

Continuous change communication and employee motivation

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| <p>Martela & Jarenko (2015)'s book about intrinsic motivation was the start for this thesis. The book made me think of how to combine intrinsic motivation and communication. Change communication is an interesting and relevant topic and I wanted to process it, but not in the traditional way. I think that today's change communication is happening on a daily basis and it has continuity. The main research question was how to communicate continuous changes in order to keep employees motivated and it was concentrated on literature review.</p> <p>The literature review consisted of two parts: change communication and motivation. Major changes are familiar to many and there are management guidelines and psychological studies on how to lead and communicate big changes. But what about continuous change. Change chapter explained basic change communication theories and strategies. Motivation chapter focused on intrinsic motivation: what is it and how it is useful to organizations. This chapter explained Martela & Jarenko (2015)'s motivation diamond and its four categories: the need of capacity, the need of voluntary, the need of social cohesion and the need of social cohesion.</p> <p>The study was executed as a quantitative study through web survey. It was executed during spring 2019 and it received 319 answers. The group of respondents were change positive due to their work and them being highly interested in communication. It can be stated that this was not an average group of knowledge workers but, on the other hand, the group that should be kept in organizations as they could act as change ambassadors. The above mentioned four categories were used as a base for some question' options. After the data was analyzed, five guidelines was created for continuous change communication. These guidelines were validated with a small group of communication professionals and outcomes were written out.</p> <p>Even today, most of the respondents were longing face-to-face communication, whether it was related to change communication, internal communication or hearing that their work is meaningful. This, a clear content and a dialogue were most expected from change communication. However, f2f communication might be difficult to organize in all organizations due to resources: people, time and money. Therefore, it is important to have interactive communication tool where feedback can be gathered and presents two-way communication even though it is not done f2f.</p> | |
| Keywords change communication, intrinsic motivation, guidelines | |

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1 Introduction

The inspiration for this thesis came after I read Martela & Jarenko (2015)'s book about intrinsic motivation. The book made me think of how to combine intrinsic motivation and communication. Change communication is an interesting and relevant topic and I wanted to process it, but not in the traditional way. In my opinion, change communication is related to big changes, such as, for example, organizing new organization, a project that has a start and an ending, etc. To me, change communication is important in the everyday communication as knowledge workers face changes daily. Communication always has an effect on employees in good and in bad. After pondering these two topics and combining them came the idea for this thesis and the title puts the idea together: "Continuous change communication and employee motivation".

The main research question is how to communicate continuous changes in order to keep employees motivated. The main question was the foundation for the literature review. The thesis study part needed to have follow-up sub-questions so that the collected data would be wider, and it would be analyzed from different angles. The three sub-questions are the following:

1. How do knowledge workers describe their motivational factors?
2. How do knowledge workers see changes in their work?
3. How do knowledge workers describe communication about the meaningfulness of the work?

This study was done for a general purpose and there were no case organizations behind it. The outcome can be implemented into different organizations.

The structure of this thesis will be as following. Chapter 2 presents the literature of change communication. Chapter 3 covers literature of motivation, especially intrinsic motivation: what it is and how it is useful to organizations. After that, in chapter 4, the methodology used in this study will be discussed. Chapter 5 gives the analysis of this thesis study and each question is discussed more detailed level. After that, chapter 6 gathers the findings and gives answers to the research questions, and also opens the reliability of this thesis study. Based on the study findings and the literature, the chapter 7 presents development ideas, gathers comments and validation as well as own learning.

2 Introduction to change communication

Change is normal part of everyday life. We all change as we age and are involved with our surroundings. Organizations change as well – we all have experienced restructuring of a part or whole organization, changes in processes or other big changes. Major changes are familiar to many and there are management guidelines and psychological studies on how to lead and communicate big changes. But what about continuous change? Especially knowledge workers have accustomed to continuous change. How should it be led and managed? And how continuous change in an organization differs from big changes and disruptions in an organization? This chapter explains basic change communication theories and strategies.

Communication is a two-way process and it has to be shared. Through communication can a mutual understanding be created. It has been said that communication is the process of individuals sharing meanings through a transactional process between two or more. Communication has a significant role in managing changes and without effective employee communication change is impossible. Change communication should be consistent, open, transparent and a dialogue to help the change program succeed. Meaningful communication informs and educates employees at all levels and motivates to support the strategy which then decreases change resistance. (Bull & Brown 2012, 137–138.)

With communication, the uncertainty that changes can create, can be avoided. When there is a lack of information or recognized benefits, it can create change resistance. Employees like to be in control and be aware of everything, which means that they have a psychological safety net. Communication should be meaningful and explain reasons for changes, so that it would help employees to accept changes. Communication ensures employees (even on an individual level) that they are aware of how changes impact and affect them. Therefore, communication needs to be a two-way exchange so that listening and giving feedback is possible. (Bull & Brown 2012, 138–140.)

If an organization is seen as a pyramid, especially during changes (big or small), the information and communication flow is similar to the Maslow's hierarchy of psychological needs which is shown on the figure 1. The leadership is at the top where all the necessary information flows down to employees for them to understand and act on their roles. They are in control, making the decisions and responding to the changes. The next level of management is less in control, but they have an adequate amount of information available to know their future. They might feel that they have enough information to stay in the

organization or to find a new position during the changes. Rest of the employees are at the bottom of the pyramid and have a little information of what is going to happen, depending on how much of the upper levels have wanted to share the information. Employees feel uncertain about their role and their future and they are not in control. The pyramid should be turned upside down to see where the information is really needed. (Cowan 2014, 46.)

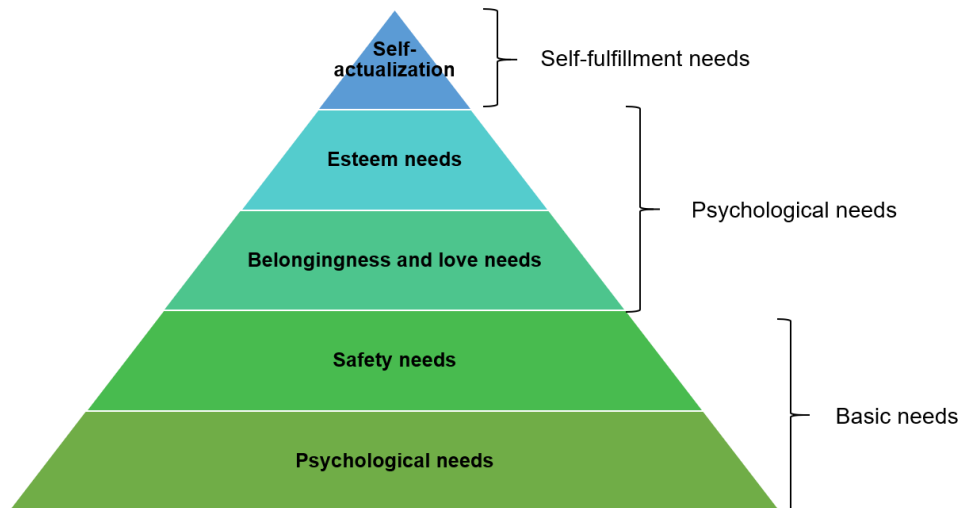


Figure 1. Maslow's hierarchy of psychological needs

A lack of consultation and communication usually increases change resistance. Managing change means the management of change communication. Change communication should give answers to these questions: why the change is needed, what will be different as a result, what will success look like, how will the employees be supported during the change and how will the results be measured. (Hargie & Tourish 2009, 17.)

Hargie & Tourish (2009, 18) have argued that if an organization wants to be an effective organization, it needs to be aware of its employees' personal needs and take care of the relationship in all levels. Communication is an important tool for this. If organizations had open communication channels, employees would be able to tell their needs, have access to information, develop opportunities to make an influence and be part of the decision-making which is one of human's basic need. Effective change communication would increase organizations' cohesion by answering employees' questions from aspects of what is in it for me and what is in it for us. Quite often change communication gives answers to what is in it for us. Questions related to this category are "How are we doing? How do we fit in the whole? How can I help?". However, employees do not have intrinsic motivation in situations such as when, for example, a new business plan has been made. Change communication should give answers from the perspective "what is in it for me" by

communicating through questions: “What is my job? How am I doing? Is anybody interested?”. Concentrating change communication into “what is in it for me” category could increase intrinsic motivation in the employees.

Ruck & Welch (2012, 300–301) have created a model that links engagement and internal communication together. The model shows that an employee voice and identification are part of engagement. The model provides a balance between internal communication at the job level of engagement and internal communication at the organizational level of engagement, and the communication needs to fill cognitive and social psychological aspects. The model is based on an assumption that work and organizational employee engagement is influenced by internal corporate communication and effective management communication.

2.1 Change resistance

There are at least six main reasons or themes against changes based on how people think about changes: “I don’t know, I don’t know how to, I don’t want to, I’m afraid, I don’t believe, I can’t”. For all these reasons, there are ways to communicate and help get over it. When employees have a “I don’t know” state of mind, they need a clear message why the change is needed and where it will lead them. Raising employees’ capabilities and strengths, will help them in the “I don’t know how to” part. When employees do not want to, they need to be led based on performance and given more feedback so that they would be accountable for their actions, all this in a positive spirit, of course. When employees are afraid, they need leaders to coach and help them improve their strengths. By showing your own example and communicating with a clear vision, it will help employees to believe. Encouraging employees will give them the attitude that they can. All these mentioned ways to convince and sell the change to employees are possible if people are willing to change and they want to grow as a person. Employees need to be seen as individuals, therefore personal steps towards the change is a good way to keep employees motivated and thinking positively. (Wendelin 2013, 135–136.)

Based on the study employees do not face changes as a static state of mind but their attitude varies during process (Kiiskinen 2017, 124).

People in general are against changes: it is a part of human basic needs and behavior. Changes are a part of every workplace and a part of employees’ every day lives, so employees need to accept changes. One way is to influence the right side of brain which is the foundation of feelings. Often employees handle changes through why question and

are trying to understand the change. But when communicating changes with different tools, it is important to think of the ensemble: people and things, feelings and rationality. (Wendelin 2013, 134–135.)

A change always contains differences to normal and familiar situations. It has been said that employees might feel fear of the unknown and risks are a part of change that will create uncertainty in employees. But this can be overcome by trust. In organizations where employees trust management and have seen positive and successful changes, they more easily have positive attitudes towards new changes. A transparent communication helps create trust between the employees and the management which then reinforces work engagement. When there is a relationship between trust and work engagement, it is possible to see and feel results in organizations' atmosphere. Some have stated that when there is a trust between colleagues, leadership and clients, it shows as an organizational trust and has an effect on the readiness to changes. (Matthysen & Harris 2018, 2–3.)

2.2 Readiness to changes

Readiness to change contains three aspects: an emotional dimension, a cognitive dimension and an intentional dimension of change. The emotional dimension means emotional reactions towards changes and a resistance is usually based on fear of the unknown. A cognitive dimension is related to the emotional dimension, and a cognitive dimension means what beliefs and thoughts people have towards changes. The intentional dimension means how much of an energy are people willing to put into a change process. These three dimensions might occur at different times during a change process or some dimension might not occur, depending on the individual. (Matthysen & Harris 2018, 2.)

Matthysen & Harris (2018, 3) based their study on a remark that organizations need to figure out employees' readiness for changes before starting to make change processes because it might have an effect on the change and whether it is a success or a failure. Matthysen & Harris also studied the relationship between readiness to change, work engagement, process of change and trust in leadership.

An organizational commitment and work engagement have a positive relationship towards readiness to changes with employees. When employees have a higher work engagement, employees will have a higher readiness for changes. Some studies have revealed a relationship between readiness and processes of change and some studies have found a

positive correlation between readiness to changes and organizational trust. The results of the study showed that having trust in colleagues, leadership and customers is correlated to having organizational trust which increases the readiness to changes. There needs to be trust in leadership before work engagement. When leaders have and show transformational leadership behaviors, it will create a higher level of work engagement. (Matthysen & Harris 2018, 3.)

Employees first define whether a change is a good or damaging for them and evaluate the situation through different factors: power and authority on matters, job security and intrinsic rewards. These are most valid in motivating readiness to changes. (Appelbaum, Profka, Depta, & Petrynski 2018, 47–48.)

During all the changes in organizations and the resistance relating to them, it is difficult to get the attention of employees. The engagement is needed, and it should lead to attention and focus towards the work which then increases productivity. In order to get employees' attention, we need to understand employees and their wants, which means that there needs to be different strategies to engage different employees. The management needs to have the knowledge and the intelligence to understand people's behavior, engage with the other person's point of view and understand how they focus on their work. If we can get employees to give their attention, then we are able to support them to focus their ideas, knowledge and emotions towards the organization's needs. By leading people towards the future, they and the organization needs to go, there will be a better chance to increase the engagement. In order to succeed in this, there needs to be an understanding of the values of organization, because our values define our actions. (Cowan 2014, 65–66, 68.)

2.3 Change communication strategies

The communication strategy must change and evolve along as the organization's goals and employees change. Usually, the first step is to create focus and to set priorities that will increase effectiveness in organizations. Then comes the focus on employees. During changes, it is important to reduce uncertainty, confusion and doubts for employees to properly function. There is a need to find a cohesion together and to find what motivates. (Clampitt, DeKoch & Cashman, 2000, 47.)

According to Clampitt et al. (2000, 47-48) there are five typical change communication strategies for management: spray & pray, tell & sell, underscore & explore, identify & reply and withhold & uphold. In spray & pray strategy leaders share all possible information to

all employees and expect employees to find the core message from the information flood. The idea is that sharing all information would lead to good communication, but it does not, and it is not effective. Quite often it might confuse employees as they do not know what it is important. In tell & sell strategy the information and messages leaders share is more limited and from their point of view and the messages are related to core organizational issues. After sharing the messages, leaders sell their “right” ideas to employees through presentations. In this strategy, a meaningful dialogue with employees is forgotten. Leaders might think that feedback is not needed if employees receive information in a passive way and they have all information about the key organizational issues. In underscore & explore strategy leaders want test messages and core ideas with employees. Leaders give employees a chance to explore the implications of ideas. Leaders think that communication cannot be ready until they will have the information of how employees react to the core ideas. The idea of this strategy is to listen and find out potential misunderstandings and unrecognized obstacles. Identify & reply strategy is focused on purely employees’ concerns. The main focus is to identify key employees’ concerns and then giving answers to those. Behind this is the assumption that employees know best what the critical things are, when quite often employees do not have all the information and are not in a place where they would be able to ask the right questions. In withhold & uphold strategy leaders do not share the information until it is necessary and usually when they need to respond rumors. In this strategy some leaders think that having the information is power, and some leaders might think that employees do not understand the big picture. In this strategy, a lot room is given for rumors which then decreases productivity. Leaders tend to use hybrids of these mentioned strategies or even other strategies. All these strategies have a similar nature: it is difficult for employees to understand and outline of organizations’ matters.

Clampitt et al. (2000, 49–52) have divided a process of change communication strategy into three phases. The figure 2 presents all three phases and how they overlap, and results give a starting point to the next phase. The phase 1 is Discover. First, the foundation of themes needs to be studied and discovered and changed into goals. There needs to be an understanding of the type of the organization, what challenges does the organization have, what goals do the leaders have and what objectives do the employees have. This will create a foundation for a change communication strategy. The next step is to find out critical themes and issues, narrow down the amount of the topics and find a connection between themes, in order to deliver messages through the organization. When these core issues to organizational success have been detected, it will give a good background information for creating change communication goals. The phase 2 is Create. Keeping in mind the established goals, you need to create messages and think in

advance, what type of responses are wanted in long-term. This is a good time to question if the current communication style and tools are appropriate for this change. There might be certain ways and tools used in communication in the past, but they might be baggage from the past, from a former management for example. Actions and execution are the base of a successful implementation. Phase 3 is Assess. No strategy is perfect and therefore it is important to receive feedback about it through different methods; employee surveys, focus groups, etc. Are communicating goals achieved with the messages? An assessment process also demonstrates how long it will take to have an impact on employees' thinking and behavior. Implementing a change communication strategy might create employee resistance, this is expected. Assessment process helps to improve the strategy and actions while helping employees to understand the messages. The messages might have to be modified several times to meet the goals.

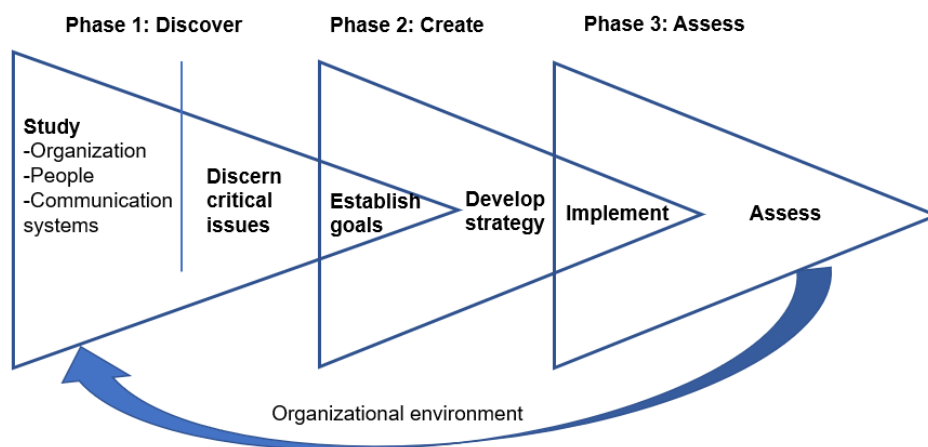


Figure 2. Developing change communication strategy adapted from Clampitt et al. (2000)

Barret (2002, 223–227) has developed a strategic employee communication model related to change communication. The model has four actions: forming a strategic communication team, assessing current communication, conducting vision, organizing strategy and job redefinition workshops and finally monitoring the results. To have an effective and successful change communication, you would need a team, selected employees and management. A couple of communications staff members are not enough. The team should be a multi-level and cross-functional employee team which has four fundamental targets: to estimate organization's current communication works, to point out employee communication improvement gaps, to design and implement a change communication program and to work as change ambassadors. When the is formed, the team will assess current communication and they will be able to tell the management what strategic employee communication means while resolving organization's improvement targets. By interviewing some key leaders and employees from all levels and reviewing

HR surveys, the strategic communication team can gain insight into their perspective and is able to build communication approach and program. The success of a change communication program means that an organization has a clearly stated, believed, understood and meaningful vision, which is aligned with the upcoming change. If it is not, then the vision needs to be developed and changed by management and employees as well. When vision and strategy objectives are opened and discussed with employees in workshops, it will increase trust in employees as they have a chance to be involved and that they are being heard. It is important to monitor the results of the change program frequently: what is understanding and acceptance of change messages and how has the organization heard the messages.

