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Enhancing wellbeing in the office workplace

What employer could do better to have healthier employees?

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Employers come to realization that employee wellbeing is more and more important factor not only from business perspective but also from perspective of a healthy company. Happy and healthy workers are not only productive but also less absent from work. Absenteeism results in great numbers – it is truly a cost issue. However, reasons for absenteeism are not easy to find or monitor. Overall absenteeism is rather complex issue. Nevertheless, the greatest reason or absenteeism according to research was personal illness.

In order to cut costs resulted from absenteeism employers should be more interested in employees’ health and wellbeing. There are numerous ways of how it could be done. However, researchers suggest clear strategy plan in order to enhance employee wellbeing. Defining areas of improvement is crucial. Many companies in Finland offer gym membership to their employees, but is that enough? What is overall wellbeing? Based on research material, this thesis describes very well what are the parts of the human wellbeing. However, many of us battle with the stress sooner or later. What is stress and how it impacts the body both in positive and negative way? In this thesis I wanted to take more profound, research based, approach to stress management and handling the stress. Finally wrapping up to how overall wellbeing could be handled by employer suggesting that best solution would be individual health program for every worker.

| Keywords                          | Employee wellbeing, occupational health, absenteeism |
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1 Introduction

The success of a single company is greatly depending on its workers wellbeing. Especially in customer service sector. These days work is requiring so much from us, even going as far as losing our health. Some working places have healthier workers than the others.

I am certified personal trainer and have great concern for people’s health. Once you lose your health you might never get it back. Is it worth all the effort, health and wellbeing you sacrifice for the purpose of a company and work place you are working for? How do people evaluate cost of their health? Is work too demanding these days? Are the employers asking impossible from us? Can less be enough for employer? How much of stress can person bear till he breaks?

I did my internship at Nordea bank and my employer said they need to decrease the sickness leave days. The big question is how? Majority of customer service jobs are not only serving the customers but also making sales meanwhile. The sales requirements can be very scary. The pressure to be both effective and fast while making sales can be really demanding. Seems like employer wants everything at once while cutting the costs in staff.

This thesis is basically for office workplace managers. Writing about this topic I mainly want to give food for thought, how the dynamics, in other words employees, feel about their work and what actions should be made in order to increase both their job satisfaction and motivation at work through improvement of wellbeing. Nevertheless, those who want to feel more energetic and well at work, this thesis is for you. Additionally, this concerns people, who want to avoid different kind of complications because of work stress and exhaustion. Some people think they know their limits, but once they get promotion all the limits are suddenly gone, and they are ready to flex to any direction (if being healthy when they got the promotion). This does not concern only young people but instead all generations working in all kind of industries.
2 Absenteeism

2.1 Definition

Business dictionary (businessdictionary.com) defines absenteeism as follows:

“Voluntary non-attendance at work, without valid reason. Absenteeism means either habitual evasion of work, or willful absence as in a strike action. It does not include involuntary or occasional absence due to valid causes, or reasons beyond one’s control, such as accidents or sickness.”

In 2007 biggest reason for absenteeism was personal illness with 34% according to CCH, market leader in reporting in US. What this number tells us? Absenteeism is quite complex topic. There could be a real reason that justifies absence, for instance sickness. However, here we are discussing absence without valid reason. Yet, it is hard to monitor what reasons are justified and what are not. Among personal illness we can see from the figure above that next most common absence reason was family issues, personal needs, entitlement mentality and stress with even chunks on the pie. Nevertheless, what are the real reasons for personal illness? The word “personal” itself defines quite clearly
that the real reason behind illness is between employee and the doctor. How many cases are either tiredness, exhaustion, flu or frequent headaches, all stress related symptoms? Sickness leave with the title of personal illness is rather sensitive topic and not much researched.

2.2 Job satisfaction (dissatisfaction)

“There is negative relationship between satisfaction and absenteeism” (Judge T, Robbins S, 2012:47), (Fred Luthans et al., 2015:122). It is logical that those that are dissatisfied with their job are more likely to miss work. However, Judge et al. argue that organizations, who provide liberal sick leave benefits, encourage their employees to take days off – even those who are satisfied. If the days off come free with no penalties and more likely paid, who would not want to take extra 3-day holiday.

Nevertheless, according to Fred Luthans et al. research among state government employees has found that those who considered their work as an important factor in their lives had lower absenteeism rate than those who did not think same way. In addition, it is good to remember that high job satisfaction does not immediately result in low absenteeism, however, low job satisfaction rather results in absenteeism (J. F. Home III and J. E. Orr, 1998).

Beside mentioned above, there is numerous factors brought about by high job satisfaction. According to research, highly satisfied employees have tendency to be physically in better health, learning new job-related skills and tasks quicker and have less on-the-job related accidents. Also, there is positive aspect, that according to M. A. Blegen “there is strong negative relationship between job satisfaction and perceived stress” (M. A. Blegen. 1993). So, this means that by building job satisfaction, stress might be reduced.

2.3 Occupational Stress, depression or anxiety

Stress is dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with and opportunity, demand, or resource related to what the individual desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important (C. L. Cooper et al., 2002)
Not all the stress is bad. Stressful situation offers potential gain, like athletes on a stage or gives you extra boost to run last mile during marathon. What happens simultaneously in the body? Nervous system brings to action, “hypothalamus, pituitary, and adrenal glands supply with stress hormones to cope. Heartbeat and breathing accelerate to increase oxygen, while muscle tense for action” (S. Robbins, T. Judge, 2016). It is called “fight or flight” response, that is why you might notice sweat coming. This is short-term and temporary also called acute stress, which comes and goes quickly. Besides, the body recovers from it quickly too.

Here we are interested in harmful stress, which consequently causes absenteeism. Although, stress is key to survive, too much stress can be detrimental. For instance, emotional stress that might stay for weeks, even months, can weaken the immune system and “cause high blood pressure, fatigue, depression, anxiety” and at the worst, can go as far as causing heart disease. (ULifeline, 2017)

The reasons of the stress, in other words stressors, are numerous and is possible to find anywhere at workplace. Stressors are for instance not-so-safe working conditions, long shifts, worry of whether job remain, or one will lose it and monotonous job (Bradford). When lasting long, stress can unfold in poor mental health, heart disease and back pain are just few to mention. Stress can cause adaptable behaviour such as excessive drinking of alcohol and smoking. Subsequently, stress can put forth dangerous behaviour and therefore cause accidents. One research stated that among “all factors related to the cause of accidents, only one emerged as a common denominator – high level of stress at the time the accident occurred” (Bradford). Therefore, this leads to lower working morale among employees and thus productivity lowers too because of weak performance (Haswell, 2003). Finally, this can result as job burnout where there is no more energy to put forth, is dissatisfied, has negative way of thinking, and has very poor immune system (Bradford).

How does the employer see this vicious cycle? Stressed employees can cause seeking alternative employees, which turn out very costly to employer through recruitment process and training. In addition, stress will more likely exhaust co-workers who are contributing additional responsibilities while recruitment process is still running. This might
add to even greater workload for already troubled workers, which has even greater impact on their health and consequently lead to even more absenteeism (Haswell, 2003).

