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## The importance of manager's wellbeing in Company X

Study of the situation of the members developing managerial roles in Company X and their problems

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## Abstract

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The main purpose of this research is to find possible solutions for the managers working in Company X. It is a complete practice thesis since the research was requested by the Site Manager because of the overall well-being and complaints received by the employees according to the skill of the people who are in leading positions. The company is giving the chance to young and inexperienced people to develop roles in which they did not have previous studies therefore after a couple of years the outcome has become completely negative.

The author will be developing qualitative research consisting of various interviews for the different managers' levels, the object of those is to get the problems or issues that the managers are struggling with.

The study was done during hard times of the company and the managers included in the interview were requesting what they would like the writer to pay more attention to at the time of doing the research.

During the interviews, the managers of each different level mentioned that they are stressed and the workload they are currently having is not manageable, in between, of many other issues. The author concluded that not only the middle and lower management team should get more training but also get the right support from their supervisors. In the support part, the author's suggestion to the company is to have an assistant/coordinator of managers who will be helping each of them according to who is having the most difficult situation.

The structure of the research is containing an Introduction, 4 chapters and the Conclusion. There is also a table of content and a glossary having the abbreviations of all the titles or positions mentioned during the body of this research.

Keywords: Balanced Managers  
Responsibilities distributions  
Startups  
Working environment  
Working culture

## **Contents**

Glossary

|          |  |           |
|----------|--|-----------|
| <b>1</b> | <b><i>Introduction</i></b>                           | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>2</b> | <b><i>Current situation on Company X</i></b>         | <b>2</b>  |
| 2.1      | <b>From start-up to established company</b>          | <b>2</b>  |
| 2.2      | <b>Current hierarchy in Company X</b>                | <b>4</b>  |
| 2.2.1    | Internal promotion system used in Company X          | 7         |
| 2.2.2    | Symptoms that create the need of this research       | 8         |
| <b>3</b> | <b><i>Methodological approaches</i></b>              | <b>10</b> |
| 3.1      | <b>Qualitative data analysis</b>                     | <b>11</b> |
| 3.1.1    | Considerations for the interview's questions         | 12        |
| 3.2      | <b>Literature review analysis</b>                    | <b>15</b> |
| <b>4</b> | <b><i>Research observations</i></b>                  | <b>17</b> |
| 4.1      | <b>Decision on topic to be researched</b>            | <b>17</b> |
| <b>5</b> | <b><i>Analysis on Research and Solutions</i></b>     | <b>19</b> |
| 5.1      | <b>Interviews insights and the literature</b>        | <b>19</b> |
| 5.2      | <b>Relevant challenges for managers in Company X</b> | <b>20</b> |
| 5.2.1    | Employee's efficiency                                | 20        |
| 5.2.2    | Lack of capacity                                     | 21        |
| 5.2.3    | Information flow                                     | 21        |
| 5.2.4    | Bad team spirit                                      | 22        |
| 5.2.5    | Inexperience and self-doubt                          | 22        |
| 5.2.6    | Poor planning or time management                     | 23        |
| 5.2.7    | Structural barriers                                  | 23        |
| 5.2.8    | Reliable supervisor                                  | 24        |
| 5.2.9    | Ability to respond quickly                           | 24        |
| 5.2.10   | Inequality or unfair positions                       | 24        |
| 5.2.11   | Unpleasant working culture                           | 25        |
| <b>6</b> | <b><i>Conclusion</i></b>                             | <b>26</b> |
|          | <b><i>References</i></b>                             | <b>28</b> |

## Glossary

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| CEO       | Chief Executive Officer. A top-ranking executive who handles the major decisions inside of the corporation.  |
| CFO       | Chief Financial Officer. A top-ranking executive who handles the financial decisions of the corporation.   |
| COO       | Chief Operating Officer. A top-ranking executive who handles the operational and administrative functions and obligations inside of the corporation.   |
| CTO       | Chief Technology Officer. A top-ranking executive who handles the technological advances and research development inside of the corporation.           |
| DL        | Department Lead. The person who oversees managing both shifts in all areas that belongs to a department in Company X.                                  |
| FTE       | Full time equivalent. Is a unit that represents an employee's workload in a form that allows being compared across contexts.                           |
| HQ        | Headquarters. A place for the company where key management and other supporting departments are located.   |
| IB TL     | Inbound Team leader.   |
| LLC       | Limited Liability Company. A company structure that protects its owners from being personally responsible to repay the company's debts or liabilities. |
| Micro-cap | A company with an estimated valuation of \$50 - \$300 million.   |
| OB TL     | Outbound Team leader.  |
| TL        | Team Leader. The person who oversees managing one shift which consists of coaches and product specialists and reports to DL.                           |
| VP HR     | Vice President of Human Resources department.  |
| W&R DL    | Warranty & Returns Department leader.  |
| W&R TL    | Warranty & Returns Team leader.  |

# 1 Introduction

One of the most important factors that can affect a company's overall performance and development in their operations is the way the managers or supervisors thrive in their work.

A manager's role in the company is very critical and can affect directly the work culture and work environment, thus if a manager knows how to tackle the different issues that can affect the normal direction of tasks needed to be done daily, the outcome will be completely different according to how they react to those, the actions they take, at the same time, will determine the way the goals or results of the company will be achieved.