2.4 Building change communication

When building a change communication strategy, it is helpful to think things through the following questions: “who versus what”, “when versus how”, “why versus what”. Different surveys show that employees would like to hear messages directly from their supervisors. Often the case is that supervisors might not have all the wanted information regarding things such as organization changes. Therefore, is important to think in advance who the right person is to deliver messages so that he/she can answer follow-up questions and discuss with employees about changes. Quite often during changes employees speculate when they do not have the information. The change does not need to be ready in order to be able to communicate it to employees. Sometimes with changes it is important to communicate sooner than later. The content of messages has to explain why something is needed/done, why the change is good for the organization and how it will help the organization. (Clampitt et al. 2000, 43.)

Communication is a key element in knowledge management. The knowledge needs to be transparent and open which enables it to be shared, and sharing is caring. When knowledge is shared, it will create new knowledge and intelligence that motivates employees and increases employee's potential. Communication is also a dialogue and way of connecting, informing and influencing personnel by keeping in mind that the delivered message should answer to the individual's expectations and the question “What is in it for me?”. When this is kept in mind, it is possible to make more effective management. A good internal communication needs to also make strategic sense that helps during the strategic journey and engaging employees. (Cowan 2017, chapter “What are the benefits of effective internal communications”.)

When creating a content for change communication, it is important to think how employees as respondents would take the message, how they respond to it. What is in the message has an influence on the employees. The message as well as communication strategy should be linked to organizational goals in order to be effective and understandable. (Clampitt et al. 2000, 44.)

Meaningful communication has two objectives: to inform and to educate employees at all levels in organizations' strategy and to motivate employees support the strategy and the goals. Achieving these two objectives makes communication meaningful. Change communication needs to have a clear and consistent message that will clarify an organization's vision, strategic goals and what the changes mean to the employees. Motivation and support for employees in the organization's new direction is done through change communication. Change communication encourages higher performance and it will also decrease misunderstandings and rumors when it is executed as planned. Change communication will help with aligning employees behind organization's strategy and it will also help the employees' willingness to improve their goals and performance. (Barret 2002, 220.)

Communication needs to be structured in order to communicate key strategic messages to employees and it needs to underline organization' strategic objectives. Messages need to be targeted and information has to be tailored to the audience. This makes messages and information relevant and meaningful, and at the same time communication stays consistent. (Barret 2002, 221.)

The tone of voice is important in communication, especially when there is a need to communicate about changes or the organizations' goals. Today, a connection is needed and wanted instead of the top dictating what to do. The focus needs to be in achieving a common goal by connecting employees and forgetting the feel of power. The communication has power, however, a communicative power. It means that the words and actions are used for assurance, acknowledgement, respect and satisfaction. This can be used in a positive way to create a connection between employees but using it in a negative way on purpose or unintentionally will create miscommunication. In some cases, employees might feel disconnected from the organization and it is a part of a communicator to understand and to find a way how to reconnect. (Cowan 2014, 37–39.)

Redundancy and repetition show that leaders care and believe in the change. Repetition cannot be minimized because it always gives a chance for some employee to hear about the changes for the first time. It is important to deliver the same message by using

different ways and tools. Delivering the same message in different words creates redundancy. (Clampitt et al. 2000, 54.)

When communicating to employees, management needs to think what channel would work best to achieve the wanted result. For example, emails are efficient but a very short-term solution as they do not convince employees for upcoming changes. Face-to-face communication is a powerful channel because it offers possibilities for employees to ask questions and therefore it is more dynamic. Face-to-face communication is expensive to management from the time-consuming perspective but in long-term it will give more than sent emails would. (Clampitt et al. 2000, 42–43.)

There is a relationship between a communication medium and communication effectiveness. The chosen medium can enhance or distort messages. Each medium (face-to-face, emails, intranet, etc.) has qualities which are suitable for some situations and some for others. A communication medium is consisted of three qualities: ability to handle multiple information cues simultaneously, ability for a rapid feedback and ability to provide a personal focus. The more of learning is put through a medium, the richer the medium is. Therefore, face-to-face is the richest medium because it has direct experience, multiple information cues, immediate feedback and personal focus. Electronic media is lacking body language and written media is slow in feedback and transmits limited number of cues. (Lengel & Daft 1988, 225–226.)

Communication media are tools for leaders to communicate and explain work situations and influence or direct co-workers. In the study, it was found that messages could be classified into a continuum of routine to nonroutine. Routine communications are straightforward messages, rational and logical, containing no surprises. Therefore, routine communication does not need a rich medium in order to achieve an understanding between sender and receiver. Nonroutine communication often includes surprise and time pressure, a potential for misunderstanding. Nonroutine communication needs a rich medium in order to have a possibility to influence on how messages might be interpreted. Rich medium is used to trying to achieve a meeting of the minds between sender and receiver. The richness of the medium should be selected to fit the message. (Lengel & Daft 1988, 226–227.)

Asymmetrical communication is a one-way communication that is done from the top down to employees. Symmetrical communication is a two-way communication, a dialogue between organizations and employees. Characteristics of symmetrical communication are trust, credibility, openness, feedback, horizontal communication, sufficiency of information

and employee-centered style. Symmetrical communication style is used by transformational leaders. Transformational leaders are really interested in employees' well-being, create trust and confidence amongst employees and encourage employees for self-development. Transformational leaders are eager to listen employees' feedback and want them to be part of the decision-making process, which creates organizational engagement and satisfaction. (Men 2014, 267–268.)

Using rich media such as face-to-face communication promotes organizations' symmetrical communication because it offers instant feedback possibilities and internal dialogue. Face-to-face communication can be done in smaller groups as well, such as team meetings, supervisor briefings, group problem-solving situations, etc. Symmetrical communication tool can also be organizations' inner channels that enable commenting, having a dialogue and giving feedback. These types of channels are known to increase engagement. (Men 2014, 269–270.)

Management in all levels in organizations should be included in sharing messages and information to employees, this will create information flow going across all organization's levels. Leaders should lead by an example during changes and they are setting the tone for information flow, whether it is open or closed. (Barret 2002, 221.)

Effective change communication to employees is to use all possible communication tools, but the most important tool is direct, face-to-face communication. Leaders need to be trained for this and improve these types of skills. (Barret 2002, 221.)

According to Albrecht (2010, 21–22), the concept of work engagement means that employees are using their voices. They generally ask questions in order to improve the organization. They are showing their interest towards the organization by using their voices which is a sign for an engagement. In order to use voice, there should be listening as well. If employees do not feel that their words count and they are being listened to, they will not say anything and are not engaged.

When employees have a voice and they are able to use it, it enhances the dialogue in organizations and makes employees more engaged. Employees have an opportunity to have an influence on the organization in many levels: culture, work tasks, products, services and atmosphere. Trust in the organization is the foundation of employee voice. (Bridger 2018, 94.)

To have an effective change communication means that communication staff needs to be close to the most important business issues and they need to be involved in the strategic and business planning processes. The communication staff needs to be seen as facilitators of change, not just as producers of information and publications. (Barret 2002, 222.)

In order to improve and do better, communication needs to be measured on how effective it has been during different key stages of changes. (Barret 2002, 222.)

2.5 Engagement by communication

In Welch (2011, 332, 335–336)'s article had discussions on whether engagement is an attitude, a psychological or a motivational state or a personal character trait. Communication can have an influence on attitudes and states but not so much on personal character traits. Welch have described how engagement is seen from different perspectives. Engagement can have a relation to three psychological states: meaningfulness, safety and availability, engagement can be seen as well as a positive attitude. Some thought that engagement is a psychological state, and some thought it to be an attitude. Engagement is seen as a complex network which includes character traits, state and behavioral forms. Later in 2010 engagement is thought to be a mix of attitudinal-type states and fixed steady-state tendencies. This complex view is useful for communicators since they need to communicate for internal stakeholders' core (trait) communication needs and for a surface (state and attitude) communication needs. Internal communication is one element in organizations' condition which promotes engagement.

Engagement have been identified into three types: trait engagement, state engagement and behavioral engagement. Trait engagement means that the world is seen and experienced of a certain point of view. State engagement is more of a psychological aspect, how to feel towards work and what is energy level. Behavioral engagement means optional effort or a certain form of in-role behavior. A positive relationship has been discovered between voice and state engagement which has an impact on behavioral engagement. State engagement is an assumption of behavioral engagement. Employees who feel that they are allowed to give opinions in organization, they will be more likely to be engaged, and this can lead into improving organization through behavior. When the employees feel that their voices are heard, it is easier to bring up developing points that will help management to make decisions and change things. When there is voice, there can be a positive outcome. (Albrecht 2010, 174, 177.)

Organizations' values and goals are explained and engaged to the employee through internal communication which then creates more of engagement. Well planned internal communication is an important part of employee engagement. Especially open and compelling communication from senior management increases the development of employee engagement. Senior management communication has been thought to be a part of internal corporate communication which is emphasized for its importance. Internal corporate communication can be seen as one of the four dimensions of internal communication. (Welch 2011, 339.)

It is important to engage employees by involving them and by two-way communication, because then changes will happen through employees and not to employees. The key is to have a better communication and employee engagement which then will create employee engagement and empowerment. Some studies have found that 72% of practitioners think employee involvement is most important and 70% think that having honest and transparent communication and in a right time, and having it continuously is most important. Engaged employees have more readiness to changes. Some studies have claimed that intrinsic motivation factors help and engage employees in long-term during the change process. (Appelbaum et al. 2018, 46.)

There is a difference to when an employee is happy and when an employee is engaged: these two terms doesn't mean the same thing. Employee engagement and communications means an exchange between an employee's participation in the success of the organizational mission and what makes an employee content with their work/life. This has changed the traditional communication style to understanding behavior. To understand internal communication and employee engagement, an understanding needs to be created of human behavior and how it exhibits, impersonates and impacts the behavior of colleagues and employees. (Cowan 2017, chapter "Internal communications is about communicating behavior".)

Trust and engagement are linked together. Management has a big role when creating trust in organizations. Employees need to have trust in others and for organization to feel safe, but they also need to feel trust by management, and therefore management needs to create actions that increase trust. There are two points that show when there is trust in organization. First, employees are passing on the good which they are receiving from others. Second, employees are feeling that other employees/management have integrity, capacity and goodwill, and that people are working and acting openly and are not behaving opportunistically. When there is this kind of trust, employees can act and work

freely together, which is the foundation of engagement and for effectiveness. When there is trust, employees will more likely invest more of their personal energy into an organization. (Albrecht 2010, 161.)

3 Motivation

Motivation is a value-based concept. Employees have different levels of work motivation, and different types and dimensions of motivation. (Park & Rainey 2012, 2633.)

Motivation tries to explain the “why” of behavior. Motivation is goal-directed behavior that pushes employees towards certain forms of behavior and not others. To be able to understand motivation, internal physiological needs and external situational demands need to be understood. Theories of motivation try to explain behavior which is related to instincts and drivers, and incentives and rewards. (Gorman 2004, 1, 7.)

The commonly known Maslow’s hierarchy of needs’ triangle explains how needs have been divided. At the bottom are the most basic of survival needs and at the top is self-actualization. The needs at the bottom of the hierarchy must be fulfilled before an employee can consider other needs from the top. (Gorman 2004, 44–45.)

In this chapter I concentrate on Martela & Jarenko (2015)’s views on intrinsic motivation factors.

3.1 Intrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation is the start of a creativity. It will guide and create a vision and objectives which then will drives people forward. (Sydänmaanlakka 2017, 187.)

Intrinsic motivation comes from psychologic needs and values that resonate to an employee, and it is related to actual work and working. This means that intrinsic motivation is associated with the content of work, versatility and how challenging the work is. Intrinsic motivation is long-lasting and in this state of mind employees want to continuously develop themselves, learn new skills, develop in their work tasks and to do a meaningful work. Based on studies intrinsic motivation is related to better well-being, satisfied life and positive feelings. (Sinokki 2016, 98–99.)

A self-determination theory has been adapted as a framework of work motivation. According to it, intrinsic motivation means an involvement in an activity for its own sake with enjoyment and interest. Extrinsic motivation means performing an activity for an instrumental reason. Based on a self-determination theory, autonomous regulation is realized when there is a satisfaction in basic psychological needs: competence, autonomy and relatedness. The need for autonomy is fulfilled when employees believe that what

they are doing is of their own will and based on their core values. The need for competence is fulfilled when employees have the capacity and resources to achieve their goals and accomplish their tasks. The need of relatedness is fulfilled when employees feel that they are part of the organization and that they are being valued and appreciated. (Albrecht 2010, 65–66.)

Intrinsic motivation is based on four factors: a choice of freedom, competence, meaningfulness and progression. When employees can use their own judgement and execute their work in their own way, the choice of freedom factor is being fulfilled. Competence is related to being proud of your own work that is done with quality and professionally. Meaningfulness is associated with aiming towards a valuable goal or a work task that is related to a big picture and therefore meaningful. In progression employee feels success when the final goal/target is getting closer in his/her journey towards it. (Sinokki 2016, 100.)

When a human's psychological basic needs are in order, it will create and start intrinsic motivation. This means that an employee has a drive to do his/her job well and is motivated to develop himself/herself to become better. An employee who has intrinsic motivation, is feeling good and is more likely to create added value to the organization. Therefore, intrinsic motivation is a key factor for future's business and performing in it. There are four basic needs that, after being filled, will create excitement, relevance and drive for doing things: the need of voluntary, the need of capacity, the need of social cohesion and the need of doing good. The need of voluntary means that an employee can choose the tasks which interests them the most and choose the way of doing them. Then the work is not forced from an organization and shows the identity of an employee and who is he/she as a person. The need of capacity means that the work will create enough challenges and a possibility to use the knowledge, and that an employee is able to develop and can feel achievements. The need of social cohesion means a feeling of being a part of the work community where an employee is cared for and appreciated as a person. The need of doing good means that, through the work, an employee can achieve something good, whether it is for colleagues, customers or society. (Martela & Jarenko 2015 17–18.)

There are six guiding elements for individuals: a feeling of being part of community, a feeling that your work is meaningful, a feeling of challenging work and development, a feeling of control, a feeling of knowing what is expected and a feeling of appreciation and getting feedback. Although everyone is an individual, there is still a basic need for feeling of being a part of community and team. When an employee knows the meaning of his/her

work, then intrinsic motivation is high. Work needs to be challenging enough and it needs to offer a personal development. Employees need to have a feeling of control in their work tasks, time management and having the balance in their work. Employees need to have an authority to make decisions regarding their work. Employees need to know what is expected from their work and what their role is. Employees need a positive and constructive feedback; they need to feel that they are appreciated. (Leppänen&Rauhala 2012, 247.)

From an employee's perspective, having a meaningful work means that there is a balance between goals/targets, a freedom and a responsibility and a role. It means that targets are challenging enough but achievable, and that the employee has a feeling that he/she can influence on and adjust their work. It also means that an employee sees and understand their job's meaning in the big picture. (Isoaho 2007, 58.) It is easier to acknowledge the meaning and importance when the employee has heard it from management, supervisor, colleagues, etc.

The figure 3 of a motivation diamond describes key factors of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, and the key questions related to them. A big part of work motivation can be explained through two basic factors in human's motivation system: safety and acceptance. There is a need to secure the physical safety and well-being, and a need to get an acceptance and status from community. Both factors are part of extrinsic motivation which explains why employees are not doing things because they are inspired by the work itself, but because they are trying to gain acceptance, a status or assets, such as a bigger compensation. Employees are replying to a question "How to stay alive?". When you want to increase intrinsic motivation in employees, a good first question would be "What makes the life worth of living?" There are four categorized factors for this part of the motivation diamond: the need of social cohesion, the need of capacity, the need of voluntary and the need of doing good. The first three are based on self-determination theory. These four factors are explained in the following paragraphs. (Martela & Jarenko 2015, 53–57.)