2.4 Family issues

Family responsibilities are on top five causes of short-term absence (Telegraph.co.uk, 2017), (CCH, 2007) (Mehmet C. Kocakülâh et al. 2009). In terms of absenteeism family issues play crucial role. For many people balance between work and family life can be a true struggle. Often the greatest cause is childcare. Ever-growing costs for the childcare we can notice that not everybody is capable to adapt to higher rates. Many families place their toddlers to smaller day care centre to reduce somehow the costs. However, what happens if the day care owner falls sick? The worker might then be late because of figuring out of another day care place for the day, or realizing the only option, taking a day off to take care of a child. Completely another story is sick child (or children). In day care centres children are constantly sick and there is a lot of bacteria brewing. A child can be sick in one year several times couple days at once, which also cuts from working days of an adult.

2.5 Health and wellbeing

In a fast-changing world where market is entire globe to adapt to changes instantly it requires more and more from employees. Comparably this has not so positive impact on the health and wellbeing of employees. The outcome has been in high absence rate and thus turns out “in high cost to business and public purse” (MacDonald, 2005), public sector absenteeism being as high as “nearly ten days per employee every year” (Department for Work and Pensions, 2006). In numbers this means that growth from 0.7 million to 2.7 million has happened from 1970 to 2006. Also, it is notable to mention that mental health conditions have grown from 25 per cent in the mid-1990’s to 40 per cent today (Department for Work and Pensions, 2005), meaning that “stress and other mental health conditions are the main reason for employee absence” (Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD), 2007).

Current average condition index being 32 is not high enough to contribute eight-hour work day (tekniikkatalous.fi). This index is enough for six-hour work day. Eight-hour work day requires condition index 36, which can be increased only by working out, not
diet for instance. However, just recently (2009), descending of national health has moderated after fifteen years of descending, says Matti Heikkilä, head of testing from Vierumäki sports academy. In other words, people have woken up to the reality. After long working day it is so much easier to get on the coach and watch tv entire evening instead of going outside for a recovery walk. Matti Heikkilä says, we many times overload our bodies with stress when after stressful day we go and have exhausting workout. It is important to learn to listen to your body and have recovering walk instead. Exercise should be recovering, and support health not stress it even more. Learning to find balance might be very challenging.

2.6 Cost of lost labour

Cost of lost labour input is 24 billion euros early, according to report from Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (Rissanen M. & Kaseva E. 2014). Amount is 12 times bigger than the input to employee wellbeing, being only 2 billion a year (Manka M-L. & Manka M. 2016:39). The losses are quite high. In order to decrease costs, there must be implemented more effort and research in the field, says Guy Ahonen, professor from Department for Occupational Safety and Health.

![Figure 1: Cost of lost labour totalling in this figure 25,2 billion euros. (Rissanen M. & Kaseva E. 2014)](image-url)
Sickness leave number is based on calculation of Statistics centre of Finland totalling in the figure above 14% (3,4 billion euros). According to the report in 2012 there were 20,193,000 sickness leave days because of various reasons. Another as large piece is because of presenteeism. Presenteeism means being present at work when sick and not fully in working condition. Government of Finland budgeted final amount of 53,9 billion euros in 2016. Losses because of occupational nausea is roughly half of this amount. However, developing employee wellbeing could cut costs on scale of state economy (Manka M-L. & Manka M. 2016:40)

The biggest chunk belongs to disablement pension with 34% and in numbers 8,5 billion euros. What are the reasons for such great disablement pension amount?

Those that have transferred to disablement pension in 2006-2015 by groups

![Figure 2: Disablement pension reasons in 2006-2015.](https://www.tyoelakelakipalvelu.fi/telp-publishing/vepa/compilationfullscreen.faces?folder_id=200052)

The main reason to transfer to disablement pension is diseases of the musculoskeletal system, covering one third of all in 2015. Second the most common one was mental disorder with 28%. However, the biggest group of all that receive disablement pension is mental disorder covering 66,500 people that year.
3 Employee wellbeing

3.1 Definition

Employee wellbeing means wellbeing of each individual; personal feeling and vitality, covering four parts of wellbeing: physical, social, mental and cognitive wellbeing. On the other hand, it means vitality of whole organization. The main focus of employee wellbeing should be on constant development of individuals and organization so that everyone has a chance to participate in success and feel joy of work (Otala L. & Ahonen G. 2005:28). Positivity, excitement and commitment grip people. More energy is composed to organization. Energy brings success.

Otala L. and Ahonen G. suggest that employee wellbeing could be mirrored to Maslow’s hierarchy, where physical needs such as nutrition and enough sleep, build the basement of need hierarchy. These basic needs could be compared to health and physical condition, which build the foundation of wellbeing pyramid.
Next step is safety needs which from perspective of wellbeing is described as workplace mental and physical safety. It is not enough to have safe working environment, although that factor is quite crucial in order to have healthy workplace. Mental safety is as important. Otala L. & Ahonen G. describe mental safety as safe working atmosphere, where there is no bullying and where there is no need to be afraid, where you know, what to do and how to succeed in what you do. Safety is also trustworthiness that work continues.

Social wellbeing (SW) is about the need of belongingness and feeling loved. From wellbeing perspective is the desire of belonging to work and professional community. SW covers relationships at work and outside work. SW helps commitment to the work and managing at work.
Fourth step is the need of appreciation. At work this is based on own skills and professional ability. Based on skills a person is selected to teams and working groups and finally to work itself, so therefore, it has a great impact on all levels of the hierarchy. Appreciation is the key to safety in working life today. Skills determine what work a person will do and thus is important to keep skills and abilities up to date, which both belong to mental wellbeing.

Final step is about self-actualization. In other words, like mentioned in previous paragraph, the desire to self-fulfilment, continuous development on own work and skills. Also, desire to reach own personal goals is part of self-fulfilment. Self-actualization is also improving own actions, abilities and person himself.

One final step could be built on Maslow’s hierarchy, when talking about personal wellbeing. It is therefore called cognitive wellbeing covering intellectuality and internal drive. It is all about person’s own values, motives and internal energy. They direct person’s commitment and excitement towards different things. These days people have to take responsibility of themselves more and more. After all, personal wellbeing is based on own desire and own self, own values and ideals. None of employers’ actions will help if person himself does not want to take care of wellbeing. Therefore, cognitive wellbeing is basement for everything, if it collapses it will have an impact on all other levels such as: physical condition goes worse, relationships with others worsen, skills and abilities go out of date, when cognitive wellbeing goes even worse (Otala M. & Ahonen G. 2005:30).

3.2 Physical wellbeing

As we saw from the previous chapter’s diagram, physical wellbeing consists of two factors: physiological and safety needs. Physiological needs are health, physical condition and coping with ever-changing life challenges. Safety needs of workplace’s mental and physical safety was described in previous chapter.

Definition for health by World Health Organization (WHO) is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, in fact, not the absence of disease or infirmity (World Health Organization, 2017). Business Dictionary adds to previous definition health being
“dynamic condition resulting from a body’s constant adjustment and adaptation in response to stresses and changes in the environment for maintaining an inner equilibrium called homeostasis” (BusinessDictionary.com, 2017). In other words, healthy person is capable of adaptation to changes while maintaining inner peace and balance throughout the process.

In addition, healthy person bodily functions are working at peak performance due to regular exercise, balanced nutrition and adequate rest. Physical wellbeing involves pursuing healthy lifestyle in order to decrease risk of disease. "Maintaining physical condition can protect and develop the endurance of a person’s breathing and heart function, muscular strength, flexibility and body composition" (Shuvani Sanayai, 2017).

Working out improves wellbeing, mental health and performance enhancing working condition. Good condition helps control stress and regular exercise decreases sickness leaves (Healthfactory Oy / SYKE / Minun hyvinvointi, 2017). Physical health reduces the risk of an injury.

