
**Development Discussions for Construction Workers as a Tool
for Management by Key Results**



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ABSTRACT

The primary objective of this thesis was to examine the possibilities to utilize development discussions with workers in the construction sector to improve management and job satisfaction on construction sites. Another objective was to create a working concept to implement development discussions for workers on a bigger scale and to develop them further to be part of the company's management system. This thesis was commissioned by YIT Construction Ltd. The objectives of the writer of this thesis were to utilize his own experiences and that work would be useful to both parties.

The theoretical part of this thesis was collected from literature. The research method was a qualitative method. Data collection was done with themed interviews, because it allows freedom in the interview situation. Interviews were used to find out the current situation in the company and to collect experience from previous development discussion methods. Two production based companies were benchmarked.

The results of the thesis shows that development discussions are a working tool to utilize management by key results with workers. Another objective was met, and a working concept on a bigger scale was created with all the templates, which can be found in appendices. In addition to that an implementation plan for the concept was created. The concept has a potential to become used in the whole operating area of the company.

More research could be done to find out the best database system, which would support the concept and result utilization. The concept of resource services could be tried in other units to find out whether it would support the development discussion concept better.

Keywords Development discussion, construction workers, management by key results, management by objectives, performance management

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TIIVISTELMÄ

Työn päätavoitteena oli selvittää voiko tulosjohtamista jalkauttaa rakennusalan työntekijöille kehityskeskusteluiden avulla ja näin kehittää johtamista sekä parantaa työtyytyväisyyttä työmailla. Toinen tavoite oli kehittää toimiva kehityskeskustelukonsepti yrityksen johtamisjärjestelmän osaksi. Aihe tuli toimeksiantona YIT Rakennus Oy:stä. Opinnäytetyöntekijän henkilökohtaisiin tavoitteisiin kuului omien kokemusten hyödyntäminen sekä työn hyödyllisyys molemmille osapuolille.

Teoriaosuus perustuu aiheeseen liittyvään kirjallisuuteen sekä tehtyyn tutkimukseen. Tutkimusmenetelmäksi valikoitui kvalitatiivinen tutkimusmenetelmä. Tiedonkeruumenetelmäksi valikoitui teemahaastattelu, jotta haastattelutilanteeseen saataisiin tarpeeksi joustavuutta. Haastatteluilla kartoitettiin yrityksen kehityskeskusteluiden nykytilanne, kokemukset aikaisemmista kehityskeskusteluista työntekijöille sekä kahden tuotantopainotetun yrityksen toimintatapa.

Työn tuloksena syntyi päätelmä, että kehityskeskustelut ovat toimiva työkalu jalkauttaa tulosjohtamista sekä toimeksiantajayrityksen uusien arvojen mukaista toimintaa rakennustuotannon työntekijöille. Tuloksena syntyi myös kehityskeskustelukonsepti kaikkine lomakkeineen, jotka löytyvät tämän työn liitteistä. Lisäksi Suomen osalta konseptille luotiin käyttöönottosuunnitelma. Konseptilla on potentiaalia tulla käyttöön yrityksen koko toiminta-alueella.

Jatkokehitystä aiheesta voisi tehdä tutkimalla, mikä tiedon tallennusmenetelmä sopisi parhaiten kehityskeskusteluiden tulosten dokumentointiin. Resurssipalvelun toimintaideaa voisi kokeilla eri yksiköissä ja selvittää, tukeeko se kehityskeskustelukonseptia paremmin kuin nykymalli.

Avainsanat Kehityskeskustelu, rakennusalan työntekijät, tuotannon työntekijät, tulosjohtaminen

Sivut 37 s. + liitteet 13 s.

Development discussion

Discussion between the superior and subordinate with the main focus mainly in personal development of the employee. Nowadays term is used widely and commonly including also objective setting.

Foremen on site

Foremen on a construction site run the site and their subordinates are all workers on site. This includes the site supervisor that holds overall responsibility of one site.

Management by key results

Term is broadly used in YIT instead of performance management. Principles are the same, as in management by objectives and performance management.

MBKR discussion

Discussion between superior and subordinate with the main focus in personal development and setting of the targets. Like objective and development discussion. Term is used in YIT.

Management by objectives

System of management by objectives can be described as a process whereby the superior and subordinate jointly identify their common goals, define each individual's major areas of responsibility in terms of the results expected of him. These measures are then used as a guide when operating the unit and assessing the contribution of each member of it. Focus is on participative goal setting and measurement of the set goals.

Objective and development discussion

Discussion between the superior and subordinate with the main focus on development and objective setting. Also referred to as performance review.

Performance management

The principal idea of performance management is to ensure that goals are being met in an effective and efficient manner. Focus can be set on different things like performance of an organization, department, employee or even processes.

Site Manager

Manager whose responsibility is to lead several construction sites. Direct foreman of the foremen on site. Usual working location in office.

Target

Word meaning the desired goal or objective, used by YIT.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Topic of this thesis is ‘Development Discussions Construction Workers as a Tool for Management by Key Results. The thesis was commissioned by YIT Construction Ltd.

Development discussions as a tool for management is an up-to-date subject because there is a need to introduce a company management system - management by key results - to the employees and support the utilization of the commissioning organization’s values and leadership principles. The age structure of employees in the construction sector is undergoing a big change in the future, when the big age groups are retiring. Workers are getting younger and younger, when new generations come to fulfill natural exits. Therefore, the working environment needs to be adapted to the generation change. Younger people tend to be more demanding towards their employer, so there is a need to listen to them more and more to be able to create long lasting commitment. This is one of the main reasons this topic of development discussion needs to be studied.

The first priority of the writer of this thesis is that it would be beneficial to the commissioning organization YIT Construction Ltd, and professionally useful for the writer. The writer’s position in the human resources supports this topic. This thesis will help to understand the means to utilize the full potential of YIT’s workers and develop them. YIT on the other hand will get information whether it is beneficial to utilize development discussions as a tool for management by key results with production workers. If this is the case the company will also get a working concept to be used with all the workers. For these reasons this thesis will be really close to daily working life. One more benefit is that the thesis is written in English, which allows this material to be used in all countries where YIT operates.

1.2 Objectives

The main objective of the thesis is to find out if management by key results could be utilized with workers in the construction sector in the development discussions as a tool. This will be examined by studying the literature, current situation in the company, previous experiences and benchmarking two other companies. Another objective is to create a development discussion concept on a bigger scale for the commissioning organization, based on experiences and literature. The concept includes creating an information package for foremen holding these discussions and templates for the discussions.

The scope of the thesis is limited in the following way. The thesis will first study the history of performance management and describes it through literature. The history and theory of the development discussions are studied

carefully through literature and experiences. The current situation of the commissioning company is studied in a careful and detailed way. Only the situation of Finland is considered, so other countries and cultures are left out in this study. This topic is a part of a bigger development project related to the utilization of management by key results. This thesis will consider only development discussions of the construction workers.

These objectives are achieved by answering the following questions:

- Could development discussion be utilized as a tool for management by key results for workers in the construction sector?
- How could the development discussion concept for construction workers could be integrated to the company's management system?
- What is the goal of the development discussions?
- What are the benefits of the development discussions for both parties?
- What are the biggest challenges against the concept?
- Who will hold development discussions and how often?
- What topics should be discussed?
- How to utilize the results of the discussion?

1.3 Process and Content

First the objectives are defined and the thesis plan is drawn up. Data needed in this thesis is related to management and the commissioning organization. Data about management is mainly literature and studies about performance management and development discussions. Important data needed is about the current situation and processes of the company. Benchmarking is done for two big production concentrated organizations located in Finland.

The data related to the current situation of the company is obtained from the personnel of the commissioning company through qualitative interviews. Earlier development discussions routines and results are researched with interviews. People to be interviewed have mainly had these kind of discussions before or have experience related to worker development. Some data is also collected by following ongoing real development discussion cycles. After attending such a discussion the superior and subordinate are interviewed. The collected material from the interviews is used to study the current situation. The writer of this thesis will also take part in planning the ongoing discussions.

Based on the data collected and studied, the development discussion concept is created. In practice, two main documents are created. The more important one is the info package for foremen related to the discussions. It will give support, encourage good discussion practices and help foremen to prepare themselves. The other one is the template for the discussion itself which will be guiding the documentation of discussion. Documents are aimed to be simple, understandable and short.

The documentation of this thesis is done with a funnel approach. The history and description of performance management comes first. After that the thesis concentrates on the term development discussion. This topic is studied deeply from the literature and some examples of the commissioning organization are included. Next part is the description of the company's current situation. Then comes the main part, which is the new concept creation for the development discussions. In the end, a conclusion of the thesis is found including the development suggestions and possibilities for further research.

1.4 Research Method

A qualitative research method has been chosen for this thesis. Themed interviews are used to collect data. The qualitative research method means that research is done without statistics and quantitative methods. Analysis is within every step in the process itself and it guides the research process and data collection. (Kananen 2008, 24.)

Interview is a method that is used to collect data about one or more subjects. There are many techniques of interview and they usually vary depending on how well the original question setting is followed. It can be based on multiple choice questions or on a themed interview. In themed interview questions can be adjusted and added according to the previous answers. (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka, 2006).

Adjustability is the main advantage of an interview. Questions can be placed just in the order that the interviewer wants, which adds the adjustability. The objective of the interview is to collect as much data about the subject as possible. It is important to prepare the interviewed person properly so it might be wise to show the question setting beforehand. Questions can be repeated, so that risk of misunderstanding gets smaller and data collected is more reliable. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2009, 73)

The qualitative method has been chosen for this thesis, because it gives a possibility to take into account people's opinions and usually doesn't include guiding presumptions. The method is used to find out the current situation in the company and to benchmark some other companies of their management system and development discussion concept. Research is done with themed interviews and the question setting presented might have varied during the interviews. This gives the needed adjustability to the interview situation.