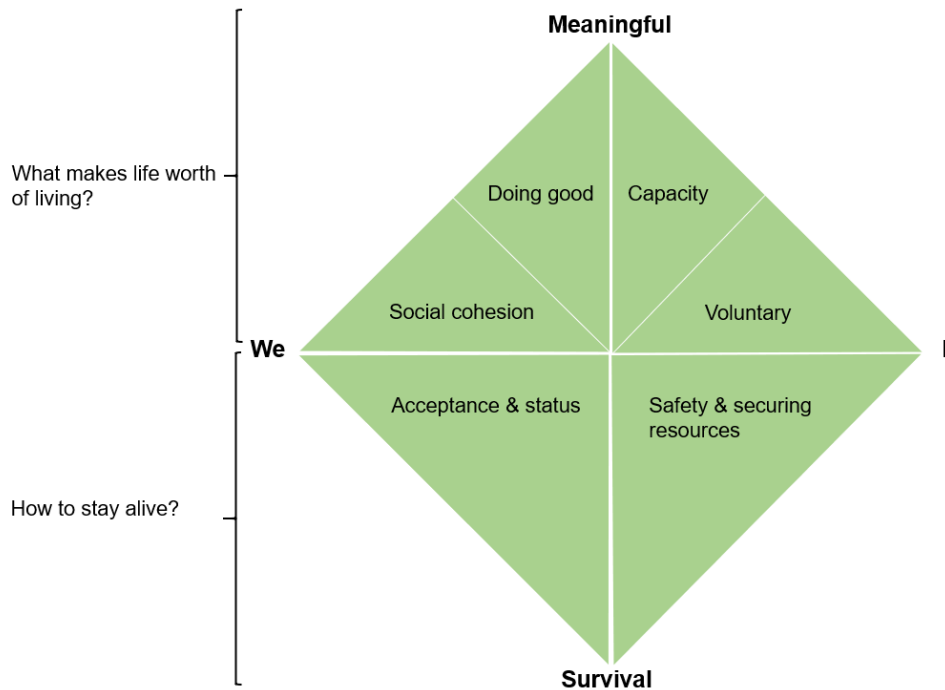


Figure 3. Motivation diamond adapted from Martela & Jarenko (2015).

The need of voluntary and the need of capacity are two basic needs for self-actualization. In this context, the need of voluntary means how employees can express themselves through actions and how self-determination is experienced. Employees need to understand values and goals of the organization and adopt them in order to feel free when working, and then motivation towards work comes from inside. To get to this point, management cannot do micromanagement and control the employees too strictly. Instead, they need to give some space to the employees so that they can reach the organization's goals in their own way. Organizations need to keep this in mind when they want to keep their experts in house. The need of capacity means the employees' experience of how they can do things and the feeling that they can do their part in the organization. Employees enjoy when they can do something they are good at. Employees are also more content when they get something done, and this will increase motivation. Employees need a certain amount of challenges to develop their skills and knowledge, and this is important in keeping their capacity and motivation. (Martela & Jarenko 2015, 57–60.)

The need of capacity in work consists of three areas: competence in the work and a feeling of control, accomplishments, and continuous learning and developing. The feeling of control is more often related to coping at work and handling stress than the actual workload. In these situations, a management has a big role in communicating the situation to employees and making sure that employees feel competent and in control during changes. Accomplishments are important for employees and, again, it increases coping at

work when employees see concrete results. It is important for management or an employee to create concrete steps during a project or a process in order to keep employees motivated and keep their feeling of control. Continuously learning and developing themselves is a part of intrinsic motivation, although the level of interest might vary among individuals. (Martela & Jarenko 2015, 98–100.)

Instead of focusing on performance and showing excellence, the employees need to concentrate on learning; what they can learn and in which areas can they grow. That would create intrinsic motivation instead of performing, and the employees can achieve much more while being happier and content about themselves. When thinking about growing, learning and self-awareness, there are questions that need to be asked. How can I do this differently? What do I need to learn to achieve my goals? When you have intrinsic motivation drivers and willingness to grow, changes and challenges do not impact as negatively. Also, when the employees are growth-oriented, they seek learning possibilities from failures and changes. (Wendelin 2013, 111–112.)

Beside self-actualization, employees need social cohesion. This is one of the basic needs to feel connection, and the second basic need is doing good. Even though employees are individuals, they get influences from surroundings, people and other employees in a positive and negative way. In general, employees are big part of others' motivation and well-being. From a social environment, employees want an affection and a possibility to influence. Employees need to feel that they can be their own people in organizations and that the organizations care for them. This type of experience is possible when an organization has a culture or an atmosphere that the employees are appreciated and there is a good spirit. Beside this, employees have the need for doing good for other people with their work. When employees are able to do good for others or feel that they are doing good, it creates a win-win situation where he/she is also doing good for himself/herself. (Martela & Jarenko 2015, 60–62.)

The need of doing good can simply mean to get positive feedback directly from customers such as customer stories done by marketing department. This also shows that there is not a clear division between external and internal communication; there is communication. When an employee hears how a customer is speaking positively about a product/service and the concrete benefits they have gained because of it, it will give motivation and drive for employees to do their jobs even better. Their jobs matter and that is what employees want to hear, and that will engage them into an organization.

When employees receive positive feedback, it will increase motivation and engagement towards work community. When they get feedback, employees feel that they are valued and that their work is meaningful. (Sinokki 2016, 90.)

The need of social cohesion consists of three areas: a mutual group spirit, caring and an appreciation from management, and reliable and fair actions. Employees need to feel that they are part of a mutual group spirit and that they are appreciated just the way they are. They need to care about the community and the community needs to care about them. Beside an appreciation from a group, it is important to feel it from the management as well. An employee wants management to genuinely care about him/her. A reliable and equitable action is based on keeping promises in all levels and that actions are seen and conducted equitably. One way to improve social cohesion is to improve teams, team spirit and teamwork. It can be done through communication and making sure that everyone has the same amount of time to speak. The best way to communicate, even today, is face-to-face communication. When talking about social cohesion, it is clear that a team should bond by talking to each other without a need to have a leader present. A team should be able to talk about topics even when the whole team is not present and then inform the others. That creates a trust inside a team. Teams that spend time together and/or are connected outside the working hours creates a new inspiration for the team. (Martela & Jarenko 2015, 119–120, 122.)

The need of doing good in organizations consists of three areas: a mission, an impact and helping. A mission means that an organization is making something good in long-term. When there is a strong mission, employees want to be a part of it and fight for the organization's existence and therefore are highly engaged in the organization. An impact means what good an employee can produce with their work to other people and this also creates motivation. Helping means that an employee has a positive impact inside the organization by helping team members or other employees, and therefore he/she feels valuable to an organization. (Martela & Jarenko 2015, 142–143.)

3.2 Intrinsic motivation factors' impact on productivity in organizations

According to Martela & Jarenko (2015, 42), there are eight reasons why employees who have the drive are more productive: 1. they put more effort and energy in their work, 2. they see their work from a broader perspective, 3. they learn faster and their learning has more depth, 4. they are more creative and produce more innovations, 5. they work more persistently with their work tasks, 6. they are better in customer service, 7. they rarely change their workplace, 8. they have less sick leaves. In the next paragraph these reasons are discussed in more detail.

The first reason explains that the more employees put more energy in their work tasks, the better they will succeed in them by average. In the second reason, when employees have extrinsic motivation, they do what is requested, but when they have intrinsic motivation, they are doing work with their whole persona. Therefore, employees with intrinsic motivation are more proactive, make more initiatives, and strive towards a better result through self-management. Currently, there are lot of changes in organizations, and employees need to adapt in them and educate themselves on a regular basis. This is crucial for the third reason, in which employees with a drive are more willing to educate themselves and learn new skills, and because of this, their learning process has more depth. When the drive is combined with learning, it results in profit. The fourth reason is based on employees' emotion, especially positive feelings. This means that there is a willingness to review things from a broader aspect, openness to new information and a capacity to find more creative solutions. In the fifth reason, driven and enthusiastic employees with intrinsic motivation can last longer with work tasks and they do not see their workload mentally overwhelming compared to employees who have extrinsic motivation. In the sixth reason, feeling good is related to customer service. When employees are delivering their own good feeling to customers through a service, this will have impact on how the customers are rating organizations. A customer loyalty can increase profit more efficiently than by being a market leader. In the seventh reason to keep employees, it is important for the employees to feel the drive for the work and for the work to enable that. This creates intrinsic motivation and the result is that the employees stay in the workplace for a longer period. The eight reason is based on raising awareness for the well-being of employees. Employees are always an investment for organizations, and they need to be taken care of for them to be more profitable for organizations. Today, it is important to give in advance guidance for health, self-management and to having energy in life. In order to minimize sick leaves and to increase work efficiency, organizations need to invest in different health coaching programs, wellbeing and health services and workshops. (Martela & Jarenko 2015, 42–48.)

It is more demanding for employees to work in organizations that are driven by intrinsic motivation than working in organizations that have a traditional hierarchy. This new model is giving employees responsibility to make decisions and making them accountable of them. It also drives employees to change matters instead of complaining about them. Employees also are responsible for setting personal goals after they have been informed about organization's goals, and following up on them, which means that work needs to be planned and organized, and skills need to be updated. They need to have skills for time management, project management and planning models. When the responsibility has

been shifted to employees, they need to be careful of their well-being and time management and follow up on them. This model only works when employees are interested in developing themselves and organizations and taking responsibility of own actions. Then they will manage and enjoy their work. (Martela & Jarenko 2015, 180–181.)

When employees have intrinsic motivation, they are interested about the job itself and not so much of the rewards. These kinds of employees are feeling better and are not likely to have a burnout. Employees with intrinsic motivation are achieving more due to enthusiasm, and this can be seen directly on company's profit. The future leadership means leading the energy of employees and not leading the time consumption. This means that the most important role for the management is to make sure that every employee has the possibility to experience the drive for their work. (Martela & Jarenko 2015, 21.)

The best workplace is where the organization is profitable, employees are feeling good and emotions are impacting the defining of goals. From the employees' point of view, the most important thing is that the organization is primarily a place for meaningful work, and secondarily a money-making machine. (Isoaho 2009, 18.)

How to lead the need of social cohesion, the need of capacity, the need of voluntary and the need of doing good? As mentioned earlier, the need of voluntary means an employee's personal experience that he/she is doing something he/she is interested in and it comes from their own interests and values. The need of voluntary can be identified into three categories: goals of self-motivation, freedom of how to work, and inspiring. The goals of self-motivation mean that an employee can be engaged in them. Communicating goals of self-motivation means that an employee is heard and what is meaningful and inspiring for him/her is understood, and then those things are linked to the job description and goals. A leader's job is to find, together with the employee, goals that are worth aiming for, from both the organization's and the employee's point of view. A leader needs to have an inspiring vision that the employee wants to execute and sees the organization going towards it. A freedom of how to work is possible to execute when the goals are clear. When a common goal is established, a leader should take a step back and let an employee go towards it in ways, he/she feels is suitable and right for him/her. It is important to let employees feel trust in that they are professionals in what they are doing, and not to control them with micromanagement. It can be extremely harmful for those employees who hold freedom in high position in their motivation factors. Employees are inspired by different things and two people in a same work position might be inspired in two different ways, even though the job description is the same. Again, listening is

important for the leader to understand what inspires the employees. It is also important for the employee to understand what inspires himself/herself in order to ask for those types of tasks and in order to define a career path for the future. (Martela & Jarenko 2015, 68–72.)

A relationship between psychological capital and organization's success has been studied by Fred Luthans. Based on the studies, an individual's and organization's high psychological capital is connected to positive feelings, work motivation and work engagement. An employee with high psychological capital is more responsive and flexible for changes in organization. Psychological capital increases an inner entrepreneurship for employees and for a whole organization, which then will have an impact on productivity in an organization. (Leppänen&Rauhala 2012, 50.)

4 Conducting the study

This study focuses on how knowledge workers see and feel continuous change and how this affects on their intrinsic motivation factors. The initial idea for the study was that today changes are a part of everyday work life. Changes are not seen only as big projects that have a start and an ending. Instead, knowledge workers face changes every day. Are changes seen in a positive or negative way and do engagement and intrinsic motivation have an impact on attitudes and readiness for changes? The study was based on this main research question: "How to communicate continuous changes in order to keep employees motivated?". The main research question needed to have follow-up sub-questions so that the collected data would be wider, and it would be analyzed from different angles. The three sub-questions are the following:

1. How do knowledge workers describe their motivational factors?
2. How do knowledge workers see changes in their work?
3. How do knowledge workers describe communication about the meaningfulness of the work?

4.1 Methodological approaches

When research questions do not suggest a certain philosophy to be applied, the pragmatist's view states that it is possible to work with different philosophical positions. There are many ways of interpreting the world and undertaking research, and it is not possible to give a whole picture as there could be multiple realities. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2016, 130.) The study is not done for a special case or a company, but the aim is to study if there is a link between intrinsic motivation factors and engagement in general. When studying people's personal beliefs, feelings and motivation factors, there is not only one correct answer or a study. Therefore, pragmatism is a suitable philosophy for this study. Pragmatism is appealing for researchers as they can study what interests them and has value for them, and there is no need to debate between truth and reality (Saunders et al. 2009, 109).

Inductive approach is used to generate untested conclusions, and it generalizes from the specific to the general. When collecting data, it is used to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns and create a conceptual framework. In deductive approach, when the premises are true, the conclusions must be true as well. Deduction generalizes from the general to the specific, and data collection is used to evaluate propositions and hypotheses related to an existing theory. In abductive approach, the known premises are used to generate testable conclusions, and it generalizes from the interactions between the specific and the general. Data collection is used to explore a phenomenon, identify

themes and patterns, locate these in a conceptual framework and test through data collection. (Saunders et al. 2016, 144.)

This study started from the theory and, after building the knowledge, was moved on to the empirical part of the study. This would mean deductive approach, but there was an interest for studying phenomenon and finding patterns, and through those to create a conceptual framework. Therefore, for this study, I chose an abductive approach that combines the inductive and deductive approaches' best and most suitable features.

4.2 Data collection

The data was collected using a quantitative method, an online survey, and it was conducted through an online Webropol survey tool. Access for this tool was provided by the Haaga-Helia school. As the study is not a case study, I wanted to use a generic survey tool which cannot be linked to any specific organization. The survey was bilingual: in English and Finnish. A respondent could choose a preferred language in the beginning of the survey.

The survey was filled online and it was anonymous. The survey was open from 23 April to 23 May 2019. The survey was shared and sent to six different groups of my network. With a permission, the survey was sent to all master students in Haaga-Helia (895 students) via email. Then I sent the survey via email to my colleagues at work (approx. 100). After both emails, I started to use social media channels, LinkedIn and Facebook. In LinkedIn, I created a post to my wall where I wrote a short introduction about the study and added the link to the comment field. The post got almost 5000 views, 21 likes, 54 comments and five shares. In Facebook, I used the same introduction and the survey link and I got a request to make this post public for people to be able to share it. I also posted the same information to a Facebook group I am part of, Pirkanmaan markkinoijat & viestijät. In addition, as a sixth network group, I used my father's network. He shared my public post into JCI Finland Facebook group. Altogether I received 319 responses. Over 200 responses came through from different social media channels.

The survey method is a popular and common as it is the most used method to answer questions such as what, how much and how many. In the survey, the method is to collect a large amount of data from a population in an economical way such as through web surveys. The collected data is quantitative data that is analyzed and used to find relationships between variables and to produce models of them. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009, 144).

A quantitative study is used for generalization and is based on numbers: a sample group represents the behavior of a population, for example. A quantitative study is measurable and most often conducted through surveys. Materials from surveys are processed with statistical methods. In quantitative studies, one method can be an interview, but it is conducted through survey as an open-ended answer. Frequencies are searched from answers. (Kananen 2011, 17–19.)

A quantitative study follows scientific study's rules of defining problems, setting questions, collecting data and analyzing data (Kananen 2011, 20). Steps and the process of a quantitative study is shown in the figure 4.

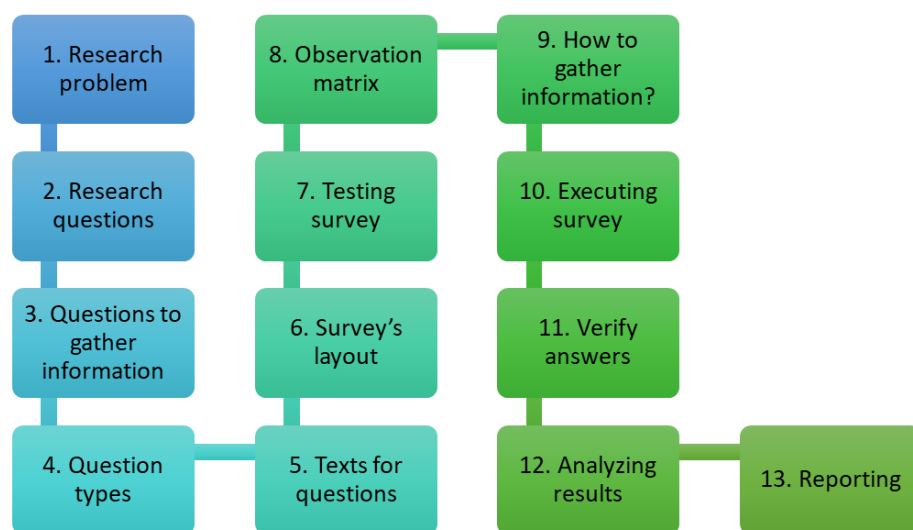


Figure 4. Steps for quantitative study adapted from Kananen (2011)

In mono method, you can choose either a single quantitative data collection technique and quantitative data analysis procedure or a single qualitative data collection technique and qualitative data analysis procedure (Saunders et al. 2009, 151–152). In this study, the mono method was used with quantitative data collection technique and data analysis through online survey.