![Physical Activity Pie](image)

**Figure 1: Physical activity pie**

Finnish national recommendation for the amount of exercise is 2 hours 30 minutes of moderate activity plus two times a week of muscular strength exercise per week, as
you can see from the picture above. On top of that, healthy nutrition and adequate sleep of 7-9 hours a day are as important factors as exercise.

Meaning of maintaining working ability and benefits that are received from exercise are emphasized when aging. When physical working condition weakens it is even more important to look after regular exercise and rest. Numerous researches done in UKK Institute show, that from perspective of working condition the most important form of exercise is the one that improves aerobic endurance, but also it is important to remember muscular and mobility work outs, too.

3.3 Social wellbeing

People are social creatures who rely on each other for wellbeing. Social wellbeing is all about positive state relationships, our social stability and social peace. In order to be well, people have to be loved and they have a need to love. We have the need to be connected and to belong to different kind of social groups and networks. The worst kind of punishment that a person can bear is solitary confinement. People being in solitary confinement for a long period of time can get different kind of “symptoms such as: hallucinations, panic attacks, overt paranoia, diminished impulse control, hypersensitivity to external stimuli and difficulties with thinking, concentration and memory” (Econation, 2017).

Researchers have found that “extreme loneliness increases person’s chances” of premature death by 14% (Bergland, 2017). Professor of psychology from university of Chicago, John Cacioppo, found in his research surprisingly that “loneliness has double the impact of obesity on early death”.

Consequences on health because of “feeling lonely” are dangerous. The researchers have found that feeling secluded from community can have following impact on person’s health:

- “disrupt sleep”
- “elevate blood pressure”
- “increase morning rises in the stress hormone cortisol”
- “alter gene expression in immune cells”
• “increase depression”
• “lower overall subjective wellbeing”

Truly people have to ponder on how to avoid depression, low subjective wellbeing and early mortality. Cacioppo argues that changes in populations make understanding “the role of loneliness and health more important than ever”. Every day “between 2011 and 2030, an average of 10 000 people will turn 65”. Especially he found that older people isolate. Therefore, he offers common sense advice: “staying in touch with former co-workers, taking part in family traditions, and sharing good times with family and friends” – all of them chances to reconnect with whom matter to them and whom they matter.

3.4 Mental wellbeing

According to WHO mental wellbeing is described as a state of wellbeing in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with normal stressful situations of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is capable of making a contribution in his or her community (Who.int, 2017).

In fact, “mental health is more than absence of mental illness” (Healthylife.com, 2017). Basically, it is all about “how you feel about yourself and how you adjust to life events”. National Mental Health Association (Healthylife.com, 2017) lists 10 characteristics for a mentally healthy person:

1. You feel good about yourself.
2. You do not become overwhelmed by emotions, such as fear, anger, love, jealousy, guilt or anxiety.
3. You have lasting and satisfying relationships.
4. You feel comfortable with other people.
5. You can laugh at yourself and with others.
6. You have respect for yourself and for others even if there are differences.
7. You are able to accept life’s disappointments.
8. You can meet life’s demands and handle your problems when they arise.
9. You make your own decisions.
10. You shape your environment whenever possible and adjust to it when necessary.
There is no such situation where a person has all of the mental health’s characteristics all the time. However, a mentally unhealthy person, according to American psychiatric association (Psychiatry.org, 2017) has following signs and symptoms:

1. Loss of interest in others and social withdrawal
2. Unexpected “drop in functioning, at school, work or social activities, such as quitting sports, failing in school or difficulty performing familiar tasks”
3. “Problems with concentration, memory and speech” that are hard to understand
4. “Increased sensitivity to sights, sounds, smells or touch”; avoiding these over-stimulating situations
5. “Loss of desire to participate in any activity”
6. Extraordinary feeling of being “disconnected from oneself or one’s surroundings; a sense of unreality”
7. “Exaggerated beliefs about personal powers to understand meanings” or influence events.
8. Strong nervous feeling or suspiciousness of others
9. “Uncharacteristic, peculiar behaviour”
10. Dramatic changes in sleep and appetite
11. Dramatic changes in feelings

One or two of these symptoms does not yet determine a person to be mentally ill. Nevertheless, if a person is experiencing several of them at once, the person is highly recommended to be seen by a mental health professional.

3.5 Cognitive wellbeing

Cognitive wellbeing, also known as subjective wellbeing, “is defined as a person’s cognitive (CWB) and affective (AWB) evaluations of his or her life” (Diener, Lucas & Oshi, 2002, p.63).

“CWB refers to what one thinks about his or her life satisfaction as a whole” and in specific areas such as work, relationships etc. Whereas AWB elements come into place when talking about emotions, moods and feelings. Affect may be either positive, when
emotions are pleasant (joy, affection etc.) or “considered negative when emotions, moods and feelings are unpleasant (guilt, anger, shame etc.”).

A growing number of empirical studies show that AWB and SWB are related but separable concepts that “differ in their temporal stability” (e.g. Eid & Diener, 2004; Luhmann et al. 2011) and “have different consequences”. For example, AWB and CWB “differ in their prospective effects on health and longevity” (Diener & Chan, 2011; Wiest et al. 2011). On the other hand, “external circumstances such as income, job status or recent life events tend to have stronger impact on CWB” (Diener et al, 2010; Schimmack et al. 2008). However, “a recent meta-analysis found that life events such as childbirth, or retirement, have more persistent and consistent effects on CWB than on AWB”.

A human-being “who has high level of satisfaction and who experiences greater positive affect and little negative affect, would be considered to have high level SWB (or in other terms, be very happy)” (Albuquerque, 2017).

4 Stress management

4.1 Life-balance

Life-balance (LB) is crucial to our wellbeing. The more we feel we can have an impact to our lives and work, the better we manage. Balancing life is therefore source of survival in a changing environment. However, many people feel they are in squeeze of outside coming requirements, even as far as in hands of destiny. Losing control of life can be seen ultimately as inability. Therefore, human-being is passive and waits for commands and guidance from outside. These are related to sicknesses, depression and stressfulness.

LB can be looked at from different perspectives. Control of a life does not mean by any means that a person can lead his life fully and know what happens next. Feeling of LB can be considered as reaching goals in life and get along with everyday chores. It is also added to essential part of motivation. Additionally, it is added to feeling of coherence, experiencing stress, control of work, wellbeing, life satisfaction and work satisfaction,
effective adaptation strategies, even thoughts of early retirement, social network and support, panic attacks and sickness leave numbers.

We have desire to understand ourselves, plan and anticipate our lives. Control of a life is means to survive surrounding chaos. LB can be looked at following perspectives:

- As a part of personality, internal and external control
- Way of thinking and interpretation, when LB is attached to optimistic or pessimistic approach
- Feeling of coherence, integrity of myself, which helps to survive strained situations

4.2 Personality and LB

Personality effect on forming feeling of LB. Feeling of control is important when expecting results on certain activities (Rotter J. B. 1966). Therefore, there can be found two extremities: internal and external. Internal control means that person can affect himself on his life and on important events. That is also often described as good self-confidence. Whereas, external control means individual’s faith that he is in hands of external power and cannot have an impact on course of events. In these situations, person does not grasp the chain of events, but instead trusts in destiny or a chance, in other words, factors that are independent from person himself to lead him. Those that have strong internal control believe that they can survive in life with their own efforts. On the contrary, people that have strong external control see that success have very little to do with their own efforts and abilities (Manka M-L. 2010).