Interviews to the benchmarked companies are done with the interview template created in Appendix 1. Interviews to the company staff are done with two separate documents, one made for superiors who hold the discussions and the other for subordinates who have had the discussion. The superior template is in Appendix 2 and that of the subordinates in Appendix 3. Question settings can vary in every interview dependent on the upcoming topics during the interview.

1.5 Commissioning Company

YIT is a 100 year old Construction Company located in Finland and also the biggest foreign builder in Russia. YIT operates in seven different countries employing more than 6000 people. The main business areas are residential construction, business premises construction and infrastructure constructions. Last year YIT’s turnover was approximately 2 billion Euros with an operating profit of 10%. YIT’s shares are listed in NASDAQ OMX Helsinki.

YIT has launched a new strategy and refined its vision and mission, and core values have been updated together with leadership principles in autumn 2013. The new values and the new leadership principles can be seen in Figure 1. Development discussions are a great way to support the new values and new leadership principles. Those give a good foundation to the development discussion concept.



Figure 1 YIT Values and Leadership principles

1.6 Terminology

This chapter introduces the terms used in this thesis. Performance management, management by objectives and management by key results all mean basically the same. The term performance management is most commonly used in this thesis when generally referring to this management style. Management by key results is used in the commissioning organization YIT Construction Ltd and it is used when referring to the YIT management style.

The term development discussion has gradually been stabilized as the most common term used as performance review, development discussion,

objective and development discussion and MBKR discussion. The term development discussion is widely used in this thesis and it is referred to include personal development and objective setting. MBKR discussion is used when referred to clerical workers' discussions.

2 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

To really understand the concept of development discussion, one needs to get familiar with the performance management. Development discussions have been created to the needs of performance management. Ideas about organizations and management are a result of the long course of development. In reality it seems that the picture of the roles of the management and other personnel has developed much slower than the development of the technique or collective renewals let us assume. (Meretniemi 2012, 169.)

2.1 History of performance management and development discussions

Around 100 years ago interest in work performance and boosting of it was increasing. The first person to rationalize it was Fredrik W. Taylor (1856-1915.) He developed production lines to Ford's car factory. His ideas were developed to the form of Taylorism which guided the companies' actions, in the 20th century. This alignment is called by its creator's name, but also referred to as scientific management. (Meretniemi 2012, 169.)

In this alignment humans were seen as a machine so that their performance could be trimmed to its optimal efficiency. The biggest change of Taylorism was that thinking of the workers was outsourced to managers. The work was divided evenly to the managers and workers so that the managers plan the work by scientific methods and the workers just complete the production work. With these new ideas Taylor became the forerunner of rationalizing and father of the scientific management. This was a huge change compared to working habits before. Workers didn't get wide-range knowledge of their work and they didn't need to bother their brains during workdays. But at the same time the possibility and right to actively develop the working processes and planning of their own work diminished totally. (Meretniemi 2012, 170.)

The pioneer of performance management was Pierre S. du Pont (1870 – 1954), who applied the independent profit center principle to General Motors in 30th century. Units were given independent goals, for example production, sales and the most important of them all the invested capital profit. The manager of the unit had a full freedom to do business if goals were met. If the goals weren't met the supervision increased and actions took place. The follower of DuPont in General Motors was Alfred P. Sloan (1875-1966), who continued the same lines. He believed that challenging but realistic goals started to increase the creativity, initiative and development of workers. The main idea stayed - Actions of the workers should be notified and good results need to be rewarded. Peter Drucker (1909–2005)

also strongly developed the ideas of performance management. (Meretniemi 2012, 172-173.)

First, workers' motives and interest and their effect on work performance weren't considered. An active interest in human needs were raised in the late 60th century. At about the same time in the USA companies were starting to hold planning discussions, which are regarded as the ancestors of development discussions. In the beginning discussions were based on a mechanical human image, and that's why they were stiff discussions, and the superior was strongly leading the conversation. Through these discussions companies started to have interest in job descriptions and its effects on work performance. The goal was to connect the job description as close as possible to the workers' knowledge and skills to maximize results. (Meretniemi 2012, 171.)

Development discussions in Finland became popular in the 1970s. They were considered important in motivation and improving the results of the personnel. The name development discussion stabilized in the 1990s. One must understand that development discussions are still limited with the mechanical worker image due to history. Discussions have been developed for ages, but the opinions of the crowd slowly change and old generations still carry on their beliefs. (Autio, Juuti & Wink, 2010, 34)

2.2 What is performance management

Traditionally performance management or management by objectives means that the whole organization and its personnel is committed to following the procedure of target oriented system. Drucker explained the principles of performance management and these principles are still alive and well. These principles are:

- Business goals should be set on those areas that are important to the existence of the company and its success.
- Different organization parts and persons' goals should be set so that they fit together.
- Planning and completion of the work are steps of the same process. Planning also belongs to every worker and to every task, not only to foremen and managers.
- Individual should be given the chance to affect and choose his own actions to achieve the result.
- Employees are encouraged to take responsibility, because responsibility motivates and increases the pleasure from work.
- Everyone monitors his own actions according to the way agreed on beforehand.
- Rewarding should be based on the results. In addition to monetary rewards some immaterial rewarding should be used.

The principles of Drucker differ from Taylorism. The difference is the concentration on the workers' personal values. In other words workers

started to be seen as individuals instead of machines. This was an important step towards the individual development discussions. (Meretniemi, 2012, 173)

2.3 Finnish leadership style

In many studies Finnish leadership style is shown to be practical, straightforward, flexible and efficient. This image is boosted with the respect of discipline and order, management by ‘perkele’, speechlessness and stiffness. It has been said that the Finnish leader gets along better with machines than with persons. This stereotype is based on the long-lasting engineer period of ascendancy in Finnish industrial companies and many expressions of weaknesses of Finnish leaders. Time after time Finnish leaders have mentioned that the most difficult area in their managing is the understanding of the human behavior, acceptance of differences and skills in co-operation and delegation. (Tainio 2007, 19-20.)

Ten most important cultural values of Finnish people according to Lewis are (2005, 58-63):

- Sense of separateness
- Guts
- Honesty
- Hatred of debt
- Reliability
- Shyness and modesty
- Taciturnity
- Directness
- Realism
- Common sense

References to these values can be found later in the thesis with an explanation how they have an effect on the topic.

2.4 Management by Key Results

Management by key results – MBKR, as a term is basically the same as performance management or management by objectives. MBKR is the main part of the management system in YIT and it plays a big role in the company culture. It is based on the company values and it has been developed according to a long history and experiences. The basic idea is to clarify the work and tasks with the help of key results and targets to utilize the full potential of the work community. The main idea is shown in Figure 2.

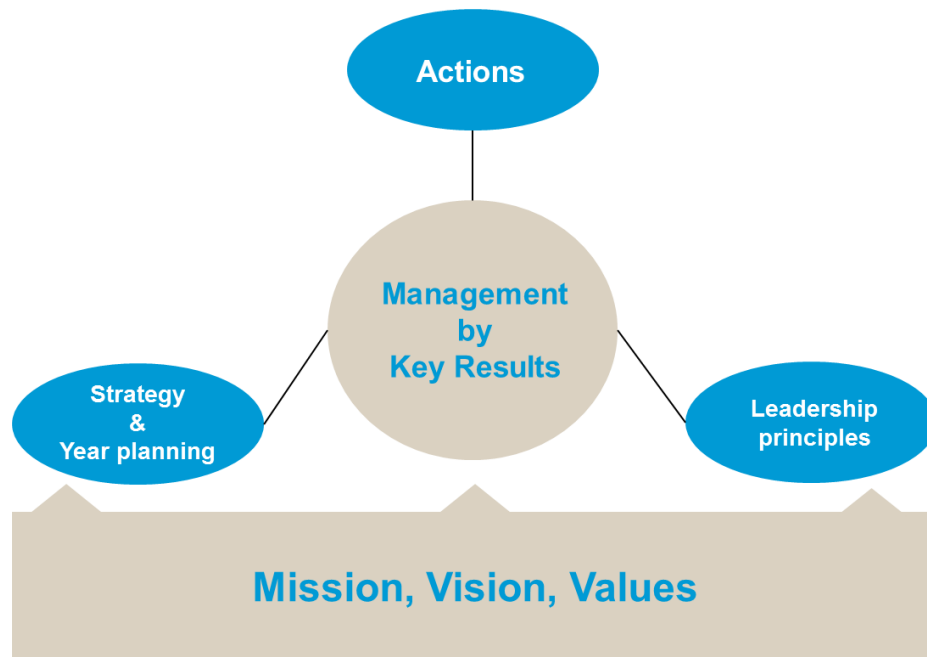


Figure 2 Main idea of management by key results

MBKR discussions are an essential link between the strategy and daily work in YIT like Figure 3 presents. The discussion doesn't replace the need of the daily management but helps to clarify the tasks. Based on this guideline every employee of the YIT has the right to know his own tasks and objectives, get feedback from his own work, develop professional knowledge and to discuss and have an effect on the content of his own daily work. In YIT with clerical workers and foreman on site this management system works well, but the workers are not yet included to it.



Figure 3 Discussion as a link between strategy and daily work

3 DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION

Development discussion is a part of performance management and it is used to determine the targets for individuals that support the utilization of company strategy and to identify personal development needs. In addition to daily communication and different meetings, regular development discussions are needed if success is wanted in leading groups and individuals. Any of these three methods won't replace others, and they all belong to the foreman's basic tools (Järvinen 2001, 43). Employees won't commit properly if they don't get adequate and constructive feedback at the right time and regularly (Borgman & Packalén, 2002, 44), which is the reason development discussions should be consistent.

3.1 Development discussion process

Development discussion process can have many variations and it can be used for different purposes. In this thesis the concentration is on management and development purposes. The most common process can be described simply with two steps. The first step is the preparation and the second step is the discussion itself. These two steps can also be split to more detailed steps presented in Figure 4.