Time horizon needs to be thought of when planning to conduct a study. There are two possibilities for this, depending on the research questions: cross-sectional and longitudinal. Cross-sectional is related to a particular time or a particular phenomenon. Longitudinal is related to a long period where the study changes and develops. (Saunders

et al. 2009, 155) This study is cross-sectional and studies a phenomenon of today's work life.

The aim of this study was to find how to communicate continuous changes in order to keep employees motivated. How is intrinsic/extrinsic motivation built in the daily lives of knowledge workers'? How do knowledge workers see changes in their work? How good is their readiness for changes? How do supervisors support the meaningfulness of the work through communication?

During the process, I used three different mentors and my instructor from Haaga-Helia to challenge me in my thought process to find the right questions for the survey. The first survey was sent to 10 people from different networks and I asked them to be part of my test group. After receiving some feedback, I adjusted the survey before sending it out to all the networks which were specified in chapter 4.3.

The literature, Martela & Jarenko (2015)'s book "Draivi – voiko sisäistä motivaatiota johtaa?", was used as a base for creating questions, answer options and categorizing answers relating to intrinsic motivation factors. The literature was heavily used in the survey to help categorize the answers and to draw the conclusions. Four intrinsic categories were the base for options in questions 7,8 and 13. The question 8 was an identical as the question 7. For the questions 7 and 13 I came up answering options which would be related to Martela&Jarenko (2015)'s intrinsic motivation categories. The figure 5 presents how options were divided in the 7th question. These categories were not shown to the respondents.

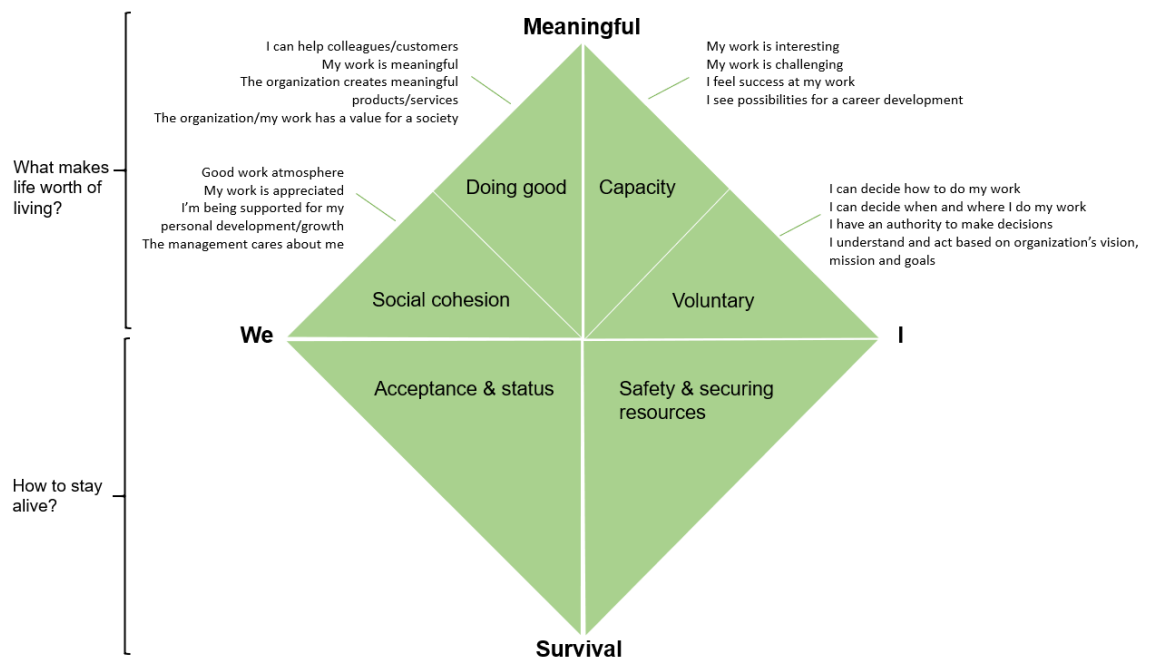


Figure 5. An example of the survey's options related to a motivation diamond adapted from Martela & Jarenko (2015).

The survey started with six background questions, plus one extra question to open an organization field. Then there were 17 actual questions, some had additional questions depending on answers. It was not shown to respondents, but the survey was divided into following topics: background (questions 1–6 and 6.1), motivation (questions 7–11), change (questions 12–19) and communication (questions 20, 20.1–20.2).

In general, the survey had multiple-choice questions which were compulsory, and open-end questions which were not compulsory. The survey ended with a possibility to leave contact information; in case a respondent would like to receive this thesis. It was emphasized that if a respondent wants to leave their contact information, they would not be connected to answers. The survey was answered anonymously.

The English version of the survey can be found in appendix 2. The chapter 6 summarizes conclusions on the research questions.

5 Findings of the study

This chapter presents the results of the study. The chapter is divided into four sections based on how the actual survey was divided into sections: background information, motivation, change and communication. This chapter will provide answers to the following research questions:

1. How do knowledge workers describe their motivational factors?
2. How do knowledge workers see changes in their work?
3. How do knowledge workers describe communication about the meaningfulness of the work?

From a traditional aspect, a change in a workplace is usually seen as a big project which has a start and an ending, such as an organization change, for example. In this study, changes are seen as a part of everyday work life that knowledge workers face daily. How to stay motivated and engaged through the everyday changes?

In this study, communication refers to internal communication. It can be done by anyone in the organization, using all possible channels what can be thought of. Communication is related to everyday changes.

5.1 Background information

As it was explained in chapter 5.2 Data collection, the online survey was sent out to six different groups from which four were different social media channels. Therefore, the response rate was not calculable. Altogether 319 people responded to the survey. The study had six background questions and an extra one depending on answers on the sixth question. Background questions were about gender, age, working experience, position, organization size, organization and, in addition, organization field.

Question 1: Gender. From 319 respondents 32% (n=102) was male and 67.1% (n=214) was female. Two responded with an option "N/A" and one responded with an option "Other". If there will be findings related to gender, the last three mentioned responses will be rejected due to too small batch of other genders. The question was compulsory.

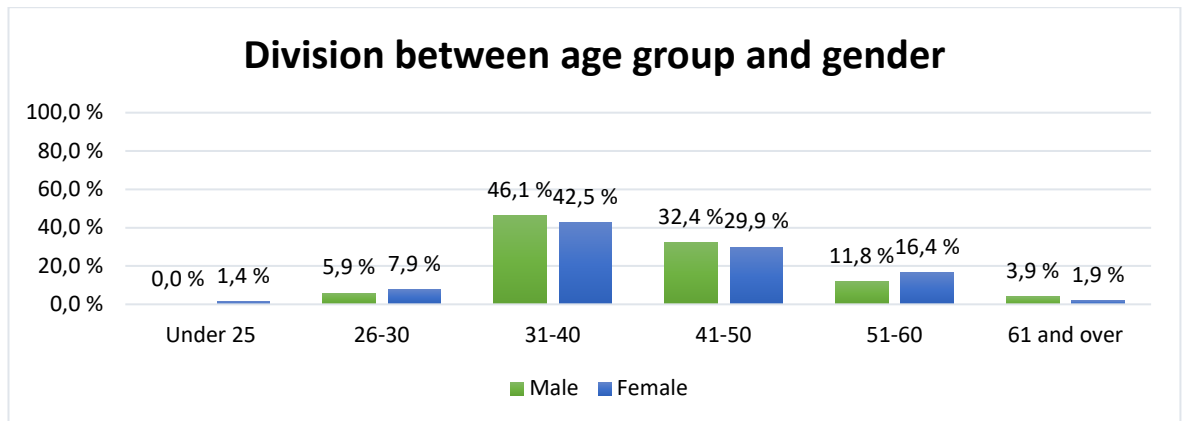
Question 2: Age. The question was compulsory. Table 1 demonstrates that most of the respondents (44.2%) were part of the age group of 31–40. The second biggest age group was 41–50 by 30.4%. The third biggest age group was 51–60 by 14.7%

Table 1. Question 2: Age

| | N | 319 |
|-------------|-----|-------|
| | | % |
| 31–40 | 141 | 44.2 |
| 41–50 | 97 | 30.4 |
| 51–60 | 47 | 14.7 |
| 26–30 | 23 | 7.2 |
| 61 and over | 8 | 2.5 |
| Under 25 | 3 | 0.9 |
| Total | 319 | 100.0 |

Table 2 demonstrates how gender and age groups have been divided. In the age groups 31–40, 41–50 and 61 and over, there are slightly more males than females. In age groups under 25, 26–30 and 51–60, there are more females than males. Although there were twice as many females as males, genders and age groups have been divided quite evenly.

Table 2. Division between age group and gender



Question 3: Working experience. The question was compulsory and received 319 responses. It was about the respondents' working experience (in years) in the current organization. In the current organization, over half (50.8%, n=162) of the respondents had been working under five years and almost half (49.2%, n=157) of the respondents had been working over five years. Table 3 shows how working years' categories has been divided between the respondents.

Table 3. Question 3: Working experience

| | N | 319 % |
|-------------------|-----|----------|
| Under five years | 162 | 50.8 |
| 5–10 years | 82 | 25.7 |
| 11–20 years | 53 | 16.6 |
| 21 years and over | 22 | 6.9 |
| Total | 319 | 100.0 |

Question 4: Position. The question was compulsory. The options were chosen based on commonly used positions in generic studies. Table 4 shows the division between the positions. The biggest group of respondents (34.5%, n=110) was managerial employees. The second biggest group (21.3%, n=68) was functionaries. The third and the fourth group had almost the same number of respondents: supervisors (11.3%, n=36) and workers (11.0%, n=35). The fifth and the sixth group had a difference of two respondents, management (8.5%, n=27) and entrepreneurs (7.8%, n=25). The two smallest groups of respondents were top management (4.4%, n=14) and others (1.3%, n=4).

Table 4. Question 4: Position

| | N | 319 % |
|---------------------|-----|----------|
| Managerial employee | 110 | 34.5 |
| Functionary | 68 | 21.3 |
| Supervisor | 36 | 11.3 |
| Worker | 35 | 11.0 |
| Management | 27 | 8.5 |
| Entrepreneur | 25 | 7.8 |
| Top management | 14 | 4.4 |
| Other | 4 | 1.3 |
| Total | 319 | 100.0 |

Question 5: Organization size. Most of the respondents (38.6%, n=123) worked in organizations which had at least 250 employees. The second biggest group (31.3%, n=100) worked in organizations which had 51–249 employees. 17.9% (n=57) worked in organizations of 11–50 employees and 12.2% (n=39) worked in organizations of less than 10 employees. The question was compulsory.

Question 6: Organization. Most of the respondents (68.0%, n=217) worked in a privately held company/own company. 16.9% (n=54) worked in a public company. Rest of the 15% of the respondents worked in following organizations: other employer (6.0%, n=19), government (5.3%, n=17) and municipality (3.8%, n=12). The question was compulsory.

Question 6.1: Organization field. If a respondent responded “A privately held company/Own company” or “A public company” in the sixth question, they were shown the question 6.1, which asked to specify the organization field. In that case, the question was compulsory. The classifications were taken from Statistics Finland’s web pages. Table 5 shows that it was answered by 271 respondents. From that amount, 24.0% (n=65) of the organizations were in information and communication field, this was the biggest individual field. Other two the most responses received fields were manufacturing 13.7% (n=37) and other service activities 13.3% (n=36).

This question explains that most of the respondents work in information and communication field and therefore were more eager to response in this study. In future analysis of answers, this can be seen as well; this group of respondents sees the importance of communications.

Table 5. Question 6.1: Organization field

| | N | 271 % |
|--|----|----------|
| Information and communication | 65 | 24.0 |
| Manufacturing | 37 | 13.7 |
| Other service activities | 36 | 13.3 |
| Financial and insurance activities | 23 | 8.5 |
| Professional, scientific and technical activities | 23 | 8.5 |
| Education | 16 | 5.9 |
| Industry unknown | 15 | 5.5 |
| Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles | 10 | 3.7 |
| Real estate activities | 9 | 3.3 |
| Transportation and storage | 6 | 2.2 |
| Construction | 5 | 1.8 |
| Accommodation and food service activities | 5 | 1.8 |
| Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies | 4 | 1.5 |
| Mining and quarrying | 3 | 1.1 |

| | | |
|---|------------|--------------|
| Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply | 3 | 1.1 |
| Administrative and support service activities | 3 | 1.1 |
| Human health and social work activities | 3 | 1.1 |
| Arts, entertainment and recreation | 3 | 1.1 |
| Human health and social work activities | 3 | 1.1 |
| Arts, entertainment and recreation | 3 | 1.1 |
| Agriculture, forestry and fishing | 1 | 0.4 |
| Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities | 1 | 0.4 |
| Public administration and defence; compulsory social security | 0 | 0 |
| Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods and services producing activities of households for own use | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 271 | 100.0 |

Based on the background information, this group of respondents is very similar to each other's as most of the respondents (24.0%) worked at information and communication field. Due to this the respondents have thought quite similar in the following questions related to motivation, changes and communication.

5.2 Motivation

Question 7: Why do you work in your current workplace. As it was written on chapter 3, Martela & Jarenko (2015, 17–18) defines inner motivation into four categories of basic needs: the need of voluntary, the need of capacity, the need of social cohesion and the need of doing good. When these are filled, it will create excitement, relevance and drive for doing things. The need of voluntary means that an employee can choose the tasks that interest them the most and choose their own way of doing them. Then the work is not forced from organization and shows the identity of an employee and who is he/she as a person. The need of capacity means that the work will create enough challenges and a possibility to use the knowledge, and that an employee is able to develop and can feel achievements. The need of social cohesion means a feeling of being a part of the work community where an employee is cared for and appreciated as a person. The need of doing good means that, through the work, the employee can achieve something good, whether it is for colleagues, customers or society.

These four categories were used in creating the list of options, and each category had four options. Four extrinsic motivation factors were added to the list as well. Originally, there were a lot more of extrinsic motivation factors, but based on comments of the test group, the amount of options needed to be reduced. Figure 6 visually demonstrates how

the options were divided into the four intrinsic motivation categories. From the figure is excluded extrinsic motivation options. The options in the questions 7 & 8 are based on these four categories and, therefore, this figure is useful for reading the analysis of these questions.

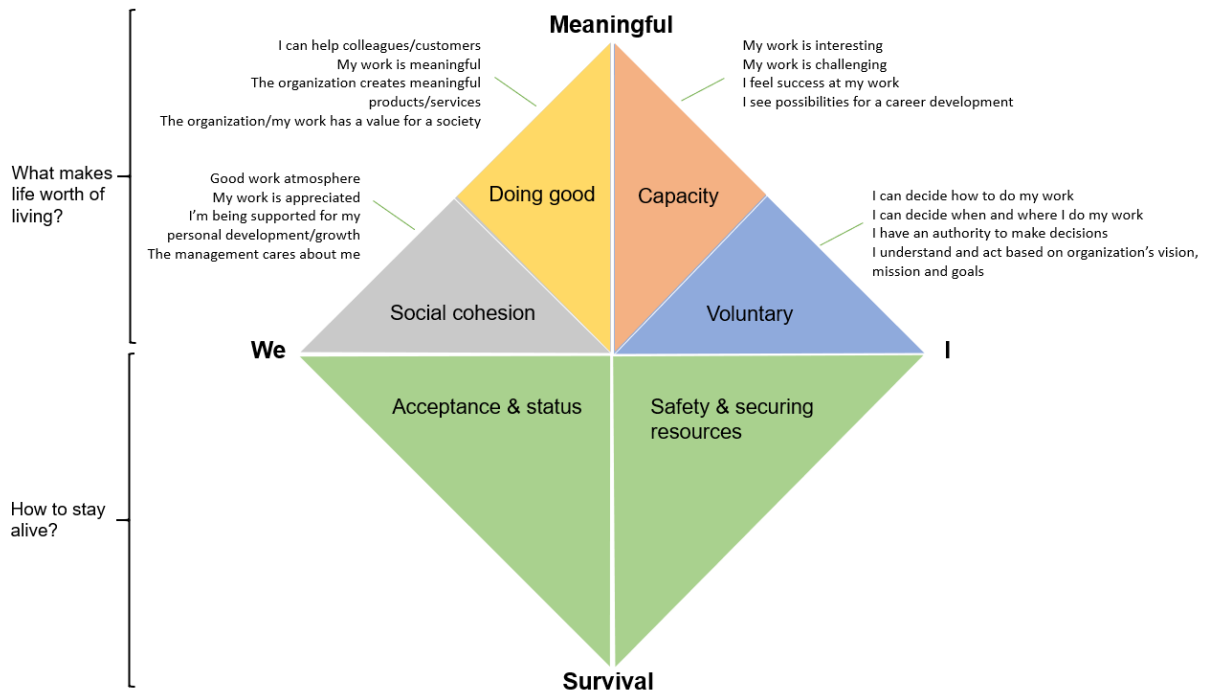


Figure 6. The options for the questions 7 and 8 based on a motivation diamond

The 7th question was compulsory, and each respondent had to choose five options from the list. The answers of four respondents were disqualified from this question. They had chosen “other” option and had written that they were forced to choose five options, and none of the options were true that they had chosen. The number of respondents in this question was 315.

The table 6 shows the top five of the options, and they all are related to the four mentioned categories. The most popular option was “My work is interesting” and it was chosen by over half of respondents (59.0%, n=186); the option is related to the capacity category. The second popular option was “I can decide how to do my work” and it was chosen by 45.4% (n=143) of respondents; the option is related to the voluntary category. The third popular option by 41.6% (n=131) was “My work is challenging”; the option is related to the capacity category. The fourth popular option was “Good work atmosphere” by 41.0% (n=129); the option is related to the social cohesion category. The fifth popular option was “I can help colleagues/customers” by 40.6% (n=128); the option is related to the doing good category.