This thesis will be studying and analysing the situation of the managers in Company X. The start-up recently became a so-called "micro-cap" company with an estimated market capitalization of approximately €100 million (Kauppalehti. 2021) and with over 1000 employees in two different countries. The total number of employees has grown 10 times in the last two years. The fast growth in the number of FTEs has given the opportunity for several students/young employees who have been working in the company for a certain period and who knows the operations system of the company to become leaders in operations sites. The company requires a study to determine if the current situation of the managers is in a necessity of reviewing their situation.

The research objectives of this thesis are two-fold: 1) To analyse the current level of management well-being and 2) to provide recommendations for improving the well-being of managers based on the results of the analysis and best-in-class practices. The research methodology that will be used to find what are the issues that the managers are struggling the most are various qualitative interviews where managers at different levels inside of the company hierarchy will be participating.

The final result of this research will give to the writer a conclusion only on the topics studied during the main analysis, after the thesis is completed and the investigations are done between the managers, the results of the researcher will

be providing a list of recommendations for each of the problems that the managers are suffering at the moment, as requested by the Finland site manager, having as the main goal to mitigate the current managerial shortcomings as efficiently as possible.

## **2 The current situation on Company X**

### **2.1 From start-up to established company**

The company was founded in 2016 and started with 4 members who were doing every task from the beginning until the end in the process line with the addition of every administrative task as required in the Finnish LLC Act (Finlex.fi. 2006.) In 2017 the startup reached an employee number of 40 and the company was financed by the founders. In 2018 the company was having around 100 employees and the decision to massively scale up the company was put in motion.

Company X's first Black Friday sale in 2017 was very busy and the next year's number of sold products during the Black Friday sale was forecasted to be 10 times larger than the previous one, therefore they needed 10 times more employees. During the summer of 2018, the company started to hire temporary workers in massive numbers, around 15-20 per week but however, the growth was done so fast that the company was not ready for the number of people they had to train weekly. The employees were going around the departments according to the company's needs and only a handful of employees were permanent in each department. Anyone with experience of 2 weeks in the company was able to teach one of the new employees that had just been hired and the operation's site had a rotational system of leaders.

The system of rotational leaders was not successful since shifting from a week to week the employee responsible of the different departments was only creating a big misunderstanding for the employees to whom they would refer when they

needed a supervisor, or a manager and it was not provided any type of training/change in title for those employees who were in charge.

When Company X was founded, the entire focus was on developing a company plan, developing processes, being attractive to investors, getting financed by an outside source, developing products, developing a marketing strategy, and preparing the launch in different market segments. The overall focus in the founders' eyes was to boost the growth phase of a recently founded company by hiring in great numbers, marketing aggressively, pushing products into the proven market in order to show the possible investors that this type of business model is supported by economies of scale, all this information was given by the Chief Operating Manager, in the interview provided to the researcher.

Most early-growth companies are the result of product specialists' innovative imaginations, and the co-founders were people who come up with a great business idea, test it in a specific market, and then decide to launch the Finnish company only in their natural country.

At the end of 2018, the company decided to establish a new style of management structure consisting of fixed leaders for each department and each shift. There are morning and evening shifts, and the leaders were the link of the department's shift to make sure everything works equally the whole day of production.

During the second Black Friday, there was the need for many more employees to fulfill the orders received from customers. The easiest tasks were always done by the new employees but there was not a training process established for the employees or plan of progress for any older employee.

In this phase, Company X was still in a startup mode but with the integration of a VP of Operations who had much more experience in fast-growing companies the company started to get in shape.

Grant in his article (Grant, M., 2021.) describes startups as corporations or ventures which can be targeted on a single service or product that the founders need to carry to market and make it successful. These corporations normally do not have a completely advanced commercial enterprise version and, greater

crucially, lack of capital to transport onto the subsequent segment of commercial business, therefore, Company X was in need to grow and produce a certain amount of profit before they can become an attractive company for investors capitalist. This was the situation in the third year of Company X when they started to search for investors who could finance their massive expenses since they were not able to continue doing it alone. Some of the other facts mentioned by Grant in his article (Grant, M., 2021) were the legal structure followed by the founder. He established the firm as a sole proprietorship, and he has acted as the owner and key employee from the firm's creation to the present.

The company decided to start to work on the organizational structure and by the hand of the new VP Operations, an expert on scaling up companies, that needed new sources of revenue, and by those new positions and roles started to rise in the company. These positions were filled by the members who were more experienced in the operations system of the company but not necessarily experienced in managing people.

This decision mentioned above is a clear indication that there is no prior management experience on behalf of the founders or possessing the critical mindset of a successful entrepreneur. Their intentions are good, they are prepared to put in the time and money, and they are usually kind individuals but managing people is an acquired talent from extensive experience. Even if you are a delightful person with inherent leadership qualities, you must learn how to manage effectively through training, mentorship, and coaching.

## 2.2 Current hierarchy in Company X

Currently, Company X is having a fixed structure which was established when the new VP of Operations joined. However, there are still a few changes done in the different positions according to the needs of the company. In Figure 1 it is possible to see the upper management structure and all the different executive positions that are in the company.



For the positions such as COO, CFO, or CTO, the company usually is not able to fulfill those roles with members who are working in the operation's site because their skills are more towards mechanic works than executive roles. The goal and achievement of these members are to give results with their knowledge to the company and not vice versa as the employees joining Operations site, which is to have the work done by getting training on the ways of work in the company. The employees joining the operation's site are not required to have previous experience in anything specific before getting the position, the company offers the required skills and provides all the training necessities for every department.