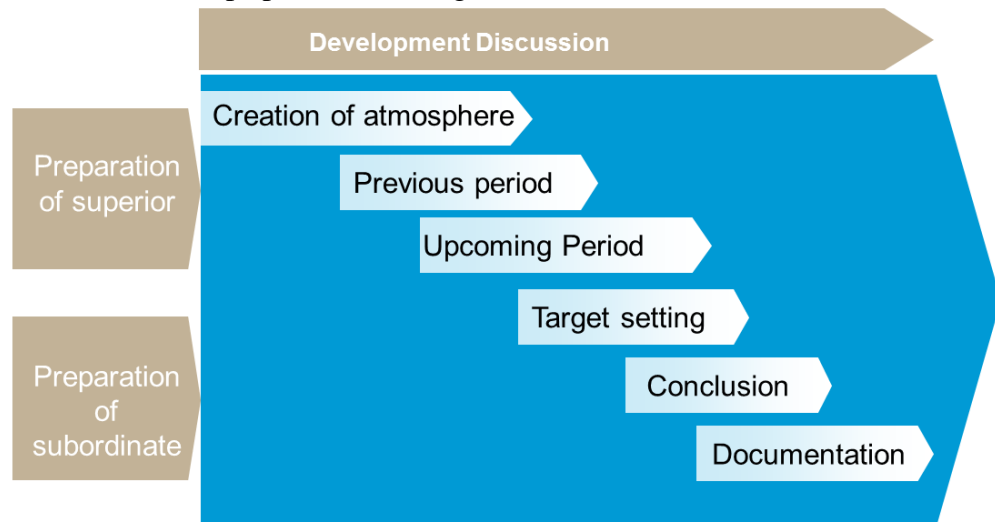


Figure 4 Development discussion process

Preparation can be split to the superior and subordinates' preparation. Discussion itself can be divided to many parts; Start – creation of the atmosphere, past period review which includes the general feedback of both parties, upcoming period, which includes the strategy of the company and units and one's individual role in it and target setting where development needs are together agreed as targets. The conclusion summarizes the agreed targets and topic. Last but not least in the discussion documentation is done according to guidelines and paper is signed to add commitment.

3.1.1 Development discussion as a part of management system

The easiest way to describe development discussion is social intercommunication between the superior and subordinate. The idea behind is that it's good to talk to all subordinates so that everyone would be taken into account during the year. Usually this superficial discussion practice is based on the superior's interest only and as a result discussions aren't held systematically. Because the practice isn't systematic that doesn't encourage superiors to hold the discussions. (Järvinen 2001, 43.) Interviews have shown the same trend that superiors aren't eager to hold the discussions if they aren't supported and demanded by the management system.

To really make the development discussion a working practice that benefits both parties, it needs to be supported by the management system of the company (Savutie, 2009). There are many companies that have adapted development discussions to management successfully. In these companies

they are the most important way to implement strategy in practice (Järvinen 2001, 43). The same successful style could be seen in the two benchmarked companies. Both companies also showed that the implementation of the development discussions to production level workers can be done and good results can be achieved with systematic work. The difference between social intercommunication and tool of management can be seen in the Table 1, where Järvinen describes the main differences.

Table 1 Development discussion as a social intercommunication or as a tool of management (Pekka Järvinen 2001, 44)

Development Discussion

As a social intercommunication	As a tool of management
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #f0f0f0;"> Free willing Random Focus on person Spontaneous Based on memory Unclear purpose Danger to get frustrated </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #f0f0f0;"> Part of management system Regular Focused on work and objectives Systematic Documented Clear purpose Usually meaningful </div>

3.1.2 Preparation

Experience has shown that the importance of the preparation phase cannot be emphasized too much, because it is an essential part of the process. The preparation can be simplified so that both conversation partners crystallize the main idea of the discussion and think about the discussed topics beforehand.

The first thing is to reserve time for the preparation and discussion and then inform the other party of the time and place. This makes sure that both parties can start the preparation process. One also needs to make sure that the place reserved is peaceful enough, because the place needs to be without any disturbances to create a relaxed atmosphere. Secondly, some kind of idea should be given to the worker on how they could prepare themselves.

Subordinates' preparation to conversation needs to be ensured. This can be done with some kind of a paper form. The benefit of the paper is that the subordinate can always come back to think about and look at the form again and again. Ideas can either be in the head or written on paper which can help the worker to bring up things in the discussion. The challenge is that the subordinate might already form fixed opinions that are harder to

change. In the discussion this could mean the absence of the open and real dialog. (Aarnikoivu 2010, 88-89.)

To combine the benefits of the paper format and lower the risks, there is a chance to give the question setting to the subordinate beforehand and give instructions to think about the questions. The topics in the sheet must be chosen well so there is no place to form a completely fixed opinion about the upcoming period. Opinions and feedback on the past, however, are encouraged. The subordinate should be encouraged to prepare feedback on the superiors and the work itself so that the work community could be improved with this data.

To be able to give realistic feedback and review the worker the superior needs to collect background information about the subordinate if he/she isn't familiar already. The opinion of the whole work community should be found out to get other perspectives. The collected background information should be analyzed so that the superior could give feedback to the subordinate in the discussion.

The discussion can be of good quality without preparation, but certainly a proper preparation makes discussion much easier. A skilled superior can get the information out of the subordinate, but other perspectives are always welcome to make sure the whole picture is seen.

The superior needs to pay as much attention to the preparation as the subordinate. It is essential to get an ideal picture of the subordinate's daily work tasks and performance. Based on Aarnikoivus' idea and experience there is a possibility to develop subordinates' preparation form, for concept needs.

3.1.3 Discussion and content

Systematic management is based on the clarification of the goals and work methods. The foreman's task is to clarify to worker what is expected from him, what kind of goals are set to him. Clarification is needed on how the goals are met, how feedback is going to be given and in what ways work is going to be evaluated. (Borgman & Packalén. 2002, 97.)

With Finnish people one needs to take into consideration that one gesture of mistrust might lead to a lack of trust and one bad example and memory can spoil the whole discussion. This is the reason why the development discussion should be progressed with the limitations set by the emotions, so that the benefits would be optimized. Earlier in the thesis Finnish attributes were listed and honesty and reliability were in that list. To gain trust from a Finn is a long process, but it can be lost really fast. The common phrase emphasized by the Finnish military: "Finnish people are led from the front", is valid on this topic. The point is that one's own example determines a lot and words don't mean anything if the actions and one's own example don't match with them.

In modern days all the employees - managers and the workers too, are interested in the company's current situation. One main reason is the need to be able to evaluate the constancy of the workplace. The development discussion is a great communication and information channel, which is far more personal than, for example, a normal informative letter. Because there is a person to tell you the information instead of the letter, it is a much more trustworthy way and also gives the possibility to ask further questions. This channel can be used to inform the employees about the company and the unit's current situation. This is the reason why the superior needs to know and understand the current situation in the company and situation in markets.

Experiences have shown that the development discussion isn't about technique only - The atmosphere and spirit are important factors to get good results. For the discussion to work properly for development, both parties need to understand its objectives. This is the reason why objectives need to be defined to both parties before the conversation.

To be really able to see the same goal in the discussion and to work towards it, one needs a proper discussion between human beings. The discussion itself has many demands to work properly. If the personnel of the company use their time, energy and knowledge in a cooperative way to the same goal, discussion could lead to the creation of common visions and goals. Because everything affects everything, the company is as weak as its weakest link and active development should be focused on that link. At the same time one needs to remember that people don't live in the moment - They aren't necessarily against anything new, but they just might have negative feelings towards the topic from previous attempts. (Autio et al. 2010, 15-16.) This creates a challenging environment to the discussion, especially if negative feelings from history arise.

Information about the attitude of the subordinate in the discussion can be gained before by getting familiar with the background information. Then it is easier to adjust the beginning so that the new development discussion situation differs totally from the previous ones.

Likewise, a normal conversation, development discussion should be started with general topics. This is to create an open atmosphere and to get both parties comfortable in the situation. Good topics could be, for example, how last year has gone or how the site is running at the moment or what kind of tasks this worker has done lately. This is taken into account in the creation of the discussion template later in this thesis.

After the atmosphere has been created more detailed questions can be asked and the discussion can really start to go to deeper levels. The subordinate's view about the last year is important because the superior must be able to estimate the picture as a whole. So not only does the close superior feedback count, but both opinions have an effect on the big picture. Especially the consideration of what has gone well and what not and how things could be improved is essential. Feedback from the other superiors

should also be gathered about the subordinate to be able to develop the work community as a whole.

Before moving to the next topic it's wise to collect and summarize the topic discussed to close it properly. Another thing to remember by the superior is that he shouldn't bring up his own opinions because the topic could be guided away from the subordinate itself. (Autio et al. 2010, 15-16.)

According to Autio et al. (2010, 15-16) the worker gets a possibility to discuss their own work broadly. This includes what is expected from him and also feedback is gained. Expectations are important because they allow the worker to feel successful in his work while fulfilling these expectations. The feedback should be given to the workers about the individual performance. This feedback needs to be dressed as a constructive feedback even if it is critical. This is important to the worker to hear, because practice has shown that he/she doesn't necessarily notice the weaknesses or mistakes himself. It is easy to do things like they have always been done, even though the system would be faulty in some way. Also, the feedback is important so the fulfilled expectations can be rewarded somehow and in this way encourage the worker to keep improving himself.

Agreement about the upcoming period should be in the conversation list. It is good to list the next year's focus, so that the subordinate could always come back to the list and also evaluate himself how things have improved or decreased. It is better to have a focus, which the subordinate himself has mentioned, so it is much easier to commit to it.