Table 6. Question 7: Why do you work in your current organization

| | N | 315 % | Category |
|---|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| My work is interesting | 186 | 59.0 | Capacity |
| I can decide how to do my work | 143 | 45.4 | Voluntary |
| My work is challenging | 131 | 41.6 | Capacity |
| Good work atmosphere | 129 | 41.0 | Social Cohesion |
| I can help colleagues/customers | 128 | 40.6 | Doing good |
| I feel success at my work | 120 | 38.1 | Capacity |
| I can decide when and where I do my work | 100 | 31.7 | Voluntary |
| My work is meaningful | 90 | 28.6 | Doing good |
| I see possibilities for a career development | 76 | 24.1 | Capacity |
| The organization creates meaningful products/services | 72 | 22.9 | Doing good |
| Good benefits | 70 | 22.2 | |
| My work is appreciated | 70 | 22.2 | Social Cohesion |
| The organization/my work has a value for a society | 64 | 20.3 | Doing good |
| I have an authority to make decisions | 40 | 12.7 | Voluntary |
| I'm being supported for my personal development/growth | 36 | 11.4 | Social Cohesion |
| I understand and act based on organization's vision, mission and goals | 34 | 10.8 | Voluntary |
| Other, what? | 32 | 10.2 | |
| I'm part of the management | 19 | 6.0 | |
| An extra money bonus system | 16 | 5.1 | |
| The management cares about me | 11 | 3.5 | Social Cohesion |
| My title reflects my position in the organization | 8 | 2.5 | |
| Total | 315 | 500.0 | |

“Other, what?” answers (10.2%, n=32) were categorized separately into five most mentioned themes: the salary, the location, the current situation, self-improvement and

the flexibility. Six respondents mentioned the salary as it is a necessity. Also, six respondents wrote that there is a possibility to develop and the work is versatile. Five respondents felt that they are “stuck” in the current situation and have not found a new job. Four respondents mentioned that the current organization is in a good distance and the other four respondents mentioned that the employer is flexible which is suitable in their current situation.

Based on the table 6, all the options have received answers. Comparing the table 6 to the figure 6, it can be seen that the top five of the options were related to all four categories. The capacity category was chosen more often as it had two options in the top five. This means that employees have the need of using knowledge, the need of developing themselves, the need for the work to be challenging enough, and the need of feeling achievements. Based on this question, the most motivating factor for this group of respondents in general is self-improvement.

The figure 7 shows how the four categories were divided based on the answers. The need of the capacity was answered the most and the respondents are being motivated the most by self-improvement in their current organization. The need of capacity is something that they value the most highly. The need of doing good and the need of voluntary are almost equally valued by the respondents. Helping customers, colleagues and having a meaningful work is almost equally important as having a freedom of doing the work in their own way and having a freedom of working hours.

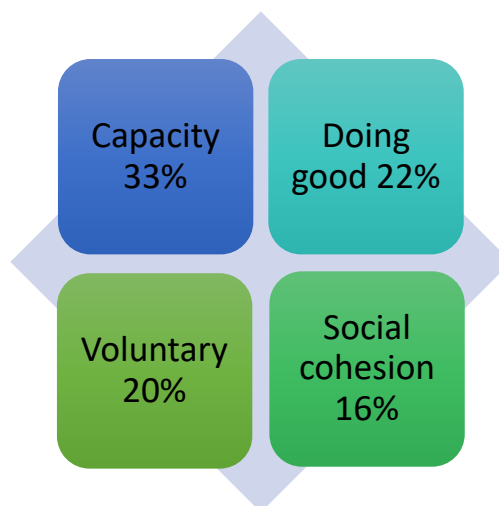


Figure 7. Fourfold table of intrinsic motivation factors

Question 8: How would you rate the motivation factors (previously chosen) considering your career in future. The question was compulsory, and each respondent was shown their choices from previous question in the matrix table. Only those chosen five options

were possible and compulsory to assess in a scale (1=very unimportant, 2=unimportant, 3=important, 4=very important, 5=I don't know). Regarding this question, answers from four respondents were disqualified based on question 7. The number of respondents in this question was 315.

When question 8 was analyzed and the mean was calculated, the option "I don't know" (5) was excluded from calculations. Table 7 explains means and standard deviations from intrinsic motivation factors. The smallest standard deviation had the option "I feel success at my work", this means that it was only assessed by values 4 and 5 (important and very important). The biggest standard deviation had the option "I understand, and act based on organization's vision, mission and goals". This means that it had received values from the whole scale from 1 to 5 (from very unimportant up to very important). Both of the mentioned means are bolded at the table 8. All the options received a mean of at least 3.00 which was quite expected, and this was proven in the table 7. It is more important and more valued when something is close to a person's own work. Versus something more abstract is valued less.

Table 7. Question 8: How would you rate the motivation factors (previously chosen) considering your career in future

| | Mean | Std. deviation |
|---|------|----------------|
| My work is interesting | 3,85 | 0,440 |
| Good work atmosphere | 3,84 | 0,391 |
| I feel success at my work | 3,83 | 0,382 |
| I can decide how to do my work | 3,77 | 0,499 |
| I can decide when and where I do my work | 3,68 | 0,548 |
| I have an authority to make decisions | 3,68 | 0,572 |
| My work is appreciated | 3,64 | 0,483 |
| The management cares about me | 3,64 | 0,674 |
| My work is meaningful | 3,63 | 0,507 |
| Other, what? | 3,54 | 0,582 |
| I see possibilities for a career development | 3,53 | 0,577 |
| I understand and act based on organization's vision, mission and goals | 3,53 | 0,788 |
| I'm being supported for my personal development/growth | 3,53 | 0,506 |
| The organization creates meaningful products/services | 3,44 | 0,651 |

| | | |
|--|------|-------|
| I can help colleagues/customers | 3,38 | 0,589 |
| My work is challenging | 3,36 | 0,583 |
| The organization/my work has a value for a society | 3,25 | 0,617 |
| Good benefits | 3,20 | 0,672 |
| An extra money bonus system | 3,06 | 0,772 |
| I'm part of the management | 3,00 | 0,745 |
| My title reflects my position in the organization | 3,00 | 0,756 |

Because all the options received the mean of 3,00, I decided to study and analyze if the rankings of the options would vary when compared to the frequencies. Even though some options had a fewer answers, they had a higher value, which is shown on table 8. The options that had higher rankings compared to frequencies are marked with the green color, and the vice versa with the red color. In addition, four options (including “other”) ascended into the top 10 of mean’s ranking list from the frequencies’ ranking list. These four options are marked with yellow color.

Table 8. The difference between mean and frequencies ranking

| | Ranking (mean) | | Ranking (frequencies) |
|----|--|----|---|
| 1 | My work is interesting | 1 | My work is interesting |
| 2 | Good work atmosphere | 2 | I can decide how to do my work |
| 3 | I feel success at my work | 3 | My work is challenging |
| 4 | I can decide how to do my work | 4 | Good work atmosphere |
| 5 | I can decide when and where I do my work | 5 | I can help colleagues/customers |
| 6 | I have an authority to make decisions | 6 | I feel success at my work |
| 7 | My work is appreciated | 7 | I can decide when and where I do my work |
| 8 | The management cares about me | 8 | My work is meaningful |
| 9 | My work is meaningful | 9 | I see possibilities for a career development |
| 10 | Other, what? | 10 | The organization creates meaningful products/services |
| 11 | I see possibilities for a career development | 11 | Good benefits |

| | | | |
|----|--|----|--|
| 12 | I understand and act based on organization's vision, mission and goals | 12 | My work is appreciated |
| 13 | I'm being supported for my personal development/growth | 13 | The organization/my work has a value for a society |
| 14 | The organization creates meaningful products/services | 14 | I have an authority to make decisions |
| 15 | I can help colleagues/customers | 15 | I'm being supported for my personal development/growth |
| 16 | My work is challenging | 16 | I understand and act based on organization's vision, mission and goals |
| 17 | The organization/my work has a value for a society | 17 | Other, what? |
| 18 | Good benefits | 18 | I'm part of the management |
| 19 | An extra money bonus system | 19 | An extra money bonus system |
| 20 | I'm part of the management | 20 | The management cares about me |
| 21 | My title reflects my position in the organization | 21 | My title reflects my position in the organization |

The options were related to the four mentioned categories and can be seen in the figure 6. The figure 8 below demonstrates the difference between the options related to the categories in the questions 7 and 8. When you look at the top 5 in frequencies and in means, and place the options into correct categories, it shows that all the categories were chosen in frequencies' table, and the capacity category had two options on that list. When you look at the rankings of the means, however, it shows that the respondents did not value the doing good category enough for it to be at the top five when they had to think from point of view of the future. Instead, the voluntary category had two options in the top five. For the future, it was more important for the respondents to be able to decide how, when and where they can do their work than to have meaningful work, a value to the society or that the organizations creates meaningful products/services.

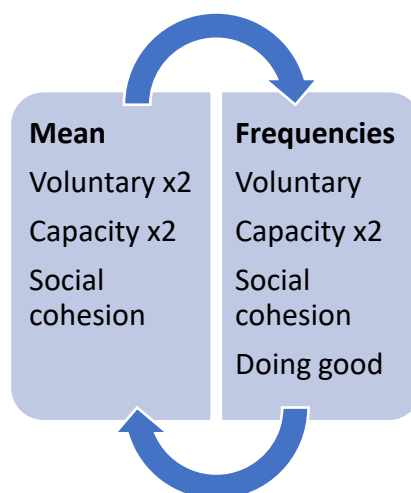


Figure 8. The category changes

Question 9: How would you describe your level of motivation towards your work. The question was compulsory. After the question, there was a sliding scale that the respondents had to move to give a value from 1 to 5 of their motivation levels. Each value was described in writing as well. Over 70% (n=225) of the respondents described their motivation level to be quite motivated or extremely motivated. 13.2% (n=42) of the respondents described their motivation level to be somewhat motivated. 16.3% (n=52) described their motivation level to be slightly motivated or not at all motivated. The table 9 specifies in detail how motivation levels and percentages were divided.

Table 9. Question 9: Motivation level

| | N | 319 |
|--------------------------------|-----|-------|
| | | % |
| Quite motivated (value 4) | 153 | 48.0 |
| Extremely motivated (value 5) | 72 | 22.6 |
| Somewhat motivated (value 3) | 42 | 13.2 |
| Slightly motivated (value 2) | 42 | 13.2 |
| Not at all motivated (value 1) | 10 | 3.1 |
| Total | 319 | 100.0 |

Question 10: Do you feel that you are sustaining your motivation with some specific ways. This was an open-ended question and non-compulsory. There were 271 respondents of the total 319. All answers were categorized, and eight main categories were found, and those are shown in the table 10. The biggest category of all the answers was self-improvement by 35.8% (n=97). 97 respondents wrote that they are taking extra education, reading professional books, participating seminars etc. The second biggest category was

development by 16.2% (n=44) where respondents mentioned that they are developing work tasks, processes and organization functions. This category covered the mentions of the development, but self-improvement was excluded from this category. These two biggest categories can be related to the need of capacity category.

The third biggest category was named as self-consciousness (8.5%, n=23) as it had mentions of how motivation is dependent on people's own attitude. Also, in this category, people wrote how they have paused their actions/work tasks and thought if they are doing the right thing while thinking about the bigger picture as well as their motivation. They are aware of motivation.

The next two categories are related to Martela & Jarenko (2015)'s category of the need of voluntary: making decisions (7.4%, n=20) and goals (7.0%, n=19). People wrote that it is important that they are able to decide things, are able to decide how to do their work and are able to decide if they want to change between different work tasks. In 19 answers, people that they are making goals and steps to be able to follow the development, and also to have moments of success while seeing things progressing.

The next category was related Martela & Jarenko (2015)'s category of the need of doing good: feedback and success/meaningful work by 7.0% (n=19). It was motivating for people to receive and give feedback to/from customers, colleagues and work community. From those situations people had moments of success and a feeling that their work is meaningful.

The last two established categories can be related to Martela & Jarenko (2015)'s category of the need of social cohesion as well: free time by 6.3% (n=17) and work community by 6.3% (n=17). People stayed motivated when work and free time was balanced and they were able to sleep, exercise, see friends and families, etc. The work community was motivating when there was a good feeling amongst people. People tried to bring that positive attitude to the work community and maintain it from their own perspective.

There were 15 answers which could not be placed on those established categories as there was no common nominator.

Table 10. Question 10: Do you feel that you are sustaining your motivation with some specific ways.

| | N | 271 |
|--------------------|-----|-------|
| | | % |
| Self-improvement | 97 | 35.8 |
| Development | 44 | 16.2 |
| Self-consciousness | 23 | 8.5 |
| Making decisions | 20 | 7.4 |
| Goals | 19 | 7.0 |
| Feedback, success | 19 | 7.0 |
| Free time | 17 | 6.3 |
| Work community | 17 | 6.3 |
| No category | 15 | 5.5 |
| Total | 271 | 100.0 |

Question 11: In your experience, how can an internal communication enhance your motivation towards your work.

This was an open-ended question and non-compulsory. There were 229 responses from the total of 319 respondents. All answers were categorized, and the ten main categories are shown in the table 11.

Table 11. Question 11: In your experience, how can an internal communication enhance your motivation towards your work

| | N | 229 |
|--------------------------------|-----|-------|
| | | % |
| Open/transparent communication | 78 | 34.1 |
| Information flow | 67 | 29.3 |
| Feedback/Meaningful work | 45 | 19.7 |
| Dialogue | 37 | 16.2 |
| Positive/negative influence | 26 | 11.4 |
| Link to a strategy | 23 | 10.0 |
| Personal development | 15 | 6.6 |
| No category | 13 | 5.7 |
| Culture/Community | 12 | 5.2 |
| No influence | 11 | 4.8 |
| Total | 229 | 143.0 |

The most responses by 34.1% (n=78) and mentions were given to open and transparent communication. It was needed, wanted, required and expected amongst respondents, and they explained that it will improve employees' motivation when communication is open and transparent. It will decrease uncertainty and unnecessary speculation in the work community. It is also important for employees to know how the business is going, what the financial situation is and if there are going to be changes. In the best case, open and transparent communication can improve engagement. The second biggest category by 29.3% (n=67) was information flow. It was mentioned that it is crucial to have a fluent information flow in order to know what is happening and how it will impact the work tasks. The basic idea was to have more often information than less. Also, this category included mentions of different internal communication tools, such as Yammer, intranet, Slack, internal newsletters, etc. Regarding different tools, they need to be collective and compulsory tools for the whole organization and all employees should be committed to use them. The third biggest category by 19.7% (n=45) was feedback/meaningful work. It was said that giving and receiving feedback increases motivation. It was important to get it from supervisors, colleagues and customers. It was a foundation for meaningful work. The feedback gives a context for the employees of how their work is meaningful for the customers. By communicating these types of messages, the organization will explain the employees why they are important. The fourth category by 16.2% (n=37) was dialogue. It was mentioned several times that it is important to have the communication through a dialogue amongst personnel, teams etc. and not from top down. Based on the answers, the employees valued face-to-face communication more than emails, it was especially important to have it with the supervisors. The fifth category by 11.4% (n=26) was more of a generic category; respondents felt that internal communication can have an influence on motivation in positive and negative way. However, it was not specified in any specific way, as all responses had a general statement such as "Yes, it impacts motivation" and "No, more like the lack of it is impacting motivation".

The sixth (10.0%, n=23) category was the importance of understanding the organization's strategy, and this needs to be highlighted through internal communications. When there is an understanding about the big picture, it is easier for respondents to be motivated. When the organization's vision, targets and strategy are explained and communicated, it will give tools for the employees to do their work and to concentrate on the right things. The seventh category (6.6%, n=15) was personal development. This category included the direct mentions of personal developments and the mentions about the needs of having goals and how they should be followed up. The eighth category (5.7%, n=13) was a "non-categorized" group. Based on different individual answers, it was not possible to find a common nominator. The ninth category (5.2%, n=12) was a culture/community. It was

mentioned that the culture consists of different little things such as, for example, employees greeting each other, coffee moments, employees feeling appreciated, creating a culture through communication, etc. The tenth (4.8%, n=11) category was “no influence”. These respondents did not see that internal communication enhances motivation in any way.

5.3 Change

Question 12: Past 12 months, how many times have you thought of changing workplaces. The question was compulsory, and the number of respondents was 319. The table 12 shows that there were small differences between responses. “I haven’t thought” answer got the biggest response rate by 23.2% (n=74). 18.8% (n=60) have thought weekly and then monthly by 17.9% (n=57). Close to each other were “1–2 times in a year” answered by 16.3% (n=52) and “1–2 times in six months” answered by 15.4% (n=49). The smallest percentage answered “daily” by 8.5% (n=27).

Table 12. Question 12: Past 12 months, how many times have you thought of changing between workplaces

| | N | 319 % |
|-------------------------|-----|----------|
| I haven’t thought | 74 | 23.2 |
| Weekly | 60 | 18.8 |
| Monthly | 57 | 17.9 |
| 1–2 times in a year | 52 | 16.3 |
| 1–2 times in six months | 49 | 15.4 |
| Daily | 27 | 8.5 |
| Total | 319 | 100.0 |

Question 13: If you would have the chance to change between organizations, what would make you to stay in your current organization. If a respondent responded “I haven’t thought” in the previous question, this question was hidden from them. For others, this question was shown, and they had to choose at least one option but the maximum of options possible to choose was five. The question was not compulsory and because of that one respondent did not answer. The total amount of respondents was 244.