Feeling of internal control makes life more pleasant and interesting. Therefore, human-being evaluates life realistically and objectively. He has also positive way of thinking; he is not afraid of new things, but instead is ready to try, because he believes he will survive by trying. He also acts flexibly according to situation and does not stress easily in changing situations. He is healthier than a person whose internal control is weak.

Strong feeling of a control is associated with holding your own. Human-being is looking and finding reasons of failure outside himself, circumstances or people. Reasons for
success he believes of himself, his own features. If control is strong, typical personality traits are dominance, resilience, social courage and goal orientation.

External feeling of control makes person to concern new things in timidly. The way of thinking is negative "I have tried this before, but it has not worked“ or "I cannot do this”. Therefore, changes worry, because this person does not believe he will survive in strange situations. Behaviour is narrowed to inflexibility and formality, some kind of absolutism: "Why does this happen to me?” and “Why do I never get information?” For the sake of negativity person stresses more easily and gets ill easier. Additionally, he blames himself for failure and when succeeding he tries to find explanation outside himself. Personality traits are withdrawal, safety seeking and low goal orientation.

If person lives according to requirements that has been settled from outside, he never finds himself living those requirements, but instead is forced to live in constant feeling of insufficiency. Meanwhile, he is obliged to observe himself and live as a weather vane, because there will be always a person or community that will judge. He also gets tired sooner than when he does not have to be prison of external requirements.

4.3 Thinking and interpretation models

Every single person has their own less or more conscious explanation models, strategies, that forecast their behaviour in problem or success situations. Success or failure is not therefore coincidence, but instead rather cumulative. It depends on person’s thinking, which one is more probable. In psychology, they are talking about different action, interpretation and thinking strategies, which person uses systematically when solving out challenges that one faces or surviving threatening situations. Strategies include anticipation, estimation, action plans, feelings and interpretation.

Strategy in this context means the way of viewing things, glasses, through which person looks at the world. Glasses may be blurry or twisted depending on what events person has had during one’s life. For the sake of clarity explanation model is used instead of word strategy. Explanation models can be divided into two larger groups:
1. What person thinks and does when preparing to some mission and before knowing anything about the end result? This phase consists of action’s end result estimation and feelings related to mission, setting of goals, planning and explanation model’s selection.

2. How person interprets event? This phase is believed to consist especially of success and failure related reason explanations.

Depending on what kind of explanation model one has in use, depends on many things, of which core consists of one’s self-image and self-esteem. Self-image is person’s perception of oneself. Perception is not objective but determines however action regardless of real abilities. Very talented person can have negative perception about his abilities and he act accordingly. Where in self-image is emphasized cognitive side, self-esteem on the other hand is indicator of affective side: how person values himself. Also, perceptions of own possibilities to influence create basement to different explanations. Positive self-image and strong faith in success allows action towards tasks; negative self-perception and faith, that one can’t influence course of events, in turn directs to passive and such action that has nothing to do with the task.

4.4 From work related stress to joy of work

Although stress is normal and positive till certain limit, too much of an effort can lead to exhaustion and depression, which have become common national diseases amongst Finnish people. More and more people want to leave for early pension, because of no energy to complete harder requirements. Mental health problems have risen as most common reason of working disability. How can we recognize are we tired in a healthy way or are we really at the edge of a burnout?

Working in positive stress is pleasant. A human-being can bear temporary tiredness quite long, if the work is interesting and challenging enough. Short term stress tunes body: the need to enhance body’s performance to accelerate hormone production and body proceeds to readiness state. Therefore, in these situations human-being is capable to act quickly within the time frame, when the circumstance is on. When circumstance is over, the body recovers to normal.
Nobody can bear this emergency stage continuously, because body does not get time for recover. Body starts showing symptoms. Serious exhaustion (burnout) and strainedness appear on the sly, if work requirements or offered possibilities by work and own expectations do not meet. The reasons leading to the circumstances could be from the work community or be derived from person himself. There could really be too much work or different people interpret their situation differently. (Manka M-L. 2010)

Typical burnout cycle has been described in several researches. Self-esteem is good in the beginning and dependant from work, and employee manages well. In working life and also in personal life experienced pressure start to feel slightly unpleasant. Work gets routine-like approach. Self-esteem starts to waver. Depression slips into and work begins to feel useless. Human-beings starts to doubt himself and his abilities. Shortly, he starts to consider himself worthless and incapable and feels insecure. Finally, self-esteem disappears completely.

Symptoms of occupational burnout are:

- Overall tiredness and sleep disorder; waking up in the early morning and it is hard to fall asleep
- Physical symptoms: sweating, palpitation, twinge to chest, upset stomach, lowered function of immune system, exposure to arteriosclerosis
- Memory and concentration deteriorate, human-being starts to fear having dementia, because even simplest things get forgotten
- Learning new becomes more difficult; there is as if lock in the head
- Beginning to work and start working becomes almost impossible
- It is hard to interfere with anything, things get to go freely
- Feelings flatten, dreams disappear
- Personality changes, person isolates himself
- The meaning of work becomes questionable

Weakening of memory is intrinsic, because in a stressful situation human-beings short-term memory’s capacity deteriorate. Human starts to receive information through his senses. Occasional process of information happens in short-term memory, through which all information shifts to long-term memory. There human has saved all his previously learned information and abilities and automatized thinking models. Human can in normal
circumstances process in his short-term memory approximately 5-7 information resources. For instance, phone number could be one this kind of complexity.

In tiredness state, capacity of memory shrinks: memory can process at a time only 1-3 information resources. Therefore, memory can in stressful situation cut into pieces. Additionally, remembering requires proper sleep – sleep is like a glue, which during the night attaches learnt pieces on their places to the bigger picture. Therefore, sleep disorder adds to forgetting.

What could be done in work community, so that joy of work would increase and circumstances that lead to exhaustion could be avoided? The most important is to acknowledge possibility of threat, because through predicting working circumstances exhaustion could be prevented. It is a lot harder to grasp the situation, when you have lost the hold of it. Acknowledging starts from the organization’s value recognition: what kind of work performance is considered good in each work community? Is the hero the one who sits at his place around the clock or the one, who does his work within working hours? What kind of example senior managers show?

Creating some kind of database, internal and external knowledge combining paths, help individuals and teams to work as trans active memory system, where everyone shares common memory, but works as expert of his own abilities and knowledge. Knowing of social networks and experts – “who knows and what” – helps the progress working, because it helps to receive knowledge from the right places and combining it. It also reduces individual’s pressure and time spent to acquire knowledge, when there is no need to know everything by himself but instead can turn to suitable expert.

Value cohesion and psychological safety help to form these kinds of databases, because they decrease interaction misunderstanding and on the other hand increase reciprocal trust. Therefore, it’s for all good that managers work towards collaboration-based work practices. Additionally, joint meetings are needed, where those that work apart can be in tight collaboration. This is how binding connections can be learnt, recognize expertise and exchange silent knowledge. Also, loose working conditions can help to progress collectively recognized expertise-based dividing of tasks (Peltokorpi V. 2004).
Reasonable use of e-mail does not necessarily mean you have to be available all the time. It can be also agreed what kind of tasks can be done via e-mail and what can be done the other way, for instance by phone call. Most of the times important messages do not even stand out from amongst junk mail. Therefore, it is extremely important to pay attention to titles.