Discussions related to the subordinate's own personal life and health are usually the hardest to talk about. That's the reason why work ability should be discussed closer to the end of the conversation or when the atmosphere of the conversation feels open enough. This guides the creation of the discussion template later in this thesis. Experience has shown that many times there comes something that foremen didn't see coming. With health problems workers should get support from the foremen in every case.

It is important to close the discussion with a positive atmosphere and that's why some positive feedback should be left to the end. It can simply be a compliment about the good and well conversation, too. To make sure that both parties have understood and agreed on the same thing it is wise to summarize the topics in the end once more. The big picture of the subordinate's career should be clarified also to make the subordinate feel secured enough. Finally, there should be an agreement on how the progress is followed and the document should be signed to increase commitment.

Practice has shown that in most cases workers tend to understand the development discussion also as salary negotiations. If this question emerges it is essential to guide the topic back to the development. The subordinate also needs some kind of a promise that salary topic will also be considered

at some point. Whether there is a reason to raise salary or not, one needs to inform the worker about it or there is a possibility for mistrust.

These limits set by emotions and topics suggested are taken into account in the templates and info package for foremen.

3.2 Possible benefits and challenges

3.2.1 Benefits

The benefits of performance management are that every employee will know his own role in organization and what are expected from him. That's why objectives are set to employees so that they would understand the demands of their positions and that they would have clear goals to work towards to.

In the discussions held, which have concentrated on personal development, it has been noticed a trend that the subordinate has an opportunity to have an effect on his own work, which allows commitment to the company get stronger and allows improvement of the productivity of the worker. The feeling that the subordinate gets, is that the company cares for its staff, which is a crucial step of the commitment. To make cooperation possible ground needs to be established. Finnish style is to base the ground on the trust and knowing each other. These two means are achieved only if the development discussion is an authentic situation and both parties know the objectives of the discussion.

The younger generation will be demanding more and more of their employers, which creates a need to listen to the workers! The development discussion is a great way to utilize contacting of the personnel. Without listening to them it will be hard in the future to keep the good corporate image and get the best workers from the available people. According to Aarnikoivu (2013, 22) the corporate image is affected by the following things: working personnel strategy, managing culture, wellbeing in work, encouraged rewarding and bonus system, career and development possibilities, working recruiting practices and working internal communication. With a proper development discussion it is possible to have an effect on many of these things mentioned and improve the corporate image of the workers.

The benefits to the subordinate itself are described in this chapter. First of all the results show that the feeling to be cared will show a huge increase in the commitment and the job satisfaction. Through these two feelings also the productivity might increase, because the subordinate knows the things expected of him. The feeling to be cared emerges when the worker can have an effect on his own work and is well aware of the current situation in the company. Especially with Finns one important factor of the job satisfaction is the foundations of cooperation, which is the trust between the superior and subordinate and knowing each other. Knowing each other

is important, because that allows the subordinate to predict the superior's actions, which makes everyday cooperation easier.

Management gets benefits by knowing the subordinates, which allows them to assign tasks that benefit all parties. This can be done in three different ways: Productivity first, development first or satisfaction to job first. In an ideal case these three ways are considered. In their book Autio et al. (2010, 15-16) say that foremen gain benefit by getting a possibility to consider his managing style from different perspectives, get new and creative ideas and a possibility to thank for good accomplishments and can have an effect on unwanted development. Managers get a possibility to make sure the knowledge and motivation of the worker are on the needed level. Everyday managing will get easier if the manager can trust the worker to do independent work with expected quality.

Organizational benefits are results of its well managing personnel. According to Meretniemi (2012, 173-174): "Which company can afford to let their personnel's full potential and knowledge unused?" If the personnel works according to all guidelines, the company will see the results in a monetary way too. For the company this tool gives a good opportunity to really utilize their strategy like benchmarked companies showed. Discussions are a good communication channel where the strategy can be utilized. The introduction of new values can also be supported with discussions. Development discussions are a good tool for human resources to plan the use of resources and future actions with scope in development.

3.2.2 Challenges

Time consumption is one of the challenges, which has emerged in many interviews. Managers have lots of work to be done, but the focus is also needed with the personnel. Experience has shown that effort to development discussions are possible, if the practice is well planned and organized. In Tampere project 2 site managers held 120 discussions within two months.

One challenge in the construction sector is to decide who will hold the discussion. Practice has shown that in many cases foremen on site don't have the needed knowledge and motivation to hold development discussions. Another problem with the site foremen comes from information delivery. If the worker changes sites, the information gained in the discussion will be left to the old site. One factor against site foremen is the fact that in some cases the problem of the worker might be the foreman itself and workers usually don't have enough courage to say that to foreman on site. There is still a possibility to create a concept so that the foremen can hold the discussions with proper training and concept available. The mobility of workforce is a big challenge in the construction sector. Workers usually change sites more often than foremen. Workers don't follow foremen from site to site as often as earlier. That fact makes the information transfer more important. Following of the individual targets are challenging because foreman change when the site changes.

The biggest challenge of the leadership in Finland is seen to be working with the persons (Tainio 2007, 19-20). Then it can be said that the most important development area is the cooperation with people. These limitations need to be understood while holding the development discussions. Readymade questions and template to start the discussion naturally, makes the discussion easier.

One challenge against the concept is the superiors that can't see the discussion benefits. The reason for it can be superiors' lack of interest in the topic, bad memory of the previous conversation or image that agreed things won't lead to anywhere. The lack of motivation can be seen as passivity in conversation or the quality of the discussion. If the attitude of the superior is negative it is impossible for the subordinate to get any kind of useful results. If the attitude of the subordinate is negative, the superior still have many possibilities to get useful results with the right kind of conversation guidance. If both attitudes are negative the conversation is totally useless and the only result is a badly filled in form.

Even though the attitudes are aligned and positive, the conversation doesn't automatically lead to useful results. More than half of the work related to the development discussion is located outside the conversation. These things are the preparation and result utilization.

According to Aarnikoivu (2013, 87) the benefits of development discussions aren't achieved mainly because:

- people don't understand the objectives and the content of the development discussions
- attitude towards discussion is negative
- foreman is missing authority
- absence of trust between foreman and worker
- faulty communication skills
- emotional intelligence is missing from foreman

Without the background information the discussion will be hard for the foremen. The worker might also get the feeling that the company is digging out information of his personal life and so the discussion cannot go deep enough. Foremen need to understand the reasons why the worker is doing what he is doing and this isn't possible without the knowledge of the background.

Results utilization can also take away the benefits of the proper development discussion. People have a good memory, and they will remember if something that has been agreed doesn't happen. It is really easy to turn development discussions against themselves if nothing is done to the results of it. Especially because one of the Finnish attributes according to Lewis is reliability. If something is promised a Finn will assume that promises will be fulfilled. In the discussion both parties need to commit to fulfilling the promises.

As a conclusion the benefits of the development discussions are questionable if the whole process starting from preparation and ending to result utilization haven't been handled properly. These listed challenges can be overcome, if the will, motivation and system exist. Benefits and challenges are presented in Figure 5.

Benefits for different parties		
Worker	Management	Organization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Communication + Cooperation + Effect on one's own work + Expectations known + Feeling of care <p>=> Productivity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Communication + Cooperation + Feedback + Knowledge of workers + Trust <p>=> Everyday management easier</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Committed personnel + Strategy utilization + Tool for communications + Tool for resource planning
Challenges		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Motivation and attitude of both parties - Time consumption of superiors - Big amount of subordinates - Information delivery - Collection of background information - Results utilization - Mobility of workforce 		

Figure 5 Benefits and challenges of development discussions

3.3 Difference between young and old generations

There is a difference in the development discussion between young and older generations. With older workers the content of the discussion is focused more on work ability and health situation. Work ability is a topic that is needed to go through carefully so that all possible problems could be taken into account and the worker could hopefully retire healthy. In most cases also the timing for the retirement is discussed. Some older workers have also been active in the development section. Those are usually willing to get apprentice to teach the skills gained throughout the years or to be the superior of the piecework group. (Rääpysjärvi, interview 6.11.2013.)

With younger generations the content is different. Most of young workers tend to want to learn more than the old workers. Sometimes they are too willing to learn new things and want to take part in everything. The employer's responsibility is in this case to discuss the realistic possibilities with the young worker and guide him to the right direction. In many cases the type of the work will be chosen so that both parties could benefit the most. For example, some rare type of work could be taught, which is known to lack professionals in the future. Then company will get workers

of whom there will be a shortage in the future and the workers get more security to the job. When the career path has been decided together, the employer needs to guide the person towards the goal. There is a challenge to connect the young workers to the professionals who could teach them. This challenge needs to be solved to ensure that the company will have skilled workers in the future. Attention needs to be paid to ensure the commitment of these trained new professionals to make sure that they will stay in the company. (Rääpysjärvi, interview 6.11.2013.)

The winner in the companies competing of labor is the one that can meet the expectations of the younger generation. The younger generation appreciates mentoring, reliable and fair foreman who gives responsibilities, and competitive salary. (Lehtinen, 2012.) To fulfill these needs the development discussion is possibly a good way to improve the management and career planning part of it.

Experience has shown that the attitudes of the younger workers are more prone to the discussions than those of the older ones. But still in many cases the older workers are happy that they are listened to and their limitations can be taken into account and working career possibly made longer.

4 BENCHMARKING OF OTHER COMPANIES

4.1 VR Group

VR Group is a state-owned limited company. Its revenue was 1.4 billion euros in 2012. It operates in five different business areas. These areas are passenger traffic, logistics, infra services, catering and restaurant activities and telecommunication services. VR Group consists of 8 different companies that work in different business areas. VR Group had 11 080 workers in their list in 2012. This number of personnel and its focus on the production worker makes their way of managing development discussions worth to study.