Behind the options were the same four categories of intrinsic motivation as in the 7th question: the need of voluntary, the need of capacity, the need of social cohesion and the need of doing good. There also were more options related to extrinsic motivation. In

addition, there was the option “Other, what?” which is not related to before-mentioned categories. The figure 9 visually demonstrates what the options were and to which category where they related to. This figure is useful for reading the result of the question.

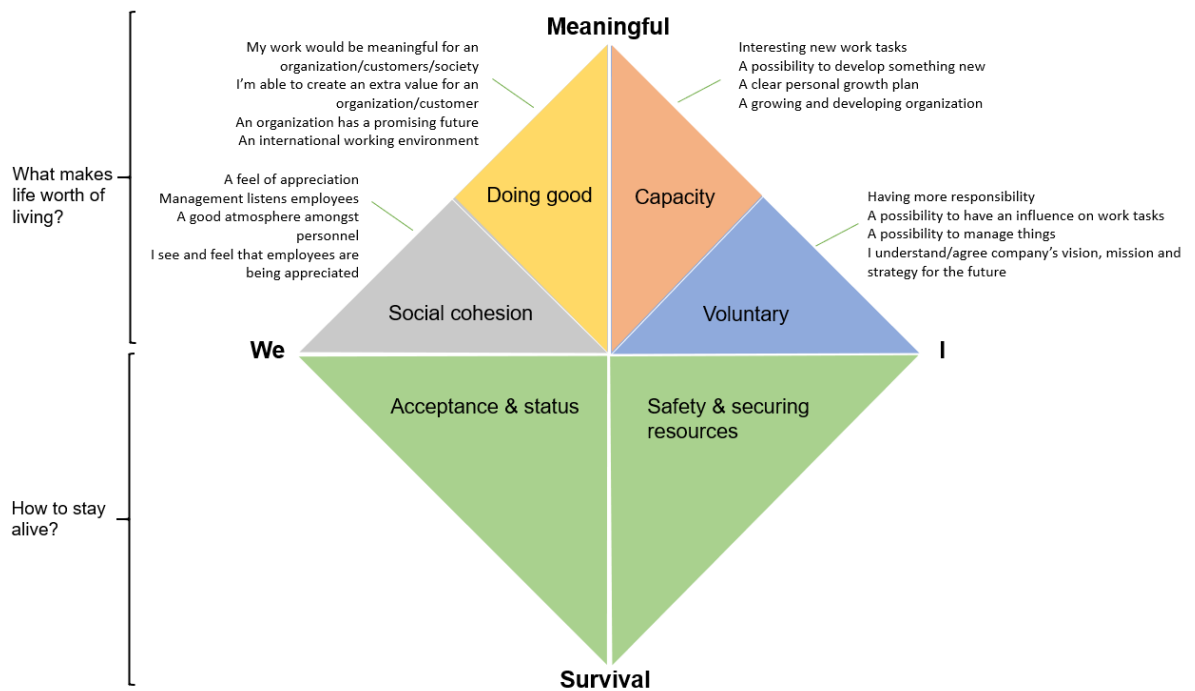


Figure 9. The options for the question 13 based on a motivation diamond

These four categories were not divided as evenly as was in the 7th question, this is shown in the table 13. When top five popular options are observed, three falls into the need of capacity, one falls into the need of social cohesion and one is extrinsic motivation factor. The most popular option was interesting new work tasks by almost half of respondents (49.2%, n=120) and this is related to the need of capacity. The second popular option was a raise by 47.1% (n=115) which is an extrinsic motivation factor, and a rather expected result. The third popular option was a feel of appreciation by 34.4% (n=84) and it is related to the need of social cohesion. The fourth and the fifth popular options were related to the need of capacity: a possibility to develop something new by 32.0% (n=78) and a clear personal growth plan by 25.4% (n=62).

Table 13. Question 13: If you would have the chance to change between organizations, what would make you to stay in your current organization

| | N | 244 | |
|--|-----|-------|-----------------|
| | | % | |
| Interesting new work tasks | 120 | 49,2 | Capacity |
| A raise | 115 | 47,1 | |
| A feel of appreciation | 84 | 34,4 | Social cohesion |
| A possibility to develop something new | 78 | 32,0 | Capacity |
| A clear personal growth plan | 62 | 25,4 | Capacity |
| A good atmosphere amongst personnel | 59 | 24,2 | Social cohesion |
| A new job description | 57 | 23,4 | |
| I see and feel that employees are being appreciated | 55 | 22,5 | Social cohesion |
| Having more responsibility | 46 | 18,9 | Voluntary |
| A possibility to have an influence on work tasks | 41 | 16,8 | Voluntary |
| A possibility to manage things | 39 | 16,0 | Voluntary |
| A growing and developing organization | 37 | 15,2 | Capacity |
| An organization has a promising future | 36 | 14,8 | Doing good |
| My work would be meaningful for an organization/customers/society | 35 | 14,3 | Doing good |
| I'm able to create extra value for an organization/customer | 33 | 13,5 | Doing good |
| Management listens employees | 30 | 12,3 | Social cohesion |
| Additional benefits | 28 | 11,5 | |
| An international working environment | 26 | 10,7 | Doing good |
| A new title | 20 | 8,2 | |
| A new superior | 20 | 8,2 | |
| Other, what? | 18 | 7,4 | |
| I understand/agree company's vision, mission and strategy for the future | 13 | 5,3 | Voluntary |
| A new team | 10 | 4,1 | |
| Total | 244 | 435.2 | |

Figure 10 shows how the categories were divided based on the chosen options. The need of capacity category's options were valued the most and secondly some extrinsic motivation factors, like a salary. The third most valued category was the need of social cohesion. Based on this group of respondents it is important to communicate what possibilities organizations offer for self-improvement and how employees can develop work tasks when organizations want to keep their employees. Another important thing is to communicate and to show that employees are being valued and that they are important asset for the organization.

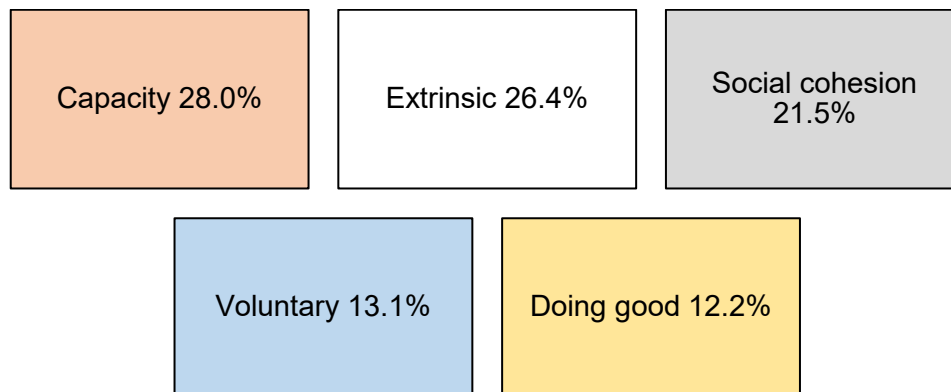


Figure 10. How the categories were chosen in the 13th question

Based on this study, a conclusion can be made that this group of respondents are driven by self-improvement and possibilities to develop themselves. This motivates them to stay in the current organization. The need of capacity means that the work will create enough challenges and the possibility to use the knowledge, and that an employee is able to develop and can feel achievements (Martela & Jarenko 2015, 17–18).

Question 14: Do you experience changes (daily/weekly/monthly) in your work. The question was compulsory. From the 319 respondents, the most by 76.2% (n=243) experienced changes in their work on a regular basis, and almost a quarter by 23.8% (n=76) did not experience changes in their work on a regular basis. The division is shown on the figure 8. This shows that changes are a part of knowledge worker's everyday work life.

Do you experience changes (daily/weekly/monthly) in your work



Figure 11. Do respondents experience changes in their work daily/weekly/monthly

Question 15: How do those changes feel to you? This question was shown to those respondents who answered “yes” in the previous question. The question was not compulsory, but it received 243 answers which was the same amount as “yes” answers in the previous question. Over half by 67.5% (n=164) of respondents felt changes as neutral. 17.3% (n=42) felt changes as easy and rest by 15.2% (n=37) felt changes as difficult.

Question 15.1: Why do you see them as difficult? This question was shown to those respondents who answered “difficult” in the 15th question. The question was an open-ended field and non-compulsory, and it was answered by 34 respondents. All answers were categorized, and five categories are shown in the table 14.

In most of the responses by 35.3% (n=12), it was mentioned that changes are happening too often and too sudden. The second biggest category by 32.4% (n=11) had mentions of how they were unable to have an influence on changes which made them experience changes as difficult. The third category by 26.5% (n=9) was a lack of communication or poorly executed change communication plan.

23.5% (n=8) from answers were impossible to categorize as they were based on individual mentions and there was no common nominator between them. 8.8% (n=3) responses mentioned that changes were not seen as difficult, but they were more like challenging and acceptable, and they were seen as a possibility. These three respondents should have replied differently to the previous question, as this was not the correct follow-up question.

Table 14. Question 15.1: Why do you see them as difficult

| | N | 34 % |
|-----------------------|----|---------|
| Too much too fast | 12 | 35.3 |
| Unable to influence | 11 | 32.4 |
| Lack of communication | 9 | 26.5 |
| No category | 8 | 23.5 |
| Positive | 3 | 8.8 |
| Total | 34 | 126.5 |

Question 15.2: Why do you experience them as easy? This question was shown to those respondents who answered “easy” in the 15th question. The question was an open-ended field and non-compulsory, and it was answered by 37 respondents. All answers were categorized, and four categories are shown in the table 15.

Almost half of the answerers by 45.9% (n=17) mentioned that they are embracing changes. Respondents were open to changes and mentioned that they like changes. Therefore, changes feel easy. 35.1% (n=13) mentioned that changes are part of today’s work life. It is the current state and it will not change in the future. 21.6% (n=8) mentioned that changes are a part of business and business needs to change and develop. The fourth category was non-categorized by 13.5% (n=5).

Table 15. Question 15.2: Why do you see changes as easy

| | N | 37 % |
|-------------------|----|---------|
| I like changes | 17 | 45.9 |
| Part of work life | 13 | 35.1 |
| Part of business | 8 | 21.6 |
| No category | 5 | 13.5 |
| Total | 34 | 116.2 |

Question 16. How would you like to hear about (daily/weekly/monthly) changes related to your work? Are there ways of improving your motivation? The question was an open-ended field and non-compulsory, and it was shown to the total amount of the respondents (319). It was answered by 62 respondents. All answers were categorized, and five categories is shown at the table 16.

Over a half of the respondents by 51.6% (n=32) felt that the most important thing is to hear about changes face-to-face, whether it is from a supervisor or in weekly meetings. The second most important thing by 35.5% (n=22) was that the information about changes is well thought, the content is clear, and it will give answers on how it will impact the respondents' work. The same category had mentions of dialogue and that the employees are being heard. Communication should not be brought from top down but be a dialogue, instead. The third important thing by 33.9% (n=21) was that the information is shared to employees at the same time by using different tools: intranet, email, slack, personnel information events, etc. The fourth important thing by 24.2% (n=15) was to hear about changes promptly, instead of later. This would give the feeling that nothing is hidden from the employees. From the answers, 4.8% (n=3) could not be categorized due to lack of a common nominator.

Table 16. Question 16: How would you like to hear about (daily/weekly/monthly) changes related to your work? Are there ways of improving your motivation?

| | N | 62 % |
|-----------------------------------|----|---------|
| F2F | 32 | 51.6 |
| Dialogue/content of communication | 22 | 35.5 |
| Shared information/tools | 21 | 33.9 |
| Fast & promptly | 15 | 24.2 |
| No category | 3 | 4.8 |
| Total | 62 | 150.0 |

Question 17: Past 12 months, have you driven (small/big) changes? The question was compulsory. From the 319 respondents, almost everyone by 89.3% (n=285) has driven changes during past 12 months. Rest by 10.7% (n=34) have not. This result explains that this group of respondents are having an extra positive attitude towards changes as they have been involved in them.

Question 18: What are your thoughts/feelings about changes? How would you react when you hear about upcoming changes? This question was shown to respondents who answered "no" in the previous question. The question was a compulsory multiple-choice question, and it received 34 answers. The table 17 shows how answers were divided.

Table 17. Question 18: What are your thoughts/feelings about changes? How would you react when you hear about upcoming changes?

| | N | 34 % |
|--|----|---------|
| How will this impact me | 25 | 73.5 |
| Will there be a training for this | 12 | 35.3 |
| How should I do that | 10 | 29.4 |
| Other, what | 7 | 20.6 |
| Yet another change, when will this end | 5 | 14.7 |
| Why change a good way | 4 | 11.8 |
| I don't have time for something new | 2 | 5.9 |
| Total | 34 | 191.2 |

This question and the answer options were based on chapter 2, as there are at least six main reasons or themes against changes based on how people think about changes: I don't know, I don't know how to, I don't want to, I'm afraid, I don't believe, I can't. How people face changes, and for each reason, there are ways to communicate and help to overcome the first thoughts (Wendelin 2013, 135–136). These six mentioned reasons were converted into own options for this survey. The reason for this was to create options which do not directly state anything, do not guide the respondents too much and do not directly lead to any emotions. For example, the option "I'm afraid" has a stronger statement behind it than the option "How will this impact me". Listed below are the original options and how they were changed.

1. I don't know = Why change a good way
2. I don't know how to = How should I do that
3. I don't want to = I don't have time for something new
4. I'm afraid = How will this impact me
5. I don't believe = Yet another change, when this will end
6. I can't = Will there be a training for this.

The biggest reason by 73.5% (n=25) was "how will this impact me" which means that there might be a fear behind, and the employees need coaching and help from the managers to grow their strengths. Also, with good and clear communication, the managers can explain how the change will impact, or better yet, remind what will not change. Other than fear, there might be a concern of how the change will affect the employees' self-improvement and possibilities in the organization. The second biggest reason by 35.3% (n=12) was "will there be a training for this" which means employees are doubting their competence and have the "I can't" state of mind. Having an encouraging communication and offering training will help this matter. In this option, there might also be a concern of how it will affect employees' self-improvement and how to increase a

personal capacity. The third biggest reason by 29.4% (n=10) was “how should I do that” which is related to “I don’t know how to” state of mind, and then there is the importance of increasing capabilities and strengths. Also, this option might refer to self-improvement and how to increase the employees’ capacity. All three options might have a relation to the need of capacity as their intrinsic motivation factor.

20.6% (n=7) chose the option “other, what” which was an open-ended field, and five answers were from the positive aspect, for example that change is good, it can bring good things, change is a possibility, etc. From the seven, two answers were from the questioning point of view: what is the meaning behind the change and is it really necessary and useful.

The fifth reason by 14.7% (n=5) was “yet another change, when will this end” which falls on the “I don’t believe” category. Setting an example, having a clear vision and explaining it clearly through communication helps the employees believe. The sixth reason by 11.8% (n=4) was “why change a good way” which was related to the “I don’t know” category. In this case, the employees need a clear message on why the change is needed and where it will lead them. The last and seventh reason by 5.9% (n=2) was “I don’t have time for something new” which is a statement “I don’t want to” which shows the need of leadership based on the performance and by giving more feedback, and the encouragement in a positive spirit that employees are accountable for their actions.

Question 19: In your experience, how should the atmosphere for a positive change in organization culture be developed/created through communication? The question was visible to everyone, and it was a non-compulsory, open-ended field question. It was answered by 264 respondents. All answers were categorized, and nine categories were found. The table 18 shows the categories.

Almost half of the answers by 45.1% (n=119) included the words “open”, “transparent” and “honest communication”. These are the foundation of successful change communication and the employees’ expectation of the organizations. The second biggest category by 40.2% (n=106) was that the employees should be a part of the change, and that their opinions and views are being heard. Communication should be done through a dialogue and not from the top down, in order to get the employees engaged. These two most common categories are styles and ways of how this group of respondents would like to hear communication. It is interesting that ways are more important for this group of respondents than the actual content of the message.

The third biggest category by 36.4% (n=96) was the actual content of communication. There needs to be clear explanations on why the change is needed and how it will impact work, teams, etc. It needs to give answers to questions why, how and who. The fourth category by 28.0% (n=74) was continuity. It was mentioned 74 times, how there cannot be too much of communication, and the message needs to be repeated several times. It is better to have too much communication than too little of it.

The fifth category by 11.4% (n= 30) was positivity. All communication needs to come from a positive point of view, keeping in mind empathy and respect towards the employees and each other. The sixth category by 7.6% (n=20) was planning: communication and changes need to be planned and follow guidelines and time frames. It will create trust amongst the employees when they see that the changes are planned and thought through. The seventh category by 5.3% (n=14) was multi-channel communication. It was mentioned how important it is to communicate using all possible channels, in order to reach out all employees. There were mentions about personnel information events, face-to-face communication, intranet, emails, slack, etc. In some of the answers, respondents suggested to have a separate channel for change communication where ad hoc questions can be asked, and all the information found regarding the change. "No category" category received 13 answers (4.9%) that had no common nominator. The last category by 4.5% (n=12) was examples from the management. It was mentioned how management should show their engagement toward changes, leading by examples. Management needs to be present during the changes, and they need to communicate actively and be part of the employees' workdays.