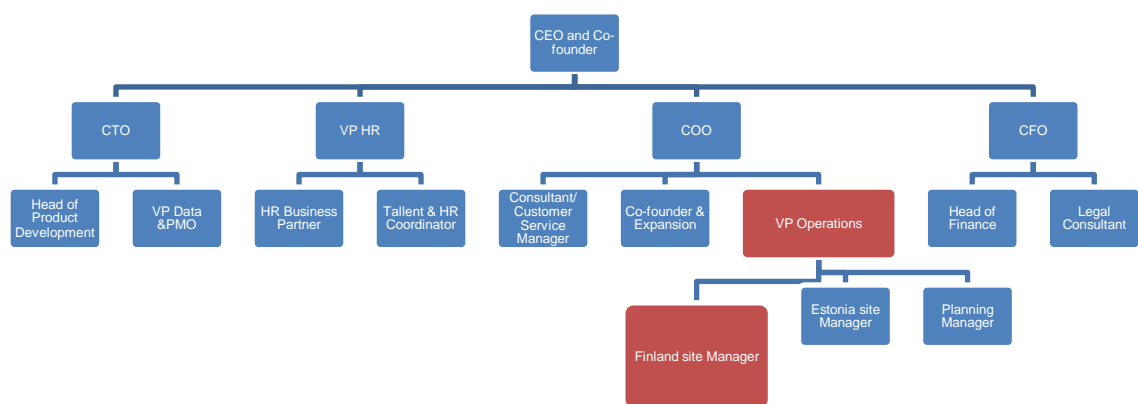


Figure1. The organizational structure of Company X

In the article *Types of Leaders Across the Organizational Hierarchy*, (Guangrong, D. and De Meuse, K., 2013.) the writers refer to and explain the different “Levels of Management”. They describe those levels “as the line of demarcation between the different managerial positions”. There are three levels usually demarcated in each company but inside those levels and according to the size of the company there are going to be sub-levels.

As well, as is shown in Figure 1, many members who belong to the upper management level forms part of the HQ side of the company. They are the key management executives who are making the decision and establishing the path the company will be following to continue the growth planned for the company but at the same time without risking what was obtained during the first years.

The company has grown in only 4 years and expanded the online business up to 12 countries and it is way more difficult to match the expectations of the customers in places where the culture varies from what would fit into a Finnish market.

All the employees belonging to this HQ office are mainly joining the company if they have previous experience and can provide the company with a new perspective with their previous knowledge and experience. Not every position that can be found in the company is filled in Figure 1, however, the most relevant ones are listed there, some of those positions are somehow linked to the managers in the operation's site and, normally, there are meeting between them and the managers.

In Figure 1, it is possible to see that the VP Operations and Finland site Managers are marked in a different colour since the researcher wanted to show who are the requesters and who authorized this research project.

On the other hand, it is possible to see in Figure 2, the managers on whom the research will be focused. Every manager who is reporting to the Finnish site manager is marked as green in the chart. Managers marked as purple are the ones who were able to get the position because of internal promotions and not necessarily with studies or previous experience in managing people.

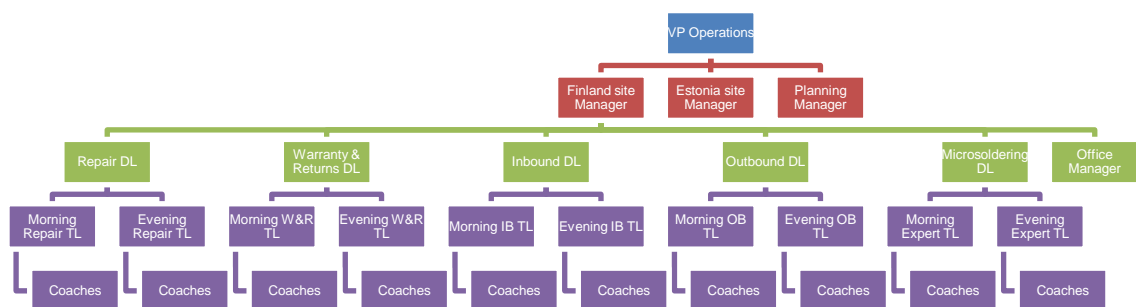


Figure 2. Middle and Lower managerial structure in Company X.

In Company X there are currently 5 Department Leads, from now on referred to as DLs, and 1 Office manager reporting directly to the Finland site manager. The office manager is the support for all of them and at the same time also the support for any company-wide events, office supplies and makes any small kind of purchases that fills the needs of the employees.

The Team Leaders, from now on referred to as TLs, of each department are having coaches as their help to manage the process specialist better. They are the ones who focus on the overall performance of process specialists and help them with any kind of problems by teaching them the process. Coaches and TLs belong to the lower management level and a TL can have 5 to 6 coaches during one shift.

Coaches' tasks can vary according to which department they belong to; in some departments, they mostly train the process specialists and keep 1-on-1 meetings that are bi-weekly organized between the coach and the employees to check the performance towards their tasks and how to keep or improve those stats. A coach can have from 5 to 10 employees who belong to their teams.

The managerial positions in Company X are named DL, TL and coaches but they are not the ones who develop the managerial tasks in the company.