Clarity of basic tasks and knowledge of work related expectations ease even single individual’s pressure. Decreasing of monotonousness of work and increasing of feeling of control are stress relieving factors. Managers work towards development discussions are good tool to give feedback and receiving it, but do not eliminate the need of daily interaction. Experiencing appreciation increases feeling of control too. Appreciation can be added being interested of others work.

With the help of new stimuli, we manage better, therefore, possibilities to develop are important for everybody. Changing of points of view works well in work rotation. Work guidance and mentoring can help also decreasing the stress. Management of work community can change too, when members of work community start to manage themselves.

These were thoughts that can be changed or transformed in work community to relief stress. However, individual himself can do much about his joy of work. From the perspective of individual ways of decreasing stress are rather diverse:

- Active attitude towards own life changes
- Recognition of own feelings and disturbing matters
- Evaluation of own goals and expectations towards oneself
- Healthy selfishness
- Life-balance
- Learning positivity

Life-balance’s pivotal factors are related to individual’s ability recognize his own feelings and handle them (Folkman, S. & Lazarus, R. S. 1988): is human-being assessing circumstances arduous or exceeding own resources. Requirements and pressure can be experienced malignant, damaging or challenging. These follow up different emotions, positive and negative states, of which stress reaction degree is determined.
With control circumstances, environment or experienced interpretation are tried to be changed to be more pleasant to oneself. Surviving methods can be conducive or preventive from adaptation. Conducive are solving problems and acquiring support from others. Preventive on the other hand, are passive hoping that circumstances would change by themselves, blaming oneself and avoiding social interaction.

Stress can be managed with three different styles:

- Changing observation target, in other words, cognitive activeness, for instance, direct attention away from burdensome factor
- Changing meaning of the content, which can be rejecting reality or seeing only positive sides; circumstance is tried to be interpreted in a new fresh way
- Solving the problem; with acquiring new information problem is tried to be solved or look for help from others, so that problem would be solved.

Problem solving would be the best way to get situation under the control. Temporarily both first two could help to reduce stress but they do not help for long-term change. Passive wishful thinking and also rejecting the problem can even prevent from adaptation.

Assessing the situation can be primary or secondary. Primary means reacting with the feelings: individual’s self-esteem is getting into troubles in hazardous or problematic situation, when anger and feeling of shame and be activated. Whereas, secondary assessment activates internal control to solve the problem and individual assesses surviving from the situation somehow. To the assessment impacts things like structure of motivation, perception of oneself and the world around as well as knowing own abilities and skills, state of health and other available factors (Lazarus R. S. 1993).

Therefore, person that owns internal control is capable of reaching for arduous situations. In occupational stress the best solution is therefore active action, affecting to the stressor. The problem has to be solved, or stress will not go away.

However, burnout human-being does not easily come across changing his life situation. Changing own interpretation or attitude and efforts towards increasing own resources
such as workout help for short period, but of course they help to manage. Therefore, it is important to try them too.

Each of us has their own way to interpret the world and catch observations. Everyone has their own disturbing matters to bother their lives, which can increase stress. Manka suggests five different matters that can bother our lives:

- Busy lifestyle; we are impatient, we are living for our calendars and do not have time and energy to focus on details; we talk with fast tempo and shift feeling of busyness to our free time also
- Perfectionism; we try to make everything as perfect as possible and anticipate everything possible; we hardly ever are happy about ourselves, because we do not have enough knowledge to build our decisions upon and our goals are way too high, so that it is not even realistic to reach them
- Pleasing; somewhat external factor that controls us; we need all the time approval from others for our doings, we do not dare to reject anything; kindness has much to do with this matter
- Strength; we go through hardships, but forget our feelings
- Negativity; we see constantly problems around us and that is why stress hormones impact all the time in our body

Acknowledging stress matters adds on self-knowledge. In stressful situation our behaviour becomes more straightforward and many times we tend to take wrong so-called mask. The influence of stress matters is seen differently on different people. It may change personality completely for given situation.

Motivation and wellbeing are dependant, like a circle. Wellbeing impacts motivation, in other words, what kind of goals individual sets to himself and how he assesses own goals. It also can be a vicious circle, where problematic goals, jammed thinking towards oneself, inefficiency, bad achievement expectations and negative goals lead to stress.

Abstract goals related to oneself seem to be in connection with wellbeing problems. Concrete development related goals, environment related goals and social goals anticipate wellbeing. Those that have occupational burnout have highlighted goals that are great amount self-related goals, stressfulness, unreachable goals and lack of support,
especially manager’s support. Those that emphasize hobbies are more capable to work, work related goals are less emphasized – at least in the monitoring students of university of applied sciences (Salmela-Aro K. & Nurmi J.-E. 2002).

Everyone should think of their own aspirations. Are the demands towards self too big? Are the aspirations of individual his own or are they coming from outside? Some of the demands can be imagined. Human-being assumes, he is supposed to act certain way even though nobody has even thought so. It’s good to ask from self, what happens if you forget these insurmountable feeling demand. Could be so that nothing.

Healthy selfishness means we learn to listen our own feelings instead of letting external factors dictate our lives. This trait could be also called assertiveness. Everyone should take care of that there is enough time for oneself. Learning to relax increases our strength; each of us has their own ways own relaxation. Somebody feels good about sitting on the bench at the park, other one likes cycling alone, yoga or spending some time in the nature. Relaxation music also helps. Classical music has relaxing impact.

It is also recommended that person does pleasant things: it can be started out by making a list of things that are fun and start carry out from the most fun activity.

Work can be learnt to be dealt realistically and practising to say “no” can bring much of benefit. “Good enough” at work does not require to be perfect. How this can be learnt? Everyone has the power of their own lives and there is no need to explain “no”. We can also think when saying “no” is the most difficult. IS it related to the same situations? Is rejecting before certain people difficult? It also can be, that we feel important, when we are asked and needed.

Work cannot be entire content of our lives. We need our social network, family and friends. From five to six different friends’ network helps to recover from all kind of situations. Friends’ different education are important in a sense, that from reflections of ourselves it is hard to get different perspectives, which are needed in challenging situations. Hobbies on free time give good variety and learning new things recreates mind.
In different life situations life’s parts get different focus. It is quite clear, that balancing between work and home varies, small children require their time, whereas later on we might often take care of our own parents. However, the most important thing is to keep balance between work and other parts of life.

Taking good care of balance requires us to ponder on our lives: am I giving enough time and attention to the values I consider most important? Manka Marja-Liisa has asked in her coaching sessions her students, why is it worth living? Friends, family and relationships rise the most significant. Work is mentioned hardly ever as the most important value. Own health comes as second factor, new challenges, love, curiosity and God have been on the list too. However, it is quite interesting dilemma how work occupies the first place in our lives, although nobody wants that.

5 Laws and regulations of wellbeing at work in Finland

Recently, there has been lot of changes in Finnish legislation what comes to wellbeing at work (Otala L. & Ahonen G. 2005:35). Those changes are aiming to enhance working environment and working condition in particular. For instance, occupational health care and safety legislations have been renewed completely. Central endeavour in latter renewal was observing mental tiresomeness. Accident and professional disease legislations will be renewed so that legislation will observe better psychological factors and causes of monitor working as professional disease sources. Development work should be done in cahoots with employer and employee representative. Guidance has been given to this cooperation model in accordance with activity in each occupational wellbeing legislation. These regulations towards occupational wellbeing activity are:

- Law of cooperation in companies
- Law of occupational safety
- Law of monitoring occupational safety and health and petition in safety issues
- Occupational health care law
- Law of equality between women and men

Law of cooperation in companies includes obligation to inform in different kind of changes concerning work community also staff and training plans. It guides employer
and representative of employees in cooperation develop, monitor and report sectors of occupational health goal-directedly.