Table 18. Question 19: In your experience, how should the atmosphere for a positive change in organization culture be developed/created through communication

| | N | 264 % |
|----------------------------------|-----|----------|
| Open & transparent communication | 119 | 45.1 |
| Dialogue & participative | 106 | 40.2 |
| Content of communication | 96 | 36.4 |
| Continuity | 74 | 28.0 |
| Positivity | 30 | 11.4 |
| Planned | 20 | 7.6 |
| Multi-channel | 14 | 5.3 |
| No category | 13 | 4.9 |
| Examples from management | 12 | 4.5 |
| Total | 264 | 191.2 |

5.4 Communication

Question 20: Have you heard that your work is meaningful. The question was compulsory. Most of the respondents by 74.0% (n=236) have heard that their work is meaningful and a quarter (26.0%, n=83) have not heard.

Question 20.1: Meaningful work; who, how and in what situations was this communicated to you. This question was shown to those respondents who answered “yes” in the 20th question. The question was an open-ended field and non-compulsory. It was answered by 209 respondents. All answers were categorized, and eight categories were found which is presented on the table 19.

Most of the respondents by 36.8% (n=77) have mentioned that they have heard it directly from their supervisor face-to-face and, most commonly, in personal development discussions. Depending on the answers, these discussions were held from once a month up to once a year. The second biggest category by 32.5% (n=68) was frequently. Some of the answers had mentions that this is communicated frequently and that the employees even receive feedback daily. These were usually related to tasks/projects/work in general and that something was done well. There were also mentions of how these topics were raised into discussion at personnel’s events. The third biggest category by 29.2% (n=61) was the colleagues. The respondents answered that they have received positive feedback on a regular basis by the colleagues and the team members. The fourth biggest category by 26.3% (n=55) was the customers/stakeholders/partners who have given the positive

feedback, and the statements of the respondents' work being meaningful. The fifth biggest category by 16.7% (n=35) was the CEO/management team. The respondents have heard the affirmations directly from the CEO or from the members of the management team. These have happened face-to-face, during the events or meetings. The frequency scale for these was from quite often to sometimes.

The last three categories received a smaller amount of the answers compared to the previously mentioned categories. The sixth category by 7.7% (n=16) was other people, with whom the respondents interact with, such as the relatives, the friends, the close family members and the subordinates, for example. There were some responses from the supervisors as the subordinates were mentioned. The seventh by 6.2% (n=13) was "no category" as there was not any common nominator to be found. The eighth category by 4.3% (n=9) was the team meetings. There were mentions of how either the colleagues or the supervisors have communicated and have given feedback about meaningful work at the team meetings. The last category by 2.9% (n=6) had a negative aspect. Some of the respondents have heard how their work and contribution was meaningful only after they had resigned and were having their exit discussions. Some of the respondents wrote that they have never been told that. These respondents have understood the previous question wrong and this question should not have been answered by them.

Table 19. Question 20.1: Meaningful work; who, how and in what situations was this communicated to you

| | N | 209 % |
|--|-----|----------|
| Supervisor f2f/development discussions | 77 | 36.8 |
| Work well-done/daily situations/personnel events | 68 | 32.5 |
| Colleagues | 61 | 29.2 |
| Customers/stakeholders/partners | 55 | 26.3 |
| CEO/management team | 35 | 16.7 |
| Other people (relatives, friends, subordinates) | 16 | 7.7 |
| No category | 13 | 6.2 |
| Haven't heard/exit discussions | 6 | 2.9 |
| Total | 209 | 158.4 |

Question 20.2: From who, how and in what situations would you like to hear that your work is meaningful. This question was visible to those respondents that answered "no" in the 20th question. The question was an open-ended field and non-compulsory. It was

answered by 64 respondents. All answers were categorized, and six categories were found which are presented on the table 20.

Over half of the respondents by 65.6% (n=42) mentioned that they want to hear from their supervisors that their work is meaningful. Over a quarter (26.6%, n=17) of the respondents would like to hear it from the colleagues. Almost a quarter (23.4%, n=15) of the respondents would like to hear it from the management.

“No category” was the fourth biggest category by 21.9% (n=14). There was no common nominator found. 18.8% (n=12) of the respondents specified that they want to get feedback on a regular basis and not just during the development discussions. 14.1% (n=9) would like to receive the feedback directly from the customers.

Table 20. Question 20.2: From who, how and in what situations would you like to hear that your work is meaningful

| | N | 64 % |
|-------------|----|---------|
| Supervisor | 42 | 65.6 |
| Colleagues | 17 | 26.6 |
| Management | 15 | 23.4 |
| No category | 14 | 21.9 |
| Regularly | 12 | 18.8 |
| Customers | 9 | 14.1 |
| Total | 64 | 170.3 |

It is interesting that over half of the respondents would like to here from supervisors or managements that their work is meaningful. To this group of respondents it seems to be more important to hear it from the top down than for example colleagues who would know more specific about work input.

6 Discussion

Based on Sanders et al. (2009, 156), there are three questions that define the reliability of the study: 1. Will the study give same results on other occasion, 2. Will there be same observations done by different observers, and 3. Is there transparency in a logic from raw data of how conclusions were made.

Validity means that the findings are really the truth and there is a causal relationship (Saunders et al. 2009, 157). This study is biased due to answer collecting methods. The answers were collected by using different channels and the sample group consisted of knowledge workers working mostly in information and communication field.

The data collection was done by using different platforms in order to receive a variety of answers. At the beginning of making the thesis plan, I had taken in to consideration that the amount of answers might be under 100 answers. This would have meant that it was not possible to draw any conclusions. However, this turned out to be an unnecessary concern, as I received 319 answers which is enough for drawing conclusions. The target group of the study was knowledge workers, and based on the study's sample, it is biased. The survey interested same type of people.

This chapter answers the research questions based on the findings from this study. The four research questions are discussed in the following subparagraphs. Based on the data of the study, the group of respondents were aware of the importance of communication and have seen changes in a positive way in their work. 89.3% of the respondents had driven changes during the past 12 months. It can be stated that this group of respondents was not an average group of knowledge workers.

The main research question is how to communicate continuous changes in order to keep employees motivated. The main question was the foundation for the literature part. The thesis study part needed to have follow-up sub-questions so that the collected data would be wider, and it would be analyzed from different angles. The three sub-questions are the following:

1. How do knowledge workers describe their motivational factors?
2. How do knowledge workers see changes in their work?
3. How do knowledge workers describe communication about the meaningfulness of the work?

6.1 How do knowledge workers describe their motivational factors?

When the respondents were asked how an internal communication can enhance a motivation towards work, familiar words came up: open and transparent communication, information flow, feedback and dialogue. 34.1% of the respondents mentioned open and transparent communication. A very basic essence of a communication is still the topic of today. Information flow covers the usage of different communication tools and channels, and it was emphasized how the information should flow fluently for the workers to know what is happening and how it will impact on work tasks. Selected communication tools and channels should enable some methods of giving feedbacks, for example in small groups it can be a direct communication and in large groups it can be an interactive poll. This will enable two-way communication rather than communicating from the top down.

A similar theme rose when the respondents were asked how communication can help in creating a culture that has the atmosphere for a positive change. Over 45% mentioned the words “open”, “transparent” and “honest communication”. These words create the foundation of successful change communication and represent the employees’ expectations of the organizations. Over 40% believed that employees should be involved in the change process and that it is important to feel that their opinions and views are heard. Dialogues are needed instead of messages delivered from a top to down. Over 36% mentioned the actual content of communication. The communication needs to give answers and explain why a change is needed, and how it will impact work, teams, etc. The communication should give answers to questions why, how and who. There cannot be too much of communication inside organizations, especially when it is related to changes. This was proven by a 28% of the respondents mentioning continuity in their answers. There was a need to repeat the information several times and have it communicated too often than too rarely.

The content of communication has a big role in communicating about changes. The majority of a small respondent group (34 people) had the question “how will this impact me” in mind when talking about changes. Good communication can relieve the fear behind the question by explaining how the change will impact, or better yet, reminding what will not change. Having encouraging communication and offering training will help with the “I can’t” state of mind which was also common in this respondent group. Communicating about employees’ capabilities and strengths gives the employees a mindset that they can which will help them accept the changes easier.

The need of capacity which means developing oneself, was a constant theme in this group of respondents. In three different questions, there were different options based on intrinsic motivation categories to the questions why they work in the current organization, what would they value in the future and why would they stay in the current place if there would be a chance to change an organization. All three questions received at least one answer related to the need of capacity category. When creating content for change communication, it is important to keep the need of capacity in mind and bring that information to employees. Because most respondents were motivated by the capacity, communication message should contain a link to self-improvement. Communication could explain and give examples when something is changing would create a possibility to grow. Communication should include ways for employees to influence message in some ways for example by providing alternatives, this would give a feeling to employees that they are in control.

When the respondents were asked how they would like to hear daily changes, over a half of respondents by 51.6% said that by face-to-face communication, whether it is from a supervisor or in weekly meetings. The second most important thing by 35.5% was that the information about change is well thought, the content is clear, and it will give answers on how it will impact respondents' work. The same category had mentions of dialogue and employees being heard. The communication is not brought from top down but is a dialogue instead. The third important thing by 33.9% was that the information is shared to employees at the same time by using different tools: intranet, email, slack, personnel information events, etc.

6.2 How do knowledge workers see changes in their work?

Within this respondent group, there was only a weak relationship between intrinsic motivation factors and engagement.

In this study, it was shown that there is a relationship between motivation level and changing a workplace. The assumption, that when motivation is high, the workers think less of changing a workplace, was confirmed in the crosstabulation. However, a relation between motivation factors and motivation level could not be found, nor the feeling of changes or the changing of workplaces. Motivation level could not be explained by the chosen motivation factors.

Almost one quarter of respondents do not think about changing workplace and almost another quarter think of changing on daily or a weekly basis. The capacity category is the

most valued reason to stay in the current organization. If an organization exclude reasons related to the need of capacity or stops communicating about them, employees will change an organization. The need of capacity means that the work will create enough challenges and the possibility to use the knowledge, and that an employee is able to develop and can feel achievements (Martela & Jarenko 2015, 17–18).

In today's business life changes are continuous and more rapid, and part of knowledge workers' days versus how before changes were seen as a big change once a year. Nowadays organizations and employees need to adapt quickly whether market dictates the need of changes or some other reasons are driven continuous changes inside organizations. From this group of respondents over 75% experienced continuous changes in their work and most them felt those as neutral.

Almost half thought that a communication style is more important than the actual content or the message not the continuity or anything similar. The communication style needs to be open and inclusive for employees to feel that they are being heard and appreciated.

6.3 How do knowledge workers describe communication about the meaningfulness of the work?

74.0% of the respondents had heard that their work is meaningful and 26.0% had not heard that.

The respondents (36.8%) who had heard it, it happened in traditional situations such as face-to-face development discussions with a supervisor. For some, feedback was given more on a regular basis, even daily. These mentions were related to tasks/projects/work in general and to that something was well-done. The respondents also mentioned getting feedback from colleagues, team members, customers and different stakeholders.

The respondents (65.6%) who had not heard that their work is meaningful would mostly like to hear it from their supervisors. The respondents also mentioned that they would like to hear it from their colleagues and from the management. Even today, getting a validation from a supervisor is important. In a conclusion f2f communication is important to all parties and 52% would like to hear it from supervisor or management, and only 16% like to hear it from colleagues. This group of respondents valued more the appreciation when it came from top down.

7 Conclusion: Developing change communication

Based on the literature and the findings of this thesis study, I have created guidelines for change communication. I suggest that these guidelines can be used for effective employee change communication by leaders. For evaluating the guidelines, I involved four communication professionals to discuss their usability. The five guidelines will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

7.1 Creating guidelines

The following five guidelines were created based on the study and what topics were raised time after time in different questions. These guidelines sum up how employees would like to hear about continuous changes, how internal communication can enhance motivation towards work, how internal communication can enhance a positive change in organization culture and that employees' work is meaningful.

Open & transparent

Communication is a key element in knowledge management. The knowledge needs to be transparent and open which enables it to be shared, and sharing is caring. When knowledge is shared, it will create new knowledge and intelligence that motivates the employees and increases their potential. (Cowan 2017, chapter "What are the benefits of effective internal communications".)

When the respondents were asked how internal communication can enhance motivation towards work, familiar words came up: open and transparent communication, information flow, feedback and dialogue. 34.1% of the respondents mentioned open and transparent communication. A very basic essence of communication is still the topic of today. Information flow covers the usage of different communication tools and channels, and it was emphasized how the information should flow fluently for the workers to know what is happening and how it will impact the work tasks.

A similar theme rose when the respondents were asked how communication can help in creating a culture that has the atmosphere for a positive change. Over 45% mentioned the words "open", "transparent" and "honest communication". These words create a foundation for a successful change communication and represent the employees' expectations of the organizations.

Quite often during changes, employees speculate when they do not have the information. The change does not need to be ready for the managers to be able to communicate it to employees. Sometimes with changes, it is important to communicate sooner than later. (Clampitt et al. 2000, 43.)

Symmetrical communication is two-way communication: a dialogue between organizations and employees. Characteristics of symmetrical communication are trust, credibility, openness, feedback, horizontal communication, sufficiency of information and employee-centered style. Symmetrical communication style is used by transformational leaders. Transformational leaders are really interested in the employees' well-being, create trust and confidence amongst employees and encourage the employees for self-development. (Men 2014, 267–268.)

After the changes have been communicated to the employees, quite often they might think and discuss why the organization has not open and transparent, especially why it did not happen sooner. In order to gain trust within employees, organizations need to trust them, share information and communicate openly and transparently with them about changes. It is easier to understand changes when there is no emotion behind them, and nothing is hidden from employees.

Clear content

Change communication should give answers to these questions: why the change is needed, what will be different as a result, what will success look like, how employees will be supported during the change, and how will the results be measured. Change communication should give answers from the “what is in it for me” perspective by communicating through questions: “What is my job? How am I doing? Is anybody interested?”. Concentrating change communication into the “what is in it for me” perspective could increase intrinsic motivation in employees. (Hargie & Tourish 2009, 17–18.)

When creating content for change communication, it is important to think how employees as recipients would take the message: how they will respond to it. What kind of influence does the message have on the employees? Message as well as communication strategy should be linked to the organizational goals for them to be an effective and understandable. (Clampitt et al. 2000, 44.)

Change communication needs to have a clear and consistent message that will clarify an organization's vision, strategic goals and what the changes mean to the employees.

Motivation and support for employees in the organization's new direction is done through change communication. Change communication encourages higher performances. Change communication will help with aligning employees behind organization's strategy and it will also help the employees' willingness to improve their goals and performance. (Barret 2002, 220.)

The need of capacity was a continuous theme for this group of respondents. In three different questions, there were different options based on intrinsic motivation categories when the respondent were asked why they worked in the current organization, what they would value in the future and why they would stay in the current place if there would be a chance to change the organization. All these three questions received at least one chosen option related to the need of capacity category. When creating content for a change communication, it is important to keep in mind the need of capacity and bring that information to employees.

In the thesis study, over 36% mentioned the actual content of communication. Communication needs to give answers and explain why change is needed, how it will impact work, teams etc. Communication should give answers to questions why, how and who.

As it has been stated earlier, this group of respondents was change positive and highly interested in communication. It can be said that this type of employees should be kept in organizations as they can act as change ambassadors. Self-improvement in all levels today and in the future is important to this group.

Face-to-face

Different surveys show that employees would like to hear messages directly from their supervisors. Often the case is that supervisors might not have all the wanted information regarding organization changes, for example. Therefore, it is important to think in advance who the right person is to deliver messages so that he/she can answer follow-up questions and discuss the changes with employees. (Clampitt et al. 2000, 43.)

Face-to-face communication is a powerful channel because it offers possibilities for employees to ask questions and therefore it is more dynamic. Face-to-face communication is more expensive to management from time consuming perspective but, in long-term, it will give more than only sending emails. (Clampitt et al. 2000, 42–43.)

A communication medium consists of three qualities: ability to handle multiple information cues simultaneously, ability for a rapid feedback and ability to provide a personal focus. The more learning is put through a medium, the richer the medium is. Therefore, face-to-face is the richest medium because it has direct experience, multiple information cues, immediate feedback and personal focus. (Lengel & Daft 1988, 225–226.)

When the respondents were asked how they would like to hear about daily changes, over half of the respondents by 51.6% said by face-to-face communication whether it is with a supervisor or in weekly meetings.

With the help of today's technology, face-to-face communication can be executed through for example virtual meetings. Face-to-face does not always mean a big organization's info event in an auditorium, it can be done at team meetings or at virtual meetings if employees work in different continents.

Dialogue

If organizations had open communication channels, employees would be able to tell their needs, have access to information, develop opportunities to make an influence and be part the of decision-making which is one of human's basic needs. (Hargie & Tourish 2009, 18.)

Over 40% believed that employees should be involved in the change and that it is important to feel that their opinions and views are being heard. Dialogues are needed instead of messages delivered from a top to down.

The leaders should initiate face-to-face communication first and then be present in organization's communication tools and have dialogues with the employees. Employees need to feel that they have a voice and it is heard, as dialogue enables change. Also, dialogue is an important part of face-to-face communication so that the employees do not feel the message is delivered from the top down.

Continuity

Redundancy and repetition show that leaders care and believe in the change. Repetition cannot be minimized because it always gives a chance for some employee to hear about changes for the first time. It is important to deliver the same message by using different ways and tools. Delivering the same message in different words creates redundancy. (Clampitt et al. 2000, 54.)