VR has had development discussions for their whole personnel as long as tens of years ago and it is an established practice in their managing system. Development discussions are written for the managers' agenda, which makes sure they are held. The latest addition to the concept was the engines drivers at the beginning of the 21st century. At those times VR had such an organization that one foreman had approximately 350 subordinates, which caused certain problems.

Development discussions are held by the closest foreman for everyone. In the beginning the discussions were held to a team of workers, due to the big number of subordinates. Then every worker had also a possibility to talk privately to the foreman if needed. The system was later changed and 80 new team leaders were hired to create a new administration level between the managers and workers. Afterwards those discussions started to be held privately, between the foreman and worker. The personnel belong-

ing to the rewarding system have discussions twice a year and those who aren't, once a year – i.e. workers. VR has successfully increased the coverage of development discussions in the couple of last year by 5% yearly. In 2012 the coverage of development discussion was 70%.

VR uses the same document for every discussion. Managers have a possibility to fill it in themselves and workers will get the same paper in the discussion. The form is filled in and signed during the discussion itself. Before the form had only suggesting headings, but their experience has shown that leading questions under the headings have shown better results. Especially managers, who aren't so experienced with the discussions, have liked the suggesting questions under headings more.

The goal of the discussion in VR is to give objectives to the daily work and implement the strategy itself. Discussions are also an important part of the communication and are an important communication channel especially during changes, which are done quite often. With managers the goals are tied to the bonus system and goals are mainly related to the monetary results. The goals of the workers are really practical and usually they are set so that they can be measured by numerical values. One organizational goal is that every worker will be listened to carefully at least once during the year in addition to the team meetings and daily communication. This is a challenge because workers are always on the move. Many times phones play a big role in the daily communication between team leaders and operational workers.

The discussion itself contains the normal development discussion phases like last year review, new personal goals, future visions and hopes, content of one's own work, work atmosphere and other upcoming topics. Feedback also has a big role in the discussion.

Most of the managers have training related to the development discussions. The development personnel of the units also clarify some things to unit managers. All personnel can also have information related to the discussion through intranet's virtual training package.

The challenges of the discussions at the moment are the time reservation and goal clarification. The organization of the discussion throughout the year to everyone is challenging because of shift work. The time to discussion needs to be reserved about one month earlier to make it fit to the shift list. The clarification of the discussion goal is difficult because there are so many types of people. Goals need to be written so that every single one of the workers can understand them in the same way. (Varjoranta, interview 11.11.2013.)

4.2 Itella Group

Itella Group is a state-owned limited company. The revenue of Itella was 1.95 billion euros in 2012. It operates in three different business areas. These areas are Itella Mail Communications, Itella logistics and OpusCap-

ita. Itella group had approximately 27500 workers in 2012 and approximately 85% of them are production graded employees. This big number of workers in production makes Itella worth to be studied.

Itella launched the development discussion ten years ago because the wage solution demanded it. Every worker had a varying personal salary part varying between two to six per cent. Development discussions were held to every worker personally to estimate the varying personal salary part yearly. About five years ago the wage solution was changed so that the salary part turned to certain fixed percentage dependent on the job description. After this change the discussions started to be held for the whole team under one supervisor.

Development discussions are always held by the closest foreman. All personnel, except seasonal workers and some of the early delivery workers belong to the coverage of the discussions. Discussions are held twice a year for the clerical workers. Production workers are having development discussion for groups, whose sizes vary between 10 and 20 persons. This group discussion is held once a year. Some small units still hold the discussions to every worker personally, even though it differs from the company policy.

Group discussions are working well in Itella, because most of the goals related to the work itself are similar to each team member. Another good point in group discussions is the possibility to inform about changes in the company to many persons at the same time. This saves lots of foremen time. The preparation for group discussions is easier, because persons have time to think about their opinions during the discussion and have inspiration from the other person's views. In this way there is a possibility to encourage attachment of the team. (Kaipio, interview 19.11.2013.)

The challenge on the other hand is to get everyone talking and sharing their opinions. Experience has shown that not all persons are able to talk and share their opinions in a group, even though the members of the group are familiar co-workers. Especially problems in the community related to co-workers are really hard to come-up with. That's why there is a need to have a possibility for a personal discussion.

Itella has also accompanied a surprising problem. Some workers don't recognize the group discussion as a development discussion. One example was that every worker had participated in the group discussions in one unit, but still the personnel survey showed only 81% as development discussion coverage. The problem was recognized later and it was found out that the foremen had concentrated too much on the explanation of the changes in the company and not on the development of the team. The goals of the discussions weren't introduced either before the discussion took place. (Pajunen, interview 27.11.2013.)

The goal of the discussion on a big scale is to utilize strategy to the daily work and improve the commitment and motivation of the workers through

better communication. It needs to be remembered that development discussions don't replace the daily management and communication. Itella is a service business provider and objectives are set so that customer and personnel survey can be used to measure them in addition to foremen reviews. The group discussion is also used for informing about new themes in the company. For example, one year the amount of safety notification was emphasized and next year their amount increased a lot. (Pajunen, interview 27.11.2013.)

General results of the discussions have been noticed in the personnel survey. The overall performance and work wellbeing have increased with the people that have had a proper development discussion. (Pajunen, interview 27.11.2013.)

Discussions are documented with a formal document found in the company's intranet. Clerical workers' documents are stored in the database. Worker discussions are documented in the same form, but the paper is then stored by the foremen. Many managers see this lack of system for workers as a big problem and have asked for a change.

A big focus is set on the preparation for discussions. All foremen are having yearly training from HR-Managers, how to hold development discussions. A support package is also available in the company's intranet. The biggest effort from HR is to provide a support phone, which connects to HR-Specialists. This helpline is available to all foremen, all around the working hours and it has had a lot of positive feedback. This feedback has mostly consisted of availability of help and quick answers to problems. (Pajunen, interview 27.11.2013.)

Again the discussion topics are quite similar compared to the current ways of VR and YIT. The topics include last year feedback, new objectives, current situation of the company, team experiences, team strengths, time-tables, costs and work wellbeing.

As a conclusion it can be stated that Itella has a working development discussion system. Personal discussions have worked properly before, but they have been stopped because of the change in the salary system. A group discussion has its own weaknesses, but it is a good way for communication and team building.

5 DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSIONS IN YIT CONSTRUCTION LTD

5.1 State of development discussions

YIT's management system is management by key results. This system includes development and objective discussions, which are called as MBKR discussion.

Little variation in the coverage of held development discussions can be seen, but safely it can be said that most of the managers are having these discussions. The results with workers are much worse. The reason for this is also well known. Managers need to have their discussions due to the bonus system. Workers are not included in this bonus system, which easily leads to the fact that they don't demand the discussion so eagerly. The discussion is based on the interest of the foreman only. The difference of free willing discussion and discussion supported by the management system was shown earlier in Table 1.

In VR the coverage of the development discussions was 70% in 2012. The coverage of Itella varied between units but the overall average was 62%. YIT's total coverage shows a bit better coverage compared to these two big organizations. The yearly increase of 5% achieved by VR gives hope that YIT can also achieve such results by persevering work and clear goals. Especially if the development discussions for workers are increased rapidly, the total coverage will show a quick increase.

Most of the workers have the feeling that the discussion is useful. Surprisingly the usefulness percentage among workers is higher than among managers. Reason for this can be that one of eight workers discussed with didn't know or understand the goals of the discussion and didn't recognize the situation as a development discussion.

It can be assumed that some members of the personnel haven't understood the goals of the development discussion or the goals haven't been clarified well enough to the workers based on the experiences of VR and Itella. This same trend is seen in YIT, which possibly results from the size of the organization and variation of its personnel. This is the reason why more training and practices are needed.

5.1.1 Resource Service unit

Resource service is an internal supporting unit in YIT Construction Ltd which works like rental companies with some differences. The main idea is that workforce can be moved over unit boundaries and idle workforce can be reduced together with a proper and lawful administrative management. Resource service has approximately 200 workers and it operates in in the Helsinki capital area.

In Resource Services the development discussion coverage is exceptionally good compared to the other units. Mainly the discussions were held in summer and autumn 2013. The idea to start holding these discussions started when the management of Resource Services changed in spring 2013. The main objectives were to get to know the workers of the Resource Services, because it is essential to know the personnel one is placing on construction sites. Another objective was, of course, to develop the personnel and get ideas on how the concept could be improved.

The person holding the discussions has been an administrative foreman who in this case is a resource coordinator or the resource manager. This solution has been a really working method, seen in the results and feedback from the personnel.

Preparation for discussions had many phases. The first step was to check out all the data and files related to the person and the second to interview managers on site leading the person. In the beginning workers didn't get any paper to guide them on how to prepare for the development discussion. They got only an invitation to the discussion by phone, and they were advised to think about their role in the company beforehand.

The content of the discussion depended on the case, because the discussion template was really open and gave a possibility to transform the content case by case. The template of the discussion is found in Appendix 7. Depending on the age of the person the focus has been either on the personal development or the wellbeing at the moment. Younger workers tend to be more interested in the personal development and older in the wellbeing. In the discussion content wellbeing of the workers and the current knowledge level was discussed. In these discussions no targets were set to the workers, but all kind of ideas were received and some of them were carried out. Some workers tried to steer the conversation towards the salary, but these tries were denied by saying: "This is not a salary conversation, but we will be returning to it later." In most cases this sentence was enough to change the focus back on wellbeing and development. The lengths of the discussion varied a lot from ten minutes to one and a half hour. The length of the conversation is not the point, but the results are. So conversations were not made any longer if not necessary.

Workers in this case got to know their administrative foreman and the possibility to have an effect on their own work and placing on different sites. As an example some young carpenters wanted to have an older mentor to guide them in their work. These requests have been taken into account and some of them have been carried out. Many courses were held to the workers according to their will and, of course, according to their suitability reviewed by the employer.