Law of occupational safety obligates work communities to form occupational safety plan and monitor implementation and dispense responsibilities.

In law monitoring occupational safety and petition in safety issues are regulated cooperation procedure over 10 people companies or workplaces also industry specific special instructions over 20 people workplaces.

According to occupational health care law “employer is obliged to arrange occupational health care services in order to prevent health dangers” that are caused by the work. Employer can make written contract either with regional health care center or private health care center or establish alone or together with other companies their own health care service center.

Equality between women and men is pursued to be improved and respectively prevent sexual discrimination with the help of equality law. According to the law, over 30 people work place, are obliged to form every year equality improvement plan as a part of staff and training plan or occupational safety activity program.

6 Building sustainable organizational activity plan

6.1 What to develop?

First of all, realization of strategic wellbeing plan core questions is “what to develop”. The phenomenon is rather large, and it is not possible to develop everything at the same time. There must be done decision amongst leaders, where core assumption is, that productivity and cost savings are included in the strategic wellbeing plan.

In the contents of strategic wellbeing plan it is important to determine basics. Aura O. and Ahonen G. (2016) argue that according to their results of research, there is lot to
develop in determine the contents. These determinants, among others, are defining industry and structure of staff.

Leadership of strategic wellbeing in Finland – research team’s member Tomi Hussi has utilized strategy map in determine strategic wellbeing’s contents. Occupational wellbeing’s strategy map is Tomi Hussi’s implementation of Kaplan’s and Norton’s business strategy map (Kaplan & Norton 1996). Occupational health strategy map’s first step is to determine with the help of organizational strategy documents, what is wanted to achieve. In the second step follows answer to question, what kind of staff is needed and third step, how organizational cooperation has to work in order achieve these goals. Fourth step is all about results and measuring them.

Hussi’s occupational wellbeing strategy map’s second and third question form answer to strategic wellbeing, especially from perspective of leadership of productivity. Therefore, we can say that with strategic wellbeing plan we want to support organization’s productivity. Contents to cost savings leadership is formed through working ability leadership. Thus, naturally determinants are sickness leave, work injury and disability pension’s management. Example of a strategic wellbeing plan could hold together motivation and developing skills, which improve productivity, whereas, management of sickness-leave and work strain factors also decrease of disability pension enhance cost saving’s leadership.

6.2 Create goals

It is crucial to set goals. To quote Zig Ziglar, American author, salesman and motivational speaker: “You need a plan to build a house. To build a life, it is even more important to have a plan or goal.” Especially strong connection between setting goals is constant development utilization. Those companies who set goals utilize constant development lot more than those who do not set goals at all (Aura O. & Ahonen G., 2016). On the other hand, setting goals boosts most leaders and HR processes’ activities and clarifies managers’ role as occupational wellbeing’s operators. When goals have been set also metrics are used naturally and actively.
Setting goals is executive committee’s job. Aura O. & Ahonen G. in their book Leadership of strategic wellbeing write about setting goals following requirements: “Goals are based on settled contents. Goals must be as concrete as possible and measured with quantitative measurement. Additionally, goals are broken down for different operators as a partial goal in order to achieve the goal in whole. Everyone has to have goal which they can affect upon with their action.”

Settling goals right level and direction are challenging to determine. First of all, goal should be hard enough but not unrealistic. Different divisions historic information (results back from 2-5 years) help to find the right level. Additionally, conversation within organization and utilizing knowledge and skills of different experts ease the task of determine the right goal levels. Also, the right direction of a goal, goals to different operators, is essential thing. It is important that everyone’s goal is the kind, which they can affect with their own actions.

Here we can see how the phenomenon turns into a chain. We can ponder chain effect for instance through enhancing atmosphere support: what does the management, what does HR and what do managers, so that atmosphere develops. And what does everyone individually. The right setting of personal goals succeeds the best through participating procedure. Therefore, goal determined by management is discussed and everyone engages to accomplish their own goal. For instance, in development of work of managers management engages to support (lead) and resource managers’ development. HR ensures effective methods of know-how development and managers themselves engage genuinely to develop their know-how. Other managers’ peer support and subordinates’ positive grip towards work community’s skills development finalize managers’ work development (Aura O. & Ahonen G. 2016)

6.3 Define metrics of the goals

After deciding goals defining metrics is easy. According to the series of research, most common metrics in organization are sickness leave percentage and staff research (Aura O. & Ahonen G. 2016). Regularly done staff research can content metrics to many fields of strategic wellbeing.
Beside staff research there is numerous amount of good metrics or sources of metrics. These are for instance payroll administration (turnover rate, sickness leave percentage), occupational health care report (sickness leave percentage, stage of working ability, mental strain) occupational safety reports (accident rate, it was close – situations rate). Additionally, for instance, customer feedback can be used as metrics if settled goals require so.

Beside staff and working atmosphere researches in organizations, there is utilized a lot particularly exactly called occupational wellbeing questionnaires. These serve especially enhancing wellbeing services’ allocation. Questionnaire about occupational wellbeing should contain questions about occupational health’s essential fields, such as working ability, health, estimates about know-how, motivation and workplace’s atmosphere and experiences about managers’ work. In addition, the most important lifestyle (exercise routine, sleeping, smoking, alcohol consumption) findings are justified.

6.4 Make a plan

You cannot emphasise making a plan too much. According to research series for five years done by Aura O. and Ahonen G. (2016) the most surprising research result was small number of written occupational wellbeing plan in organizations. Small organizations, 18% told they did plan, middle size 35% and big organizations 50%. The written plan supported clearly most HR processes and occupational wellbeing supportive activities’ efficiency. Additionally, it is evident, that written overall plan is the only way to combine different activities in order to achieve overall goal.

Ensuring doing the plan is task of executive committee and the most important is following:

Plan of strategic wellbeing must be written whole as a part of organizational activity plan. In the plan is integrated number of primary plans which for instance occupational safety and occupational health care activity plan are obliged by the law.

Leadership of strategic wellbeing divides naturally into two: developing productivity and cost savings oriented working ability activity. In the plan tactically important decision is, especially from perspective of staff, are we willing to create in organization separate clear program in order to enhance wellbeing or are we implementing actions as normal,
good leadership and managers’ work. In this case the best procedure is that developing processes are integrated as a natural part of normal managers’ work and development project as separate.

6.5 Gather the data

Important part of strategic wellbeing leadership is collecting metrics and analysing their effectiveness. Gathering data, putting all the information together, is not the purpose in itself, but it eases the control of the whole and helps understanding.

Starting point would be different divisions’ determined metrics. In our example program metrics consist of motivation, know-how, stress, absent days and working disability payment metrics. In addition to these, it is highly recommended to add leadership of managers and working community’s activity describing metrics, as these have great impact on motivation, stress, absence and even as far as to know-how (Aura O. & Ahonen G. 2016).

One possibility to gather the data is to group them according to productivity, cost savings, leadership, organization’s functionality and business perspectives. Therefore, as a result there will be strategic wellbeing balanced scorecard, which the most important function is understanding the big picture. Too many times different divisions of strategic wellbeing metrics are handled as separate. However, the big picture is what matters, especially if with the help of metrics, we are looking for answers and effectiveness concerning organization’s productivity.