There cannot be too much of communication inside an organization, especially when it is related to the changes. This was proven by 28% of the respondents mentioning continuity in their answers. There was a need to repeat the information several times and have it communicated rather too often than too rarely.

When doing communication in general, there is one rule: repetition, repetition and repetition. Quite rarely employees say that something has been communicated too much: usually it is the opposite. Employees generally need time to handle change communication and the information as it might be a new topic to them. Also, employees are in different stages when accepting changes so continuous communication is needed. Leaders need to have a tenacity to repeat communication.

7.2 Evaluating guidelines

In the previous chapter, I presented five guidelines for change communication. A workshop was organized where these topics were presented and discussed in a group of four communication professionals. Two of them were more involved with internal communication and two of them were doing communication for their customers. From different perspectives four communication professionals had taken part of the workshop.

In the beginning I presented research questions and a short summary of the main findings. The guidelines were gone through individually and following the same procedure in every guideline. First the headline of the guideline was shown and then explained and opened in few sentence. I did not want to open guidelines thoroughly because I wanted to receive and hear first reactions and authentic opinions from the members of the test group. After presenting the first guideline, I gave five minutes for the group to write pros and cons of the guideline on sticky notes and this was done by individual. Then each member presented their comments and notes about the guideline and placed the notes on the flipchart. After each presentation the group discussed about the comments and reflected them on different situations. When each member presented their notes at the same time, they grouped the sticky notes on the flipchart. Then we moved to the next guideline. All the pros and cons on sticky notes are summarized in the sections below. When all the guidelines were gone through, each member received three “yes” and three “no” votes which they could divide how they liked to the guidelines. How members gave votes on each guidelines is written on the following topics.

Open & transparent

Test members felt that this would create trust amongst employees, and with open and transparent communication, appreciation is shown. It will also reduce rumors. Open and transparent communication explains the backgrounds of changes better and it will create possibilities to ask more. Sharing information openly will enable learning as well.

It is not possible to have open and transparent communication in all cases, especially in confidential issues related to an individual employee and when it might be too risky to communicate. Also, depending on organizations, some cases cannot be communicated too early, as for example in stock organizations. Too much information might be too overwhelming for employees. If employees knew everything, it would be difficult to manage and sustain. Too much information might create speculations and vice versa.

This topic received five “yes” votes. Open and transparent communication is still seen as an important guideline, but its execution must be well thought.

Clear content

Clear content has one message, and the most important thing is that it is at the beginning of the message. It should explain the background: why and how forward. It must be a clear and concise and have positive content. It needs to give answers to what it means on an individual level. It should have a Q&A section and contact information if someone wants to ask further information afterwards. Not all employees read, listen or discuss, so utilizing all forms of communication needs to be thought of. All levels in organizations need to be considered, and respectful tone of voice and visualization can also add some extra to the information.

Clear content does not leave questions open and it does not have a bureaucratese language that no one understands nor brings any value to the content. Good content does not have misspellings nor has a condescending tone of voice. It should be considered whether it would be good or challenging to have a different content for different stakeholders.

This topic received two “yes” and two “no” votes. It was still seen as the core of the matter in change communication.

Face-to-face

Face-to-face communication gives a feeling of appreciation and creates a community. It is a fast and an interactive way to communicate. It gives a possibility to ask questions, to listen and to have conversations. It is also a fast way to turn around negative thoughts and

statements. It also emphasizes the meaning of the communication. It creates an encounter on a same level and shows that the management is not sitting in the ivory tower. Especially with difficult issues and negative feedback, face-to-face communication is the only correct way of communication. Non-verbal communication is the most powerful when comparing the content, for instance, and in face-to-face communication it is possible to use. When there are multiple communicators, the message can be communicated to all levels in the organization, and it can be discussed further, what it means for a team or an individual.

In big international organizations, face-to-face communication can be difficult to organize, since it is expensive and time consuming, facilities are expensive and there can always be a language barrier. Not everyone is always present, so the message also needs to be shared using different tools, so that employees would receive the message at all times. If the message is delivered by different employees, will the message stay coherent? The message might not go through if the person has big problems with face-to-face communication.

This topic received “two” yes votes and six “no” votes. Organizing face-to-face events was seen as challenging, and it was said that it cannot replace other channels. The usage of virtual tools to have the face-to-face experience was also discussed, and it was seen as a possibility. However, the technology needs to function well. During the discussion, the test members were presented one option that, for example, the CEO’s message would be filmed beforehand and then unit directors would show it to the employees at the same time, and have the face-to-face communication that way. It was considered as one option, although there still is the challenge with time difference and everyone getting the message at the same time and the content staying the same when there are several communicators.

Even though this was the most wanted form of communication among the respondents, it might be, in some situations and in some organizations, too difficult and expensive to organize. Therefore, leaders should be trained to have communication in general, and there needs to be a plan and a process of how change communication is going to be executed. Face-to-face communication can still be delivered to smaller groups and this way satisfy employees’ needs .

Dialogue

Dialogue was seen as a possibility from two angles: after the message has been communicated and in the early stage when there still is a possibility to influence. In the

first scenario, dialogue creates an opportunity for open questions and can bring the content close to the individual level. It creates openness, honesty, authenticity, meaningfulness and respect towards employees, and diminishes uncertainty. With a right group, it enables a broad discussion about the change. The second scenario creates possibilities for developing the message, having ideas and synergy, receiving feedback and developing further. Dialogue should be done in the right time: not after decisions have been made.

Lack of decision making and too many discussions make dialogues expand, and the discussions concentrate on the “wrong” and old issues. How dialogue works depends on the channel, and not all want to have a dialogue, as for some the delivered message is enough. In some cases, a moderator is needed on the channels, and some guidelines as well for how far it is ok to have a dialogue. In this, resources are needed, and this will be time consuming; for some and in some situations can be seen as overloading.

This topic received four “no” votes. The test group saw this topic from the perspective that there would be too much of discussion and less decision making, whereas I saw this as a tool and an opportunity to continue after face-to-face communication. Quite often change communication delivers the message of what has been done but in a more explanatory way. In my opinion, dialogue would give employees the feeling that their voice matters and that they are being heard, even though in most cases it does not influence the actual change.

Continuity

Change is continuous and therefore change communication needs to be continuous. In general, repetition is the most important thing in communication. Not all employees are present every time, so it gives a possibility to keep in touch what is happening. When there is continuous communication going on, employees will start to wait for it. There should be a roadmap where communication has been thought further: different stakeholders and groups receiving different messages by using different channels. Continuity can create development ideas and new ways of working. Change communication could be continued in teams. There should be communication even though there is nothing to communicate.

If there is too much information, it could create saturation. Today, there is already so much information available that it is hard to know how to decide what is the important to follow. After some period, it might become too one-sided from the employees’ point of view. Different messages could contain positive, negative and neutral aspects.

This topic received three “yes” votes. By changing messages and planning them, continuity is a necessity in change communication.

In theory and in general employees would like to have more f2f communication but in many organizations, it is not possible from the practical point of view. This was shown from the professionals’ comments as they are those who are executing communication. The literature review proves that f2f communication would be the most effective tool and messages would be delivered the best way, and it is the most liked style by employees. But for organizations this is an expensive and time-consuming way which is quite often difficult to execute. For example, when thinking about time usage from employees and supervisors/management it is quite often difficult to find time for continuous change communication. For this reason, there is a need to find new ways and tools for mass communication where an interaction is possible and two-way communication is possible to execute. For continuous change communication there is a constant time pressure to communicate before rumours start and in realistic this is not possible to have f2f communication. Even though organizations might have the willingness for f2f communication, there is no money for this because f2f communication ties employees’ and supervisor/management’s time and it needs to be at the same time regardless of time differences. F2f communication ties lot of resources when organizing big events for employees.

For decades there have been lot of effective mass communication tools, for example radio and TV, but it has been difficult to receive feedback and to have interaction with those tools. But using today’s interactive communication tools (intranet, Slack, Yammer,...) in real-time and in controlled way, will enable continuous change communication successfully. In a way time has passed from big organizations’ changes and today’s way is that organizations change rapidly, daily and agile which gives a pressure for communication to stay on top of things and to communicate effective, continuous and quickly.

7.3 Reflection on own learning

This was an interesting journey. First there were some struggles to find a good combination of change communication and motivation, and to narrow topics. I was pleased how good number of respondents I received from the survey. Although, I was a bit disappointed that nothing “new” and “special” was found. However, it is a result as well that this confirmed certain presumptions about change communication, and that even

today, employees still have the basic needs. It might be a reason because the group of respondents were biased, they were gathered from different channels, most of them worked at information and communication field, and most of them saw changes as a possibility and they have been driven changes in their work. Respondents were very similar and answered as knowledge workers would answer in general.

Change communication has interested me for the past few years as I have been experiencing different changes and was never part of the communication. After this thesis, I hope to gain more perspective and knowledge of change communication which can lead me to new possibilities. Therefore, I think it was good to have a general study and not a case study, it did not tie my hands so much. On the other hand, it was difficult when there was no time pressure of an organization. I work better under pressure and if I create personal deadlines, it does not give the same result. A giant progress with this thesis was done during my two weeks of work absence in spring and in fall. My advice to fellow students: do not try to do the whole thesis beside working, because it is too hard. I learned it the hard way but now I really know my limits and I never want to exceed them again.

Intrinsic motivation was an interesting topic, especially after I read the Martela & Jarenko (2015)'s book. Based on this study and this group of respondents I did not found a clear cohesion between intrinsic motivation factors and motivation level or thoughts of changes, but it is still possible. I maybe started to see the book a bit too black and white as it inspired me too much. Although, not all are aware of their motivation factors and cannot identify them.

All in all, I would not change anything about the topic. I am glad that I kept my head and followed the topic even though this became general study. I wanted to wide my own personal interest rather than developing an organization with another topic. The need of capacity meant to me more and you never know what it will bring me in the future. Hopefully something to increase my self-improvement.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Dispatches

The dispatch for master students

Hi,

I'm studying MBA degree of Communication Management at Haaga-Helia. In my thesis I'm studying about motivation factors, engagement, changes and meaningful work relating to knowledge workers' everyday life at work.

Fellow students, I need your help to finalize my thesis. :) You'll answer anonymously and it will take max 10 minutes of your time.

Link to the survey: <https://link.webpolsurveys.com/S/C0757F2364773761>.

Thanks for your help!

BR, Annaleena Somppi

The dispatch for my workplace (translated)

Good morning everyone!

My goal is to finish my thesis and to graduate as MBA of Communication Management before summer holidays (fingers crossed). I want to do my thesis from topics of motivation factors, engagement, changes, meaningful work and how those will have an effect on daily lives of knowledge workers'. Quite familiar topics to all of us.

However, I am not doing a case study for Leanware, this will be a general study. For this reason, I am going to need a big group of respondents so that I would be able to make conclusions.


I wish that you would use your time, max. 10 minutes and would help a colleague. The survey is anonymous, and the link is:

<https://link.webpolsurveys.com/S/7656E82952B6D8EF>.

Thank you for your help!

Annaleena 😊

The dispatch for social media channels



Annaleena Somppi
Marketing communication professional & event/exhibition master
1mo • Edited

🙋‍♀️ Apuja kaivataan. Communication Management MBA -opinnot ovat tulleet siihen pisteeseen, että lopputyö pitäisi saada valmiiksi. 😊 Lopputyöni käsittelee motivaatiotekijöitä, sitoutumista, muutoksia ja työn merkityksellisyyttä tietotyöläisten arjessa työelämässä.

Kyseessä on geneerinen työ ja tutkimus. Toivoisin, että sinulta liikenisi max 10 min. Kyselyyn vastataan anonyymisti. Linkki ensimmäisessä kommentissa ja <https://lnkd.in/dYkqXsQ>.




Kiitos jo etukäteen! 😊
[#lopputyö](#) [#motivaatio](#) [#sitoutuminen](#) [#muutos](#) [#merkityksellisyys](#)
[#kesäksivalmista](#) [#lopputyöahdistus](#)

🙋‍♀️ Help is wanted. I'm studying MBA degree of Communication Management at Haaga-Helia and now it's time to get the thesis done. 😊 In my thesis I'm studying about motivation factors, engagement, changes and meaningful work relating to knowledge workers' everyday life at work.

My thesis and study are generic. You'll answer anonymously and it will take max 10 minutes of your time. The survey link is on the first comment field and also: <https://lnkd.in/dYkqXsQ>.

Thanks in advance! 😊
[#thesis](#) [#motivation](#) [#engagement](#) [#change](#) [#meaningfulwork](#) [#donebysummer](#)
[#thesisanxiety](#)

42 Likes · 54 Comments

 Like  Comment  Share

Appendix 2. Survey

Survey about motivation & changes

From a traditional aspect, a change in a workplace is seen usually as a big project which has a start and an ending, for example an organization change. In this survey, changes are seen as a part of everyday work life which knowledge workers faces daily. How to stay motivated and engaged through everyday changes?

In this survey, communication is referring to an internal communication. It can be done by anyone in the organization and by using all possible channels what can be thought of. Communication is related to everyday changes.

Background information

1. Gender

- Male
- Female
- Other
- N/A

2. Age

- Under 25
- 26-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- 61 and over

3. Work experience (in years) in the current organization

- under 5
- 5-10
- 11-20
- 21 and over

4. Position

- Worker
- Functionary
- Managerial employee
- Supervisor

- Management
- Top management
- Entrepreneur
- Other

5. Organization size

- Less than 10 employees
- 11-50 employees
- 51-249 employees
- At least 250 employees

6. You work at

- Government
- Municipality
- A public company (shows question 6.1)
- A privately held company/Own company (shows question 6.1)
- Other employer

6.1 Organization industry

- Agriculture, forestry and fishing
- Mining and quarrying
- Manufacturing
- Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply
- Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities
- Construction
- Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles
- Transportation and storage
- Accommodation and food service activities
- Information and communication
- Financial and insurance activities
- Real estate activities
- Professional, scientific and technical activities
- Administrative and support service activities
- Public administration and defence; compulsory social security
- Education
- Human health and social work activities
- Arts, entertainment and recreation
- Other service activities

- Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services- producing activities of households for own use
- Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies
- Industry unknown

Motivation (was not shown in the survey)

7. Why do you work in your current workplace? (please mark 5 factors)

- Good benefits
- I can decide how to do my work
- Good work atmosphere
- My work is interesting
- My work is meaningful
- I'm part of the management
- I can decide when and where I do my work
- I'm being supported for my personal development/growth
- My work is challenging
- Organization creates meaningful products/services
- I understand and act based on organization's vision, mission and goals
- My work is being appreciated
- I feel success at my work
- I can help colleagues/customers
- My title reflects my position at the organization
- An extra money bonus system
- I have an authority to make decisions
- The management cares about me
- I see possibilities for a career development
- The organization/my work has a value for a society
- Other, what?

8. How would you rate the motivation factors (previously chosen) considering your career in future?

(scale: Very unimportant, Unimportant, Important, Very important, I don't know)

9. How would you describe your level of motivation towards your work?

(1)Not at all motivated, (2)Slightly motivated, (3)Somewhat motivated, (4)Quite motivated, (5)Extremely motivated

10. Do you feel that you are sustaining your motivation with some specific ways?

11. From your experience, how can an internal communication enhance your motivation towards your work?

Change (was not shown in the survey)

12. Past 12 months, how many times have you thought of changing workplace?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- 1-2 times in six months
- 1-2 times in a year
- I haven't thought (hides question 13)

13. If you would have the chance to change an organization, what would make you to stay in your current organization? (Multiple choice, max 5 factors)

- A raise
- Additional benefits
- Having more responsibility
- A feel of appreciation
- Interesting new work tasks
- My work would be meaningful for an organization/customers/society
- A new title
- A possibility to influence on work tasks
- Management listens employees
- A possibility to develop something new
- I'm able to create an extra value for an organization/customers
- A new job description
- A possibility to manage things
- A good atmosphere amongst personnel
- A clear personal growth plan
- An organization has a promising future
- A new team
- I understand/agree company's vision, mission and strategy for the future
- I see and feel that employees being appreciated
- A growing and developing organization
- An international working environment

- A new superior
- Other, what?

14. Do you experience changes (daily/weekly/monthly) in your work?

- Yes
- No (hides question 15)

15. How those changes feel to you?

- Difficult (shows question 15.1)
- Neutral
- Easy (shows question 15.2)

15.1 Can you tell why do you experience them as difficult??

15.2 Can you tell why do you experience them as easy?

16. How would you like to hear about (daily/weekly/monthly) changes related to your work?

17. Past 12 months have you been driven (small/big) changes

- Yes (hides question 18)
- No

18. What are your thoughts/feelings about changes? How would you react when you hear about upcoming changes? (you can choose more than one)

- Why change a good way
- How should I do that
- I don't have time for something new
- How will this impact on me
- Yet another change, when this will end
- Will there be a training for this
- Other, what?

19. From your experience, how an atmosphere for a positive change in organization culture should be developed/created through communication?

Communication (was not shown in the survey)

20. Have you heard that your work is meaningful?

- Yes (shows question 20.1)
- No (shows question 20.2)

20.1. Meaningful work; who, how and what situations was this communicated to you?

20.2. From who, how and in what situations would you like to hear that your work is meaningful?

Please leave contact information of your choice in case you'd like to receive the final thesis report.

Note: this information will not be associated to the previous answers.

- Email
- LinkedIn message (profile url for example)