### 2.2.1 Internal promotion system used in Company X

The company is having a clear promotion system that is implemented for all the departments but can vary in case there is someone who develops a non-existing position and there is a need for it. Each DL had been selected according to what was their position before, the promotion system works in a way that once you have been TL you can be selected to be DL and so on from other lower managerial positions, so, from production specialist to coach, from coach to TL and from TL to DL.

Currently, there is a ready-made training system for the ones who would like to go through the Expert Path and the salaries are equal for everyone in the same

positions unless they are a long time in the same position. In Figure 3. You can see how the promotion system is set up in the company, but you must choose which path you would like to go through after you know or have been in all the departments.

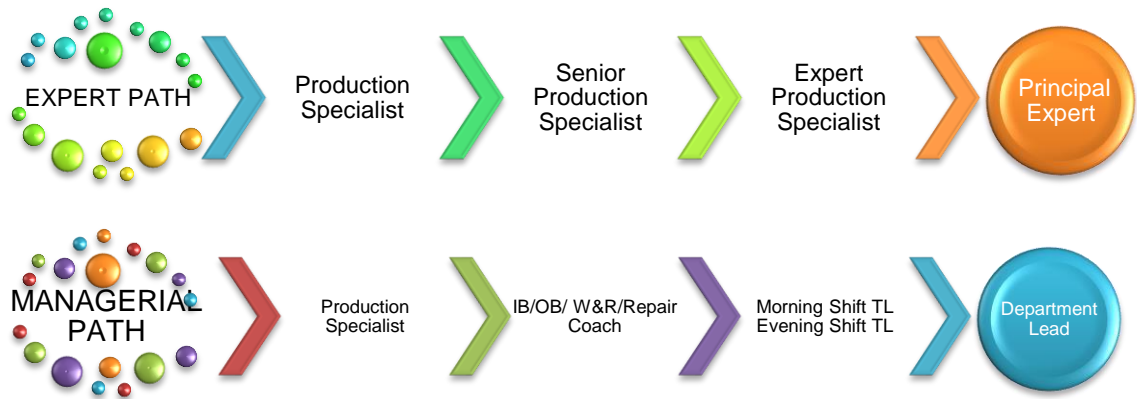


Figure 3. Base promotion system for Operations site in Company X

The promotions can be based on statistics, referring to the performance of the employee, as an exception, the coach position can also be selected according to stats that they have meanwhile are in the Production specialist positions. Those stats are calculated according to the number of hours spent on a certain task in the company and compared to the measurable workload they have done.

### 2.2.2 Symptoms that create the need for this research

Company X started to have increased levels of employee dissatisfaction towards their manager and how they handle their situations. There are few channels where the employees can express their public opinion or present any questions to the upper management level and the results lately have been more negative than ever.

The increase in complaints has led the Finland site Manager to focus on the process of managing the training of the employees. Are the people selected to the positions because of certain times in the company and are they the best to be selected to the managerial positions? The people chosen to the TL, DL, and Manager site leaders are selected based on a recruitment process. The

recruitment process is usually set into 4 stages in order to assure the rest of the applicants that it was a fair selection. Messages or emails to upper managers have lately been very negative as shown in Figure 4. They are completely normal during the past year since there is a high push to get to managerial positions and in the end, the position is “not worth the compensation” as stated by one of the managers. The company has increased the support from the Human Resources department to the coaches and leaders but after the employee tries to get the promotion to the position in management, they do not hold on to it for a long time.



Figure 4. A private message shared on an interview from a Coach to TL

Moreover, when reviewing the employees' feedback with their DLs, TLs, and coach's majority of them complain that they are feeling stressed in their positions and that sometimes they do not feel completely rested before starting a new day of work. Therefore, the performance of those managers is not as optimal as it could be for a manager who feels fully energetic at the beginning of their shift.

The site manager of Finland is very concerned about the situation and does not know how to support his team since he is fully occupied with the number of responsibilities he had at the start of his selection for the position. When he joined the company, he was the fourth employee and he and the co-founders are the only people who are still in the company from the original founder's group, this

member has seen all the changes and has got his experience completely and only from this company.

Other symptoms noticed recently in the company is that some leaders are leaving their positions for the desire to try a better position in HQ site or other companies. They usually mention to other leaders that the position is very demanding and that the stress levels are very high.

### **3 Methodological approaches**

Since on average there are around 50 members in managerial positions (counting the coaches as well), the methodological approach that this research will be using will be individual interviews done with managers on different levels in the hierarchical structure.

In order to buckle down the problems, the researcher will be focusing on two methodological approaches: qualitative interviews and the literature review.

The researcher decided not to realize a survey since those quantitative approaches are usually characterized as given a numerical and reusable outcome, in (Davis, 2021) the writer explains the value and how to conduct quantitative research, and neither of those mentioned matches with the needs in this research. In consequence, the number of managers who were going to be able to answer a questionnaire was not going to give an asserted sample for quantitative research.

The research aims is to identify best-in-class practices for managing employee well-being. The interview system created for this research will focus on what is their current situation and what are the issues or problems that are stopping them from developing their normal daily tasks.

Furthermore, the Literature review will be guiding the researcher on how to tackle the problems mentioned during the interviews, as well as will be giving the

researcher the right way to find suggestions for those problems and help to give structure for the answer that the interviews will be given.