Feedback from the workers has been positive. Many have said that it is good to see the person behind the phone. Many workers also appreciate the effort that the foreman has come to the site just to see him. Resource Services has successfully created a caring atmosphere in the development discussions and took a step towards better management and development. The future will also show other results which will be seen in the next year's personnel survey.

5.1.2 Residential construction division

Many units in Residential construction division have tried to develop the discussion to the working level, but haven't yet succeeded. They have used the template of a development quarter, which is found in Appendix 4.

In the past in Jyväskylä, one former manager on the site has held discussions to her workers. The discussions held have shown that things that were wanted were on a small scale, but the effects on the motivation were greatly positive. Also, when people once have got used to the discussion they have started to demand the next one already. This trend of interest also shows that people have adapted properly to the concept of development discussion and the feelings are positive. The feedback gain from the workers showed that the effect on their own work was the best part of the discussion. Compliments were also given to the way of presenting the current situation of the worker's own site, unit and company. The manager also noticed that really important topics and things were raised during the conversation, unlike in daily management. (Nissilä, interview 2.12.2013)

In Jyväskylä, according to the personnel survey in spring 2013 about 15% have had the development discussion. These workers have been initiative and they have demanded the discussions. The foremen at site have requested for better instructions for holding the discussions. The unit has launched a project in 2013 December to have the discussions with every worker. The project was started because recently conducted research showed that 52% of the workers wanted to have the discussions. Based on the results the project was decided to be started. (Nissilä, interview 2.12.2013)

Discussions are held by the site managers and production manager. The goal of the project is to get to know the people working in that area and to recognize problems in the work communities. Preparation is done by giving the question setting beforehand to the workers. The main focus is going to be on the personal development. The results will be documented in a quarter sheet and collected by the unit's development engineer. (Nissilä, interview 2.12.2013)

Workers in Jyväskylä area have taken the discussion very well and attitudes have been really positive. Many appreciate the fact that the site or production manager comes to the site just to discuss with them. Many agreed things have been brought up in weekly site meetings and workers have instantly noticed that results have been utilized. (Nissilä, interview 17.12.2013)

In the past Residential construction unit in Tampere has had the discussions earlier about five to six years ago. The site manager held the discussions at that time. One worker remembered that the discussion and he had gained a better self-esteem after that discussion, because he got good feedback in the discussions on the things he had done well. He just needed the confirmation to the ideas he already had about working. These are the best results that can be achieved with these discussions - To really make a difference and improve the workers' commitment by compliments of the job well done.

Tampere started a project for development discussions to their workers in autumn 2013. The person holding the discussions in this case are also site managers. There are basically two site managers in Tampere area and 120 workers. The time span for the projects is 2 months.

The preparation in this case is done so that workers are informed about the discussions in the weekly team meetings on site. Approximately a week before their discussion they get the document to themselves that is going to be used in the discussion. Workers are encouraged to get familiar with the topic beforehand. Mostly workers are familiar to the site managers and they don't collect feedback about the workers beforehand.

The goals of the project in Tampere was to find out the training needs of the workers, check the job descriptions, get to know workers better, develop personnel, create a better atmosphere and to collect feedback on the line management.

The document used was the development quarter form, but it was slightly edited for their purpose. Some things were collected under one heading etc. Practice showed already at an early stage of the project that the document was working, but too long. Site managers had wishes to have the paper shorter so that it would fit on one A4 size paper. During the discussion the person holding the discussion made notes of the discussion on the paper. After the discussion the paper was signed by both parties and the original paper was given to the worker and a copy was taken for the person holding the discussion. They also asked the permission of the workers to use the data for the training and feedback for line management.

The feedback gathered from the workers tended to be really positive and people liked to meet the site managers and appreciated the effort to come to see and talk to them. The only concern was whether the agreed actions be implemented. The things workers tended to appreciate most were the good atmosphere in the company and the continuity of work. An overall attitude was that the site manager is much better to hold the discussion than the closest foremen. It could be seen in discussion that the workers were much more open about their work and working atmosphere. (Sippola, interview 11.12.2013.)

The site managers also had a positive opinion on the discussion. They liked the feedback collected especially about the line management, because it gives them a more realistic picture. This allows them to affect them and develop line management's management style. Their opinion was also that if the site supervisor holds the discussion the focus would be more on the working itself than in the human behavioral things. The site managers would not either take the development ideas as seriously as they take when they get them straight. The biggest challenge they experienced was the time consumption of the discussion. The solution they suggested was the careful planning of the discussions early enough. (Sippola, interview 11.12.2013.)

5.1.3 Business Premises division

In business premises, one unit has held development quarters, which have been named as development discussion, because of the yearly personnel survey. They had a big question list and results weren't good. The possible problem was in the question list, because it may have led to form filling in without a proper discussion. Some site managers which held the discussions thought that they were time consuming and an extra necessity. This has led to the discontinuation of the discussion because of lack of results and demand.

5.1.4 Infrastructure construction division

One unit in Infrastructure construction has tried to hold development discussions. The trial was initiated in 2008 and they used the form found in YIT databases. A discussion practice hasn't been systematic, because nobody demanded it. This lack of demand has stopped the practice completely.

In another Infra unit they have hold these discussions for almost half of the workers. They felt that it was a necessity from the top management. This feeling then has resulted in a negative attitude, which has stopped the practice, because good results haven't been achieved. The person holding the discussion was the foremen on site.

5.2 Conclusion

MBKR as a management system in YIT has a strong culture and history. MBKR discussions are an essential part of it. Discussions are held for the clerical workers and management. At the moment only workers lack these discussions, because no official decision has been made to hold them. Discussions for workers aren't actively demanded either, which leads to the lack of them. Some people have bad memories of the previous discussion cycles, which diminishes the will to have the discussions. Still the topic arises every now and then in some units, usually when some changes in the personnel take place.

The quality of the MBKR discussions for workers doesn't yet meet the requirements, but the situation is getting better. The situation could be improved by training superiors and drawing up common guidelines for the company.

Many recent tries of development discussions have got good results. Especially the overall attitudes of the workers have been positive. It has been seen that the most important things to workers have been the possibility to have an effect on their own work and that the superior comes close to the worker.

Some managers in some units have tried to implement development discussions and some are still holding development discussions, but the results have some contradictions. Problems have been especially met when foremen on site have been holding the discussions and the discussion cycle hasn't been consistent. This is one of the main reasons why the new concept and templates need to be created.

When supervisors on site have held the discussions they haven't seen the benefits of the discussion so clearly. They have felt discussions as a must from the top management, which have shown bad results. Site superiors discussion has concentrated on a short-term development, because the subordinates tend to change every time the site changes. Because personal development is always a long-term process the discussions haven't shown their full potential.

When site managers have held the discussions the results have been better. This probably comes from the facts that the site managers usually have more knowledge of the opportunities in the company. Site managers also tend to concentrate on bigger entities and also more on long-term planning. Personal development has got the attention it needs.

Many interviews have also shown problems in the documentation of the discussions. The main problem occurred is the lack of a system, where documents can be saved. Documentation has been carried out in paper forms, which have been stored in a folder, by the persons holding the discussions. There are two kinds of problems in paper documents. First of all they are easily lost, for example if a foreman changes tasks or resigns. Another problem is to deliver the information where it is needed.

It is challenging to make sure that the long-term planning happens properly without earlier documents available. The long-term planning and follow-up is effective only if discussions are held in a constant rhythm, which is currently not happening for workers. A computerized system would help to solve this problem, but then possible problems about the content of the document and privacy policies might occur, when thinking about who the right to the documents is given.

There are many ways to use the development discussion in management. Many of these ways are also working ways in some organization and environment. It is important to have a working way to meet the needs of the organization and its current environment. This adjustment for the commissioning company is possible to do with the knowledge obtained from the company with interviews. The data collected is essential because now are known the challenges and benefits that can be gained in many different ways in a particular organization and environment.

6 NEW CONCEPT FOR YIT

Like HR-consultant Kari Lahti from Psycon states (Helsingin Sanomat, 2013) Development discussions need to be tailored to the needs of the dis-

cussers, and not to use the same model for everyone. This statement crystallizes one of the key reasons this thesis is made. The following section contains the tailoring of the development discussion concept for blue-collar employees for the commissioning company.

6.1 Person holding the development discussion

The main reason for the discussion - development of the company personnel, is a crucial step to keep up in the business. To be able to explain and offer development possibilities to workers, the discussor really needs to know the possibilities that the company can offer.

The discussor of the development discussion was one of the key things to be solved. Based on the information collected, the suggestion for the discussors at the first place is the site managers. They are more ready to hold the development discussions without training and they have more knowledge of the company and especially of their own unit, than the other options. They have most probably been in different positions in the company and hence have a variety of experience. They are able to do long-term planning of resources and plan the usage according to skills. The site manager gets the big picture of the overall situation in the unit, and thus the development can be also focused on bigger entities.

Another option was the foremen on site, but in many cases they have difficulties to make long-term planning for workers because of the mobility of workforce. With a proper planning and possible training the foremen on site could be the discussor in the future. Foremen on site don't have the possibilities to see a big picture of all the workers of the unit, because the amount of interviews would be so small and on their own site only. When the site manager collects the information from foremen they could have difficulties to form the big picture. These difficulties result from the variety of the discussions, because of different discussors. Similar discussions are also possible to gain with trainings of managers on site. Research has shown that interest and motivation in the topic is smaller with the foremen on site. Another problem is based on the fact from the personnel survey that some of the managers on site don't feel to have useful development discussions themselves. This results in a lack of motivation towards the topics which have an effect on the quality of the discussion. Based on the previous arguments, site managers should hold the discussions at the moment and more consistent training and improvement is needed to get managers on site ready to hold the development discussions to workers.

In Resource Service unit, the administrative foreman is the right person to hold the development discussions. They have a possibility to do long-term planning for the workers and also to be in close contact with the workers. The challenge with them is to get realistic feedback from the workers from different sites, but eventually the variety of feedback starts to show similar signs.

