to 5? What factors contribute to this rating?

What aspects of your job now do you find most fulfilling and motivating?

Were there any aspects of your previous job that you find particularly challenging or demotivating?

Can I hear some examples of things you would like to develop regarding your current job?

Can you shortly describe how was the cooperation working in your previous company?

How would you describe the teamwork at your previous company?

Give three examples of what worked well in your previous team?

How did the company support your work-life balance?

Give three examples of things your previous team could work on developing?

Describe what the communication is like e.g., regarding information about changes or strategy?

How was the company adapting and taking in new ideas and practices?

Could you describe the work environment and company culture?

Do you feel that your work aligns with your personal values and career goals? If not, what changes would you like to see? Some improvement ideas for the previous company how to increase engagement?

Feedback & development

Did you had goals to achieve? How often your goals were measured?

Who defined your goals? Where you able to set your own goals?

Where the whole team working together towards common goals?

Were there some team-building activities or other activities that was designed to support the team spirit?

Where you able to put an effort on developing yourself daily? Did you receive feedback and support for your professional development? What kind of?

How well did you understand company's values & mission?

Job satisfaction

How did you feel if you were able to achieve goals?

Did you got any rewards when achieving goals or salary increase perhaps? How about the team, did you got feedback when achieving goals or not doing so well?

Did you always have an open dialogue with your manager about the salary and career development, your goals?

How did you feel about your work tasks and workload?

Did you have any possibilities to affect your workload? Any possibilities to design your workday?

If there would have been the same task in a different team or under different supervisor, would have you stayed?

How about the salary, would that have made any difference?

What if there would have been your dream work task available in the same team and company, would have you stayed?

What did you learn from your previous job? Do you think you can apply those lessons in your future roles to be?

Thank you very much for taking part on this interview and research!

Please let me know if you would like to add something or go through some part again from the questions?