### 3.1 Qualitative data analysis

The approach followed by the researcher in this qualitative analysis is going to be a deductive analysis since it will be structuring and predetermining the approach to acquire the information mentioned in the feedback received by employees to the Finland site manager. According to the description in Canary's article, this type of qualitative analysis, the researcher in this situation will create categories prior to doing the analysis (Canary, 2019). The researcher will then map the data relationships to those managers involved.

Each of these qualitative analysis techniques has its own set of advantages for the research project. At the same time, deductive analyses, allow the researcher to identify major themes that are important to the research.

In Canary's article (Canary, 2019) there are six steps that the researcher will be applying to analyse those interviews:

1. Read the transcripts
2. Annotate the transcripts
3. Conceptualize the data
4. Segment the data
5. Analyse the segments
6. Write the results

The thesis will only contain the results and the major mentioned topics to know which ones will be researched since during the interviews, topics that affect only a certain manager can be mentioned but will not study.

The interview will be structured in a way that the manager interviewed will be explaining from different points of view their current situation. The topics listed below are the most important to find out:

- Their positions and their main responsibilities.
- The duration on those positions.
- How they were selected and what training they received.
- Who supports them and how do they tackle the problems?
- And overall get to know if they are feeling well in their managerial position.

The interview's duration will be approximately one hour, but it might vary according to the employee in a managerial position who is interviewed, some of them express their thoughts in a longer manner, and not all the questions are going to be in need to be asked since some of those answers will be coming meanwhile asking other questions. The interviewer will be making short notes and recording meanwhile the person is answering but after the interview, the writer will be following the six steps mentioned before.

The managers interviewed are going to belong to different levels since it is very important to get the opinion and information from every manager belonging to the hierarchy structure presented before. The struggle of stress and the problem of dealing with the teams and amount of work has been pointed as a common problem between the managers.

### 3.1.1 Considerations for the interview's questions

The questions during the interview are going to be based on the specific need of the company. As mentioned before, the main issues are the result of the stress and nonattendance on the behalf of their supervisors to develop correctly their positions.

Before the interviews, the writer is only considering the causes mentioned by the Finland site manager who requested the research. The aim of the interview's information is that the researcher is willing to have, and it is to be compared what the operation supervisor knows and explained with what the actual feelings of the managers are.



Questions 1 to 5 are going to be related to the person who is behind the managerial position and therefore also the experience or studies they have in the field. Those questions are going to give information about the person, what is their position and how they got those positions. Thus, it will help the researcher to know how the person got to those positions.

The next 3 questions are going to be crucial to identify the main issues that the employees in managerial positions being interviewed are struggling with. The purpose is that out of those answers, the literature review will be helping to tackle those problems.

Questions 9 to 14 are going to be focusing on the support that the people in managerial positions will receive, from whom, and how much importance is the company giving to their individual wellbeing.

These questions overall are mapping out the general idea on how well the employees in managerial positions are performing, how well they are being supported, and how is their own vision about the current problems in Company X.

The researcher has created Table 1. In order to create a structure, as mentioned before, with the questions that will be asked during the interviews.

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Who is the manager  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is your current title at Company X and for how long have you had that role?</li> <li>2. What are your main responsibilities?</li> <li>3. Do you have previous studies on Management, or did you have previous experience in a similar role when you got the position?</li> <li>4. Have you received any training when you got the promotion and what tools were given to you? If yes, can you describe the training and was it formal or not?</li> <li>5. How many employees are reporting to you?</li> </ol> |
| What is the problem | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you sometimes feel overwhelmed by the workload that is given to you? If yes, does the workload make you feel exhausted or stressed?</li> <li>2. Can you name a few issues that have stopped you from developing your normal tasks?</li> <li>3. How had you tackled those issues and who helped you?</li> </ol>  |

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Support received | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How had you tackled those issues and who helped you?</li> <li>2. Do you receive support from HR if you encounter a problem managing your team? If yes, would you describe this support as something you can use, or is it more of intangible support?</li> <li>3. Do you record the issues that happened, exceptional of your normal duties, in a report?</li> <li>4. Is it easy for you to communicate with your supervisor about your problems?</li> <li>5. How frequently do you speak about your wellbeing with your supervisor?</li> <li>6. Do you feel safe when communicating about personal problems to your supervisor?</li> <li>7. How would you like to receive support in the future for those “manager problems”?</li> </ol> |
|------------------|---|

Table 1. Questions and interview structure

### 3.2 Literature review analysis

In pursuance of the qualitative data, the researcher will be defending the suggestions and the structure that will be followed in the Analysis on Research, chapter 5 of this thesis, with the support of the literature review.

The researcher will be supporting the structure of the analysis with the help of the articles and books. The articles are mentioning the problems that the managers are facing in general, having those organized in a list will be helping the researcher to arrange and extract from the interviews the problems that concern them most to the manager of Company X. These are the books and articles that will be in use for the analysis:

- Knowledge Creation and Management: New Challenges for Managers (Ichijō, K. and Nonaka, I., 2007).
- The new one-minute manager (Blanchard, K. and Johnson, S., 2021).
- 10 challenges managers face & how to overcome them (Perkbox. 2021)
- 12 Common Management Challenges and How to Overcome Them (Indeed.com. 2021).
- Work sampling for personnel selection (Campion, J. E. 1972).

The author will be connecting the suggestions mentioned in these books and articles to the working methods that Company X is having, it is so that, there is some adjustment done on the solutions given by the books. Since the author has done extensive research on how the company operates, the writer will be able to apply methods in practice in the needs of Company X.