7 Challenges

7.1 Motivation of maintaining physical condition

Exercise has positive connection with physical performance and prevention of different kinds of illnesses and musculoskeletal disorders. Exercise also affects psychological and social performance. Mental (psychological) performance has been estimated to change with aging and it is always related to requirements, expectations, and preconditions that
environment requires from an individual. When psychomotor functions slowdown in different and new tasks it limits aging-personnel’s working ability. However, in practice, aging person’s experience compensates slowness (Suutama T. 1999). Therefore, exercise supports maintaining performance speed and decreases slowness that comes with aging.

Physical condition not only helps to manage. According to the latest research report, regular exercise prevents clearly from weaker memory and all in all, helps intellectual functions such as learning, understanding and problem-solving skills. Risk of getting dementia decreases. Among aging people exercise protects memory even more than social hobbies and intellectual vitality (Richards M. et al 2003).

You can exercise brain with working out, or with social hobbies, such as arts, participating in the clubs, taking part on politics, religious or voluntary activities. According to the research done in the UK, both forms of brain exercise improved functions of memory, when examinees were 43-year-old. By that age, social hobbies were even more effective than exercise.

When coming to the age of 53 exercise – especially if done regularly – prevented decline in memory clearly more than social hobbies. If physical exercise was stopped, its protective impact ended too. Therefore, it is important to use abilities unless person wants to lose them.

It is possible, that activity types effects through different channels to maintain adult’s intellectual skills, because flexibility of brain and development do not limit to childhood. Regular exercise increases oxygen intake and through that metabolism of neurotransmitters. Additionally, it decreases possibility of getting diseases that bother intellectual functions, in other words, keeps our body in shape. Besides, we start to deteriorate at the age of 30-35. On the other hand, social life can also be activated, different kinds of exercise events you can meet people and there is great atmosphere too.

Both exercise and social hobbies require person’s own willingness and energy to socialize. These in turn activate each other. Social capital and activeness foster wellbeing.
From perspective of individual sources of wellbeing are life balance, work balance, growing motivation and physical condition. Each and every one of us can impact on them.

7.2 Managing work to reduce stress

Control of a work impacts on wellbeing numerous ways. It reduces harmful stress and creates possibilities of enhancing wellbeing. Good control over work with great requirements leads to engagement and little of absenteeism. Control adds up on human-being’s ability create large social networks and receive social support if needed. Human’s resource factors were lifted feeling of coherence and social support. Little of resource factors anticipated psychological stress, ancillary and physical organ pain also decline in work ability and feeling of wellbeing.

Social support can appear as trust between employees and manager, work team social cohesion and good spirit and instrumental support, which can be estimated as receiving help from colleagues and managers. It is supposed to mitigate requirements of the work and work control influence to the health. Active strained or passive no strained can be associated with good or bad social support (Manka M-L. 2010).

Social factors are believed to be buffer between work control and work requirement. Work community's social support have been also seen as response to belonging to the group needs, which are the basic human needs as have been discussed earlier in social wellbeing chapter (Johnson J. V. 1989). It is also an asset in order to survive work requirements, which protects employees from work related structural requirements and pressure.

Social support was seen essential also in professional stress and relaxation impact related research. Experiences from regular listening of 15 minutes relaxation program showed, that relaxation normalized autonomic nervous function and level of adrenaline. In addition, it lessened neck-shoulder tensions. Neck-shoulder symptoms were connected to psychosocial factors, depression and number of absenteeism. Absenteeism declined exactly for the reason, because employees received social support by participating in the relaxation program and consequently, were more excited to develop their own work, even though it was not the goal (Toivanen H. 1994).
7.3 Motivation of staff

Work governance means possibility to affect own work, which is important factor from perspective of productivity and wellbeing. Work governance means work independence (Hackman J. et al, 1975). The metrics in this case are; how much work gives freedom, independence and power to decide upon schedule and procedures. To feel work meaningful, it also requires additionally use of know-how, importance of work and the big picture of tasks instead of partial tasks. Work motivation is also dependent on responsibility of the work and received feedback. This is how motivation potential is formed, meaningfulness x independence x feedback. If one of these is weak, entire potential suffers.

Encouragement of work can be measured; how much following features the work has:

- Diversity of skills that the work requires: how much work requires different types of skills and abilities. Simple work does not encourage very much.
- Meaningfulness of contents of the tasks: how much the work consists of performing as a whole instead of separate little tasks that are related.
- Importance of work: How much does work effect on organization or outside the organization. This has also possibility working with customers.
- Possibility working independently: what kind of possibility a person has to plan his own schedule and choose procedures himself.
- Feedback on results of the work: does the worker get feedback on his success.
- Possibility of constant development as a part of job and creativity: is there a chance to have ideas and develop own work.

Requirements of work effect on worker’s wellbeing. Requirements of work are determined according to how fast and hard work has to be done, how much there is, is there enough time to complete and does it have contradictory requirements. Stress is expected to be quite high, when requirements are high and control of work low (Karasek. R. & Theorell, T. 1990)

Productivity of the work is dependent on synergy of active learning and psychological strain. Good control of work on contrary to bad control has a lot more work satisfaction,
engagement, work performance, work motivation and less physical and mental symptoms, absence and turnover rate. Lack of control has fatal consequences. If person feels that he has not enough possibility to affect his work, his abilities to work in same or later in different situations weakens. Therefore, he does not believe he can impact on things that happen around and does not even try to change circumstances. This lack of control is harmful strain factor, which causes anxiety and if lasts long enough can turn to depression and illness. When passive model has been learnt, it is hard to re-learn. Traumatic stressful situations together with low control are the most disastrous to abilities. Passive work from perspective of productivity is more dangerous than highly stra\n\nFrom perspective of productivity the best kind of a work advances new skills and development of abilities. The best kind form of organization is small, decentralized production units such as autonomic work groups and teams. Work requires multi talent and possibility of using creativity in addition to straight customer contacts, which of feedback advances learning the new.

Many of works are so unilateral and has very little of content, so that adding control through work rotation, adding to vertical decision making do not help, but is needed qualitatively completely new tasks.

7.4 Learning to be more positive

Optimism can be learnt. Nobody is born pessimistic or optimistic to this world, but different life events shape our interpretation models without our consciousness.

Put your values in order; find out the meaning of your life. It does not have to be changing entire globe, but the kind, that makes your life worth living. Dreams and hope are elixir of life.

Finding one’s strengths increases self-esteem. Individual can be good at everything, but negative traits can be also developed. One can learn from hardships.
Recognize your feelings and be true to yourself. Catch the negative feeling, when such appears. Think, what real matters support the feeling and what are the counterarguments for it. What could be the worst to happen and what you can do so that the bad would not happen? Negative feelings can grow to be big load, which finally bring about vicious circle of negativity. Our feelings impact our physical metabolism (Askel Terveyteen 2018). So better be careful about the feelings and watch over them. Think about things that bring you joy and do pleasant things even a little bit every day.

Also, do not judge your performance and compare with other people’s performances. Listen to your internal voice: is it supporting you or discouraging? Is it looking for guilty ones or is it inventing solving opportunities in difficult situations?

Be gracious towards yourself; you are good enough. It does not make sense to require too much from yourself, because there is way enough to perform.

Instead of worrying too much, it is worth waiting the best, because anticipating expectations many times form final results. Bad experiences can serve as a lesson and therefore, can escalate your own progression.