6.2 Discussion Frequency

The frequency of the discussion should be one discussion per year. This is a period of time that some changes can already be seen, and in many cases the site has also been changed. More frequent discussions could lead to boredom, because the discussion wouldn't offer much new information. In some cases it is possible to hold check-up discussions if needed according to the situation. The concept for clerical workers has shown that six months can be used as a minimum interval.

Recommendation is that the auditing and target follow-up would be more daily-based done by the managers on the site. It is essential of the learning and development process that the performance or fulfilling of targets is followed regularly. It would allow the immediate interference, if wrong direction of the development is seen and immediate rewarding if the targets are met.

6.3 Objective of the discussion

Objectives of the discussion itself should be determined beforehand to make sure that the discussion cycle is useful. In the beginning the goals of the development discussion should be finding out the current overall situation of the workers related to work, current site and wellbeing. Development needs should be found out to be able to determine targets for development.

If development discussions are used as a tool of communication also a yearly theme could be chosen. As the benchmarked companies showed it is a working way to improve company actions.

6.4 Preparation

Preparation for the discussion should be done so that the topics discussed and goal of the discussions should be explained beforehand. One unit of YIT proved that the document used in the discussion should be given to the worker to ensure preparation to given topics. Every time the discussion cycle is starting it is an effective way to explain the goals of the discussion to everyone on the site for example in the weekly meetings. The feedback on the worker should be taken before the discussion itself so that the discussor could give a realistic suggestion about the future development needs and encourage the positive behavior or working habits.

6.5 Discussion itself

The goal of the discussion should be clear in mind with both parties of the discussion and the goals should be revised before starting the conversation. The template should be followed but more important is that the discussion is fluent and atmosphere is relaxed. During the discussion the upcoming topics and feedback should be documented in the template.

The discussion should also be used as a tool for communication. Many workers have requested information about the company and its current situation. A personal conversation is a good way to explain the situation on a small and big scale. For workers it is beneficial to know their own role and where that role is placed on a bigger scale. That's the only way to make everybody understand how their actions affect the final results. The determination of one's own role is especially important if considering the quality of the finished building. A small improvement in the attitude to quality can make a big difference on a bigger scale.

One key element of management by key results is the targets and determination of them. With clerical workers and site foremen, the objective and development discussion are based on the goal setting and follow-up with proper followable measurements. Target setting to the workers should be considered.

Proper examples and topic should be presented to make setting of the targets easier and show the style of them. Interviews and overall attitude has shown that opinions about the target setting vary a lot. The most common reason for a negative attitude has been the difficulty to create realistic targets. This could be made easier with a readymade realistic suggestion of the targets. The topics for the targets could be for example quality of the work, work safety and piecework. Exact examples of different realistic targets are presented and considered in the new concept phase.

6.6 Templates

Most of the persons interviewed wanted a simple template for the discussions that is not too leading, so there is space to guide the discussion to many directions. Some others would like to have every question in the template to not to forget them. This is also taken into account so that the info package contains question examples and the template of the discussion has only the topic suggestions. Those questions can be used as a help if needed. The template of the discussion is limited with examples and instead has words that condense from bigger entities. This activates the person holding discussions to think about the topic more widely and to write only the essential things down.

Experience has shown that the discussion should be a less formal and relaxed situation. The templates are informative and they can be changed according to the needs of the unit. The objective is to get workers to be listened to so that his thoughts and life situation will be taken into account in the work now and in the upcoming period.

There are preparation templates for workers and for the background information for the manager separately. The preparation template for workers is made to encourage the preparation phase and to make worker to think about the discussion beforehand. The topics in the template are set so that they make possible to think about one's own work from a wide

perspective. It also presents the target word to prepare the worker to set some realistic targets for his own work. The workers preparation template is in Appendix 5.

The manager background information template is created for the current situation when the manager holding the discussion isn't familiar with the worker beforehand. It encourages the manager to ask for feedback on the worker from foremen on site. This is the way proper feedback of one's own work can be given during the discussion. The suggestions for the development targets might be gained from the feedback. The manager background information template is in Appendix 6.

The discussion template itself is very similar to the workers' preparation template so the worker will know what is coming in the discussion. The discussion template follows almost the same order as clerical workers' discussion templates. First is the assessment of the previous period. Then the workers' health situation is considered. The health situation comes in the middle of the discussion because it is important to set targets also for the wellbeing in work, especially if some physical limitations exist. The last part of the discussions is the setting of the targets for the upcoming period. The long-term planning has been left out in the first discussion cycle, but can be added to topics if needed. The Discussion template is in Appendix 7.

6.7 Info package for superior

This package is created for the foremen holding the development discussion to help them to prepare themselves. The package also introduces the question examples about the topics in the template. It also includes a checklist for foremen of one development discussion cycle. One of the most important phases of the info package is the target examples, which can be used for the workers. Info package for foremen is found in Appendix 8.

6.8 Utilization of results

Good practice for the utilization of the discussion results is that the discussor of certain units would sit down for a summary. All the discussions should be gone through and in that way conceive a big picture of the situation. Then 3-5 most important development goals should be written down and a plan how to improve them should be made. This way the units' actions could also be improved together with individuals.

To make sure individual targets are achieved the closest foremen should be informed about the targets of individuals. Foremen on the site should be gathered to a meeting where the individual targets of each worker are gone through. This would make sure that every foreman is familiar with the targets of workers. The person responsible for following of the individual targets would anyhow be the closest foremen on site.

6.9 Concept implementation

The main idea in management by key results is to determinate the targets for the future period. The company is in that stage that the discussions haven't been held for all the workers so the determination of the targets might be too big of a step at a time. Proper development discussion cycles should be carefully planned with realistic and small objectives to make sure that the process and progress are consistent.

First of all the concept needs the approval of the top management so all personnel would commit to hold the discussion. The launch of development discussion concept should be carefully planned to make sure implementation would be done according to available skills and knowledge. Only one option for the plan is presented in this thesis which proceeds in four phases.

The first phase for the concept could be to start the development discussions in every unit for workers. The goals of the phase would be to find out the current situation of the workers and to recognize development needs. The main focus in the first phase should be on personal development and work wellbeing. During this one cycle the site managers should also get the foremen on site to follow the progress of the workers. Some small scale and really realistic targets for workers could be set in this first phase.

After the first phase is completed the development of concept could be started. The second phase is that the site foremen could start to hold the discussions with the help from site managers and human resources. Target setting in this phase should be done and site foremen should also follow up the targets. The targets should focus on personal development. Still site managers should collect the information gained and teach the site foremen how to hold these discussions. Also, training on a bigger scale could be arranged. In this phase research should be made on how the long-term planning could be utilized when the foremen on site would hold the discussions.

The third phase could be where the development discussions are held for every worker and the targets are followed in the daily-based management. The target focus could be on personal development and on daily management. Also, the long-term planning of development and careers would be considered as a part of discussion.

The fourth phase is already the ideal situation where the workers are led with management by key results and the targets would be set so that daily work could be managed with them. This would mean that workers daily tasks would be guided with the targets.

The implementation of the development discussion concept should be done with small steps and Figure 4 presents an example of the different phases of the steps.

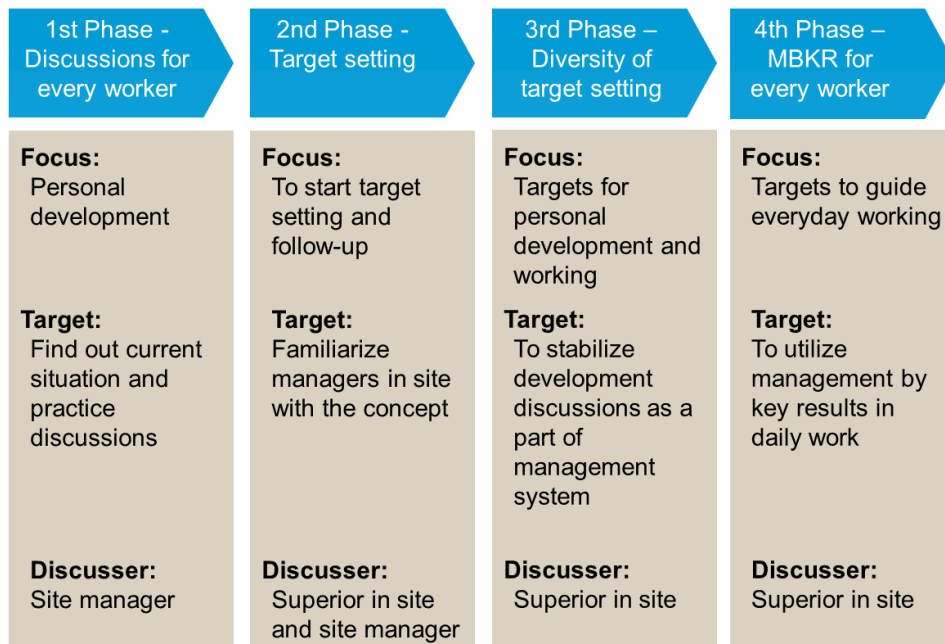


Figure 6 Implementation plan of development discussion concept

7 CONCLUSION

Interviews showed that the situation of the development discussions currently in the commissioning company isn't alarming, but needs improvement. Discussions are held in certain units, but irregularly, which proves that guidelines and targets for discussions are needed. The consistency of the discussions is missing, which doesn't encourage short- or long-term development.

Research has shown that development discussions are a proper way to utilize management by key results to workers in the construction sector. Still different opinions about the topic exist, which is the reason the concept should be initiated in stages for the best outcome. Only one option for the procedure is presented in this thesis. The Support from the top management is crucial in the launch of this concept.