The book “New Challenges for managers” (Ichijō, K. and Nonaka, I., 2007) contains a different expert in each chapter. The reader has also the possibility to only read the chapter that contains the problem that interest it the most since there is a clear separation between chapters, this makes the reading more absorbable and easier to understand. Ideas in knowledge creation and management skill that a manager should have, are as well mentioned in the book.

One of the biggest suggestions getting from the book is how it should exist in the company a knowledge management program for the managers in order to develop their own leadership skills.

The journal article “Work sampling for personnel selection” (Campion, J. E. 1972) will give an example of how the test sampling works and how Company X should get benefit by doing these “case studies” to each member joining different teams.

The book “The one-minute manager” (Blanchard, K. and Johnson, S., 2021) is a story of one person who is in search of the “perfect manager”. In the search for this mentor, the main character finds the manager who had created a new system on how to lead his company and at the same time has no stress and time for

disconnect from his duties. The “one minute manager” explains that in order to succeed soon a manager should be a combination of a result-oriented and people-oriented manager. The story brings to the main character to visit different leaders working under the manager and each of them explains how this system works.

The researcher will be finding if this system could be implemented even as a test to the managers in Company X. Grand part of the book give great insights and suggestions for the managers to get closer with their teams.

Even though the articles that will be in use are not academic references, the researcher compared different articles and what the manager replied in the interviews in order to know how truthfulness are the information in those.

## **4 Research observations**

### **4.1 Decision on the topics to be researched**

The researcher will be analysing and reading carefully the answers obtained. Few of the managers are requesting specific help on some areas of their job and some who are leaving the positions have mentioned very valuable information for the writer, such as, why would they prefer to go back to their operation roles and not have a team under their control.

There were 8 different interviews done with different managers, 2 DLs were able to participate and two of them are leaving the position in the next months because of problems within the managers’ teams. On the other hand, 4 TLs were interviewed and all of them requested in the end to get a clear solution for their problems mentioned in the interviews. The request is clear and all of them have opened the issues that are more important for them, at the same time, it is a very clear sign that they are trusting the research done by the writer. The last two interviews were done with 2 managers in the coach position, and they were the ones who seemed to be better in terms of feeling supported by their supervisors.

The topics more relevant mentioned during the interviews were referring to how hard they worked in order to get the managerial positions, but they got to these positions out of being the “best performers” not out of their previous experience in managing positions. An employee can be considered as “best performer” if they are the ones who excels in statistics, for example, if an employee needs to check 100 devices a day, the “best performer” does 150 for a few consecutive days and they automatically get in the list of possible coaches.

Standing out is a major component to getting a managerial position in Company X but not necessarily the most important competency manager should have according to (Lucia and Lepsinger, 1999), the writers explain that for the manager to help the business to meet its strategic objective they should have certain knowledge, personal characteristic and behaviour, which in the case of the current promoting system of Company X is not being supported this idea.

During the first part of the interview, named as “who is the manager”, the interviewed mentioned that the training was poorly done and since the position of manager is always having a full agenda it was never given any dedicated period to be trained. This situation together with the no experience in previous positions has got all the managers into situations which are not manageable for their knowledge and therefore end up into a high level of dissatisfaction from the employees belonging to those teams.

In the second part of the interview, the managers mentioned how the different situations generate stress not only on the hours of work but also after their shift is done, which give a result that is not possible for the manager to disconnect from their duties in the free time. Problems as do not know how to resolve a misunderstood between employees, not having enough time for their task, not receiving decisions on behalf of the executive team in time and not having all the employees needed on their team because of not realistic plans were some of the most mentioned ones. Another topic raised during the interviews was the impossibility to motivate the workers by raising salaries or at least giving different benefits. Nobody who is working in middle and lower managing can give rise or

suggestions to upper management about salaries according to quality performance, therefore everyone is working to beat stats, and no one wants to do the extra tasks which usually are not giving any number in the stats to the employee. This last problem mentioned it was all over operations site but there is not anything that the managers can do on this, thus the research suggested to rise this topic on the meetings they are having with the executive team.

The third part of the interview was about the “support received” from their supervisors or upper management and the answer varied according to the level of the manager. Coaches who were the ones having as managers TLs who were in coaches' positions before had very great and positive comments about the support received but on the other hand, coaches who were under a TL who was not developing any similar role before were mentioning about how they cannot count on their supervisor. By TLs the most common mentioned topic was about how their DLs are never having time to help solve problems and that they are not sure what is the support HR could provide to them because they have not got training from them before. They feel like their well-being is not a big topic for the company that is taken into consideration and that the upper managers only pay attention when some of them want to leave the position or when there is a need to have a sick leave due to burnout.

## **5 Analysis on Research and Solutions**

### **5.1 Interviews insights and the literature**

The interview gives a big insight about the problems the managers were interested to be researched and solved. Those problems are going to be studied and researched from different books and articles. Most of the issues mentioned by the managers are more common than expected.

In the research, the author found articles that were explaining a few of the challenges which are common when performing these positions. In the article written by Indeed editorial team and the article written by the Perkbox team, there

is in brief explanation on how to tackle the most relevant challenges the managers can face on each workday (Indeed.com. 2021) & (Perkbox, 2021.) Also, the writer will cover a few challenges from the book written by (Ichijō, K. and Nonaka, I., 2007.) *New Challenges for Managers*.