Meet the reality and take responsibility of your life. Accept things that you cannot change. Self-pity does not help you either. Other people are not responsible for your failure. Stop looking for guilty ones.

Even smallest change today can bring us completely different tomorrow. Therefore, learning is good to start already today. The most unpleasant thing would be that life would be missing challenges.

7.5 The secret of success in wellbeing

Happiness factors are simple, although they are not reachable all over the world. In other words, it is not worth complaining about everything, but instead see the happiness in life. According to Helliwell (Helliwell, J. & Putnam, R. D. 2006) healthy people are:
- More interested in social life
- Take more responsible care of environment
• They have better family and cooperation relationships at home
• They are more productive
• They are healthier
• They are seldom on sickness leave
• They are less likely to get heart attack and heart or vein disease

Many times, we cannot change external circumstances, but we can change our attitudes and perspectives. We can have an impact on at least ourselves, but because feelings seize, that is how we have an impact on our surrounding people too. Aked J. & Thompson S. (2010) suggest five ways of making the quality of our lives better:

1. Be in contact with important people and spend some time with them.
2. Be active: walk, run, play, adjust workout to your own physical condition, so you will enjoy it.
3. Keep your eyes open: pay attention to extraordinary, beauty, enjoy the moments and reflect your experiences.
4. Learn every day: try something new, take the responsibility at work and the challenge, that you enjoy.
5. Be giving: do something fun to your friends and to complete stranger, thank, smile, look inside and out.

Be in contact with people that surround you: family, friends, colleagues and neighbourhood. At home, at work, at school and local community. Treat your life’s loved ones as cornerstones of your life, give them time, because without time relationships do not exist and get stronger. Maintaining these relationships supports you and enriches each of your day.

Go for a walk or a run. Go outside from home and office. Cycle, play games, do some gardening, dance, swim whatever comes to your mind that you like. Working out gives better mood. The most important thing is to find something that is suitable to your own condition. Not everybody should run marathons or workout at the gym. We tend to spend too much time on the couch or we are too passive some other way. If you are competitive and want to measure yourself, activity bracelet might inspire you. Even at work, it is important to get up from time to time, have a little walk around office, grab
glass of water, take stairs. Instead of sending an e-mail to a colleague that is in the same office, you could walk and forward your message face-to-face. Your social skills get practiced too.

Be curious. Look for beauty. Pay attention to extraordinary and look for positive differences. Notice changing seasons. Enjoy the moment, whether you walk to work, eat your lunch or communicate with your friends. Be conscious about surrounding world and your feelings. Reflecting your experiences helps you to appreciate things that matter to you.

Try something new. Get back to your hobby or interest that you were so excited before. Take a course. Take a new responsibility at work. Fix your bicycle. Learn to play some instrument or cook your favourite meal. Make a challenge for yourself, which you enjoy working for. Learning new things boosts your self-esteem but is also fun. Sometimes learning new things might bring you to failure. Do not fall into self-pity but instead learn to laugh at yourself.

Do something fun to your friends or even to a stranger. Thank. Smile. Do some voluntary work. Be associated with certain group. Look out to the world, but on the contrary inside yourself too. Seeing yourself and connecting your happiness with surrounding community can be very rewarding and make connections with people around you.

7.6 Development discussion

Above all, employer should be interested in employees’ health. Here I mean physical condition. Sitting 8 hours a day does no good to anybody. Human-being is created to move. As for infrastructure of work places, they are built so that basically all exercise workers do is they might take stairs to cafeteria for the lunch or bathroom, grab glass of water and during work day all exercise is all about done. On top of that, if they drive a car for an hour one way, that makes the sitting amount even greater. Therefore, employees should compensate their inactivity by exercising on their free time.

What employer could do about this dilemma?
Exercise does not only keep us prevented from diseases, it also gives us better mood, improves sexual function, improves sleep, cleanses skin, are just few to mention (fitness.mercola.com, 2013). Many office workers receive Smartum or other physical activity coupons for half price. However, although you pay half of the price of the value of the coupons, the early number of coupons is not even enough to pay a year membership to the gym. On early basis, gym membership is quite expensive if monthly cost is approximately 70€, that makes 840€ a year. Some people cannot save that amount even for a holiday once a year.

According to my experience, for instance at Paulig Oy (coffee factory), they have their own gym at the office, where the factory locates too. Employees can work-out immediately after the shift, there is no need to travel to the gym or they can come earlier at work for their gym session. I wonder if they can work-out during working day, since the gym is in the same building. So should do other big corporations, such as Elisa, Nordea and Telia, for instance. Radio station Voice covers their employees’ gym membership completely.

Once there is gym, there should be gym instructor or personal trainer to show the technique in order to avoid injuries. I have heard many stories about working out with wrong technique and injury different body parts for a life-time. Doing the right thing at the gym is crucial.

In addition, not everyone is completely lost at the gym. Some people have had personal trainer and therefore know what to do and how. Internet is full of compatible work out routines. However, not everyone knows their physical condition and are not aware of from where to start and how to develop. Providing exercise plan made by professional eg. Personal trainer, is not a big loss for employer.

These are just couple things that employer can do to better employees’ quality of life significantly. In the beginning it is great investing and might require big numbers to build a whole new gym but is truly worth it. The further we go in time and people are more and more conscious about their health and wellbeing, it requires adjustments from work place too as we spend majority of our time awake at work.
8 Conclusion

Absenteeism, in any industry but especially amongst office workers, is a major issue these days. It is employers’ benefit that their workers are doing well. As a result, this will increase turnover and total productivity while it cuts absenteeism. However, employers see it as a cost right now, but eventually they will reap what they have sown. Helping employees to enhance their health is truly smart investing. It will generate not only productive workers but also committed long-term employees who are on top of that motivated and willing to reciprocate.

Employers are more and more concerned of their employees’ health and nowadays are acknowledging the cost issue in that regard. Some employers are utilizing health programs. Case Hallmark has succeeded as a company towards healthier work community through Health Rewards system (O’Reilly, 2015). Employer pays incentives or penalties to encourage employees in adoption of healthier behaviour or quit bad habits. Since 2011 82% of eligible employees have received health reward of $400. Paying such incentives has been debated in US as in UK entire system is alien. However, if it encourages employees towards healthier lifestyle and employees get little bit of extra for their hard work, why not?

Health should be discussed more widely than it has been so far and taken more seriously. There are numerous motivational speakers that can come to give a speech in companies in order to shake people to reality. The more the topic is discussed the more employees are interested in their own health. Certainly, there will be those that do not care. However, managers are the ones that employees look up to. What kind of example and inspiration do they give?

In a perfect world, the best solution would be to create individual health program for every worker in the organization paid by employer. Those that want to motivate themselves and monitor progress, activity bracelet is a solution. Once individual health program is created and purchased by employer, we can guarantee happier and healthier employees. Therefore, it is definitely a win-win for both employers and employees. Employees feel that they are taken care of, which is quite considerable factor. Employers get happier and motivated workers who are not physically healthier but also mentally
healthy. In addition, entire work organization is happier and healthier. Subsequently, this will rise happiness level while self-esteem of workers rises. Confident workers perform better and carry out greater results.

I would like to end this thesis with following words: None of employer’s actions affect, if person himself does not want to take care of his wellbeing (Otala L. & Ahonen G., 2005). Some people simply need some assistance on their way for a better health. I strongly believe there is definitely reasonable health program to each individual of corporation as they are tailored based on individual’s needs.
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