After all, the interviews from which the researcher found that the position of manager in Company X is more complex than was mentioned by the Office manager. On one hand, it is great that the company has given the opportunity to young inexperienced people or students the chance to perform managerial positions but the normal challenges a manager can face have been increased in magnitudes so large since the inexperience of how to deal in the immediate moment of action. It is also true that you only learn when you have to react and actually perform a solution but the employees belonging to the teams has a different point of view since the dissatisfaction in the feedback questionnaires is very clear and significant.

## 5.2 Relevant challenges for managers in Company X

The researcher will be investigating more in-depth the problem mentioned during the interviews but at the same time in order to create and increase their confidence, the writer will be helping on how to recognize and address these challenges before they happen. Now, few of the challenges will be explained as mentioned in the previous articles and books.

### 5.2.1 Employee's efficiency

The first challenge mentioned in the article is the problem when the workers are decreasing their performance levels (Indeed.com. 2021.) In Company X, people with the title of a coach are the ones who are addressing this challenge. Managers who assess a firm's performance will be able to improve the overall efficiency inside of the company. Coaches should review employees' current efficiency and reconstruct any weak spots through process analysis. Asking



inquiries and proposing answers to their concerns is another way to approach this situation. The coaches should use the one-on-one meetings that they are having on a bi-weekly basis to not only talk about how their performance during the past two weeks was but also establish goals for the upcoming weeks and propose solutions in order to reset work hours and productivity objectives.

### 5.2.2 Lack of capacity

Another possible challenge is being understaffed; this challenge goes to be for those who are performing in a TL position. They must recognize when it's appropriate to rent another team member, they will get an estimate on the sales and business plans of the corporate, have some people trained it'll be helping when the fixed employees are having holidays or getting a leave. The corporate should listen and take inspiration for instance when there's a change of season since those times are when the people are more prompt to call in sick or to participate in other ways for not coming to work. Since the hiring process takes time, it's beneficial to introduce the expertise of other managers and human resources specialists when trying to find a replacement employee. Company X has a staff operations planner, but TLs should ensure the knowledge of what quantity a worker can perform within a given time which should be their responsibility. When writing an employment description, interviewing applicants, and selecting the right individual for the work, seek assistance, if necessary, from the HR team to help you discover the best fit for your team, have applicants complete a sample work test for instance (Campion, J. E. 1972.)

### 5.2.3 Information flow

Lack of communication is one of the most important problems managers should tackle immediately when noticing. Company X is having members from 50 different nationalities, therefore in every team, they are not only different personalities but also different cultures, because of this, there's an opportunity for miscommunication from time to time. Coaches are the ones who are the direct contact to the employees, and they should have clear communication with their teams always. Meetings arranged with the whole team and common discussion

should be implemented for every team. It is a must to inform the employees of any changes before the change is happening, so they will know what to expect. The coaches and leaders should encourage the team members to make use of the messaging platform used in the company, Slack, so for example, when onboarding a new person to their team, coaches should make sure that everyone is invited to the team channel and include them to the tag of the team. In the book (Blanchard, K. and Johnson, S., 2021) The one-minute manager there is an explanation of how the “one minute manager” does the communication on the weekly Wednesday meetings, instead of telling what was the achievements done during the last week, he listens how the group reviews and analyze themselves furthermore listen what are the problems and what reminds to be accomplished during the next week.

#### 5.2.4 Bad team spirit

Additionally, to the previously mentioned, poor teamwork is an issue that managers can face when employees are working only focusing on stats or their individual tasks. It is important to remind ideas are always welcome if those can increase positively the overall work position efficiency. Giving time to the employees to work on projects suggested by them is also going to be great to increase levels of motivation and acknowledge their effort. Team-building exercises should be implemented to make the teams work better together and get to know with whom they are working

#### 5.2.5 Inexperience and self-doubt

As mentioned before, 90% of the managers in the company are having a managerial position for the first time in their career life, therefore, they might feel the pressure to achieve all the goals and what they are expecting from them straight in the beginning, or they lack the self-confidence to being able to perform in challenging and stressful situations. Managers must remember that the best way of learning is always coming from mistakes and unexpected situations are very common occurrences. The absence of structure will be affecting the overall performance if the team needs to be supervised closely. If there is a change of

coaches to other teams, he/she should ensure that they know well the team member, their abilities and check the work environment when overseeing that new team.

#### 5.2.6 Poor planning or time management

Time management is one of the most mentioned problems during the interviews. A coach or leader must plan, solve the situation, be sure the team is performing well, make sure the communication is getting to every member, and many more tasks that the struggle with balancing all those responsibilities sometimes become impossible to do in the timeframe of the day working hours. Scheduling and booking times in their calendar will help to prioritize the work they have to work on during the day. Another suggestion for this problem will be establishing a fixed day when the team members can discuss issues happening during the week and not receive requests on daily basis. When marking those times, the team should be informed that the manager will be focusing on a certain project that is having in his/her hands so they will know when they know they should always check the calendar of the manager. This last part of Company X will be more applied to DLs who are the ones who are struggling the most.

#### 5.2.7 Structural barriers

Moving forward to managers' problems there is inadequate support. Commonly, managers sometimes need to get approval from upper levels on their decision-making. This is the case for everyone in the managerial team of Company X. There is currently so much hierarchy and leaders cannot move forward with the project unless their supervisor approves and most of the time the executive team takes longer times to give any answers on how to proceed. If the team is waiting for these decisions, managers must always inform their teams why is the reason they are not moving forward with a project and continue with different tasks until they get the approvals. To speed up some decisions, the manager can arrange one-on-one sessions with the decision-making team and provide all the information of why it is important to be able to continue as soon as possible with the project.

### 5.2.8 Reliable supervisor

Making sure that the team is trusting that there is transparency is a huge part of the communication skills the manager should aim to have. Having a clear structure and accessible documentation of those is necessary to be able to prove why some decisions are made in a different way than what was expected from and specific team member. Checking that the team knows why there is a change of plans and why some members of the team are working on different tasks is going to help to not have a skeptical member. In the company, there is currently a problem that employees are not trusting the transparency of upper management. At the times of promotions or distribution of tasks, the employees believe that there is a clear connection between the employees getting the greatest benefit with what is the relationship with the upper management.

### 5.2.9 Ability to respond quickly

One of the problems mentioned when talking with the manager was unexpected situations such as misunderstandings between team members. This challenge will be always possible to happen, and the manager should be ready to know how to react in those moments manager should always be checking on how is the overall feeling between the team members and must react fast when there is tension in the workplace. Addressing and reacting in time will minimize the negative outcome this issue usually generates. The managers should get training from the HR team according to what is the code of conduct of the company and how to implement those in case of misbehavior of team members, at the same time, the manager should be impartial and never take any sides meanwhile solving the situation. Not every time you are going to have an easy-going team member.

### 5.2.10 Inequality or unfair positions

Getting to manage your old coworkers might generate disconformity or problems at the beginning when getting the position, having someone on the team stepping out to lead them is going to be shocking and awkward at first but with time and

right leadership it will mitigate this problem. The manager should make sure that the team member is seen as an advantage to have someone who was in their position before, only someone who was part of the team before will understand the situation and what are the blockers of that task so it only can be beneficial for everyone in terms of how much support they will be able to get for the team. A good sign of support is providing the tools the promoted person was in lack when developing that role, only an old member of the team becoming a leader will know what tools were lacking, and getting those when getting the promotion will help the team to accomplish their goals.

#### 5.2.11 Unpleasant working culture

The last challenge mentioned in the article is referring to the weak work culture. In case the manager or team members feel like there is not a strong connection with the rest of the teams or within the team, the motivation level will suffer and decrease. The team member should feel as they would belong to the team, and it is the manager's responsibility to make sure that during the onboarding times the member gets involved. From time to time get the team to come out of work activity will help to create a work culture. In company X, there is a specific budget for activities and the manager should instead of trying to arrange everything with himself/herself, it should include one team member in the planning so these tasks will not become one more reasonability on the already very full manager schedule.

The article was very complete with the list of challenges and the writer had included advice and possible solutions after the explanation of the challenges suggested as well from the article. During the interviews, not all the challenges were mentioned because specific challenges need more attention in the company than others for the managers of Company X.

## 6 Conclusion

This research paper used an extensive way of determining a problem this specific Company X is having, summarizing the overall background where did this company rise from, the current structure of the corporate ladder, the current working environment and climate this company is having and using qualitative data analysis in order to hear from the actual people that are experiencing these hardships. It is well known that very few start-ups are able to succeed as far as Company X discussed in this research paper, however, the success never comes without any problems, these can include internal or external problems in the company. In the case of Company X, the problems were raised from the immense growth the company saw during its start-up phase and also from the slow response time that the inexperienced founders and managers had at the time. All the focus was on growing market share in various segments while attracting investors to finance the massive expenses the company has. As the writer pointed out, the hierarchical structure is very strict currently and the communication is not necessarily flowing from the bottom of the organization to the top where the decision-makers are, which causes such problems as discussed in this paper. In order to get a better understanding of the problems and why they arise, the writer conducted interviews on the key management positions which can act as bottlenecks for restricting the communication flow upwards. These interviews presented many key features such as the employees' position, previous and current experience for that kind of position, their current workloads, and their prediction on if the workload is sustainable for them. As pointed out in the charts provided by the writer, the key communication bottlenecks occur at the site manager level, shown in Figure 2. Since the already heavy workload from the Finland operations site, which is the major location where most of the company's actual work and employees are located, produces excessive amounts of information that is overflowing to the site manager, therefore is not sustainable. The key problem the writer wants the site manager to focus on when providing this research to he/she is that there needs to be a proper vertical integration in the corporate structure. The constant change in the structure is causing a lot of stress and dissatisfaction in the lower-level managers

which must work with what they have, which is according to the interviews very poor. The company's managing style has not kept up with the growth, since with more growth, comes more employee demand, with more employees comes more team members for the DLs, TLs, and coaches to handle, with more team members to handle comes more communication to flow upwards to the site manager and so forth. Since there is only 1 site manager per site, the manager is carrying the heaviest workload that the company is having, which is the operations side, and they are the ones who need the most satisfaction for the company to keep growing by pushing the products on sale. In conclusion, Company X needs to focus on the middle and lower-level managers more and getting their satisfaction in line with their workload, since with more satisfied and efficient managers, comes happier team members, this will cause that the work satisfaction can be increase and the need to complain decrease. Either, by reducing the responsibilities of getting a manager's assistant the workload should be reduced for all the managers.

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