Development discussions for group have worked, if the targets set are similar for all group participants and one superior has a lot of subordinates. On construction sites work tasks vary a lot and work abilities differ, which makes similar target setting hard. For a piecework group, the development discussion could be held for the whole group, but the possibility for individual discussion should be included. Because Finns have an ability of taciturnity, discussions are better to keep for individuals. Information can, of course, be shared for groups, but development discussions should be held for individuals.

The concept proposes that in the first phase the person holding the discussions is the site manager and in later phases the foremen on site could step

in as a discussor. Despite who the discussor is, the concept needs cooperation between all the parties. The rhythm for discussions is suggested to be once a year and more often only in special cases, if follow-up demands.

The benefits of the discussions are achieved if the discussor is motivated and follow-up is consistent. The concept is beneficial for the company, because new values could easily be implemented and a new tool for development of the personnel is gained. The challenges for the discussions are created mainly by foremen, who cannot see the benefits of the discussion.

The goal of the discussion itself is to find out the current situation and agree on future targets. The topics of the discussion can be compressed under three topics, which are previous period, upcoming period and the overall wellbeing of the worker. The upcoming topics during discussion should also be considered and followed through. The discussion should also be considered especially as a tool for communication to make sure that the company and unit situation is commonly known by every employee.

Younger workers have been really eager for the discussion, which proves that the importance of the discussions could rise in the future. The results of the discussions should be followed consistently to make sure all the promises for workers are fulfilled and progress of the workers is followed accordingly.

The concept created has a potential to be used in the whole company in its operating area. The templates created are written in English, so they also fit to be used in different countries. The Finnish versions of the templates are also made to be used in Finland, but are not attached to this thesis.

More research could be done to find out which database system would support the concept in the best possible way in result utilization and also who would have access to that system considering privacy policies. Research for the best training methods and training package for development discussions to managers on site should be considered.

One possibility to change the system is to have a resource coordinator in every unit responsible for the development discussions cycle. At the moment the development engineers of the units could also be responsible for the system with site managers. Before such a change could be made, the topic would need a pilot project and more research.

Another development idea is that a development booklet could be drawn up in a paper or computerized form that would show the results of each development discussion and would concentrate on the long-term development process. This would utilize the Russian work-booklet idea. They have a booklet that shows the whole work history of the person and the booklet is saved in the company. The idea would be the same, but the data collected in the booklet would be related to development of the worker.

This thesis has given the writer a lot related to management skills and human behavior. The knowledge gained in the process will be utilized in the daily working life. Especially the basics of management by key results and company values were internalized. This thesis gave a kick start for the professional growth in human leadership and management.

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INTERVIEW TEMPLATE BENCHMARK

Interview Template Benchmark

Does your company use development discussion to their personnel? (Only management? ,workers?, all?)

Who holds the development discussion and to whom?

How often are the discussions held? (Yearly?)

Are the discussions dependent on the manager's interest or are they part of the management system?

How is preparation to discussions implemented?

What topics are discussed? (Do you have a template? Only guiding words?)

What is the goal of these discussions? (Do you set goals to personnel? How are they measured?)

What are the results of the discussions? (Feedback? have they been useful?)

How are you utilizing the results of the discussion? (Actions? reviews?)

How are the discussion results documented? (system or paper form)

Challenges and benefits shown in discussions?

Do you have training arranged for the persons holding the discussions?

Free feedback on the topic and related things.

INTERVIEW TEMPLATE INTERNAL MANAGERS

Interview Template Internal Managers

Who holds the development discussion and to whom?

How often are the discussions held? (Yearly?)

Why are you having the development discussions? (who have given the assignment)

How is preparation to discussions implemented?

What topics are discussed? (Do you have a template? Only guiding words?)

What is the goal of these discussions? (Do you set goals to personnel? How are they measured?)

What are the results of the discussions? (Feedback? have they been useful?)

How are you utilizing the results of the discussion? (Actions? reviews?)

How are the discussion results documented? (system or paper form)

Challenges and benefits shown in discussions?

Free feedback on the topic and related things.

INTERVIEW TEMPLATE INTERNAL WORKER

Interview Template Internal Workers

How many development discussions have you had and when were they held?

Feedback from the discussions held before? (Did they lead to any actions?)

Were any targets agreed on? (How have they been measured?)

What are the benefits of the discussions?

What things have been challenging during the discussion?

Did you need to prepare yourself to the discussions? (How? How much time did it take?)

Who guided the discussion? (Which side made suggestions?)

What topics are discussed? (Do you have a template? Only guiding words?)

How did you prepare yourself for the discussion?

Was the targets of the discussion clarified beforehand?

Free feedback on the topic and related things.

DEVELOPMENT QUARTER



Työntekijän keskusteluvarti

1 (3)

Toimintaohje työmaan johdolle ja muistiopohja

TARKOITUS JA TAVOITE:

Käydä läpi työntekijän ajatukset nykyisistä työtehtävistään sekä hänen henkilökohtaiset kehittymistavoitteensa ja -toiveensa. Tavoitteena on, että työntekijä tulee kuulluksi ja hänen ajatuksensa ja elämäntilanteensa otetuksi huomioon työtehtävissä nyt ja myöhemmin.

Keskustelun on tarkoitus olla vapaamuotoinen ja rento, ei muodollinen! Muistiopohja on ohjeellinen, sitä saa muuttaa haluamallaan tavalla, eikä jokaista kohtaa ole pakko saada täytettyä. Tärkeintä on tavoitteen täytyminen.

Tehtävät	Vastuu	Apuvälineet
Keskustelun aikavaraus on 15-30 minuuttia.	Vastaava työnjohtaja, työnjohtajat	Muistiopohja seuraavalla sivulla
Keskusteluun osallistuvat työntekijä ja hänen lähin esimiehensä.		
Keskustelut pidetään kunkin YIT:n oman työntekijän kanssa n. 3 kk:n kuluessa työmaan aloituksesta , kuitenkin vähintään 1 krt/vuosi.		
Vastaava työnjohtaja vastuu uttaa ko. työnjohtajan pitämään keskustelun (jollei osallistu itse keskusteluun).		
Työntekijä ja esimies voivat sopia, kumpi kirjaa muistion keskustelun aikana käsin täyttämällä valmiille muistiopohjalle (ks. seuraava sivu), ja keskustelun osapuolet allekirjoittavat muistion.		

MUISTIO (Täytetään käsin keskustelun aikana.)

Pvm:	_____ .20
Työntekijä:	
Työtehtävä:	
Esimies:	
1. Työn sujuminen	
Missä on ollut vaikeuksia:	
Missä on onnistuttu:	
Kiinnostavimmat tehtävät:	
Vähiten kiinnostavat tehtävät:	
Mitkä asiat ovat helpottaneet töiden tekemistä:	
Mitkä asiat ovat olleet haitaksi:	
2. Mitä toivomuksia työntekijällä on jatkoa varten?	
Toivomukset:	

3. Koulutus- ja kehittämistarpeet	
Mitä ammattitutkintoja pitäisi suorittaa:	
Mitä teknistä koulutusta olisi tarpeen käydä:	
Mitä muuta koulutusta:	
4. Muuta	
Miten työntekijä toivoisi toimintaansa johdettavan:	
Miten yhteistyö toimii työtovereiden, esimiesten ja työmaan asiakkaiden (esim. asukkaat) kanssa:	
Mikä on työpaikan ilmapiiri ja oma tyytyväisyys työhön:	
Muut henkilökohtaiset, esim. elämäntilanteeseen liittyvät asiat:	
Muuta kommentoitavaa:	

Allekirjoitukset:

Työntekijä:

Esimies:

(Alkuperäinen työntekijälle, kopio esimiehelle)

WORKER PREPARATION



Worker Preparation Template

Prepare yourself for your development discussion by thinking about the following topics. The goal of the discussion is to find out your current work situation and to think about realistic actions how your professional skills and cooperation could be improved in the future. Discussion is going to be free formed and a relaxed situation.

Job description (responsibilities, tasks)

What motivates in your own daily work?

Biggest challenges in your own work?

Current site conditions? (Atmosphere, foremen, safety, tools)

Your own development wishes and targets? (professional, personal, interests, cooperation)

How are you? (Health, work ability, wellbeing)

Prepare some feedback on your current foreman.

Think about how you wish you to be led by your foreman.

MANAGER BACKGROUND INFORMATION



Development Discussion
Background

Worker: _____

Foreman: _____

Cooperation skills (questions, complains, feedback)

Attitude to work (punctuality, discipline, safety)

Work tasks (skills, tidiness, developments, potentials)

Initiativeness (ideas, doing tasks without asking)



DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION TEMPLATE



Development Discussion
Template

Date:	_____
Worker:	_____
Title:	_____
Foremen:	_____
Site superior:	_____

Previous period (safety, quality, atmosphere , effectiveness, cooperation, satisfaction, feedback)

Successes

Difficulties

How are you? (Health, work ability, wellbeing)

Upcoming period

Own wishes and needs

Targets (professional, personal development, cooperation, trainings)

Worker

Superior



Development Discussion info package

Target of the development discussions:

Target of the development discussions is to **find out the current situation** of workers and to **set realistic and achievable targets** to encourage development. YIT new values can also be implemented with this tool by coming close to the worker and to allow workers to have an effect on their own work.

Development discussions are meant to be **free formed** and **relaxed** situation, not formal. All templates are **introductory** and they can be **changed** according to the needs of your own unit. Most important thing is to **fulfill the target** set for the discussions.

Time for discussions should be reserved about **45 to 60 minutes**.

Development discussion checklist

- Reserve time and peaceful place

- Inform the worker and explain the discussion targets and give question setting

- Interview the site superiors and find out the background information, if necessary

- Think about the topics before discussion

- Be positive and open minded

- Hold the discussion

- Inform the necessary parties of the results

- Make sure actions have taken place

Question examples to keep the discussion going

Previous period

Have you had any accidents / close calls?

How is work safety encouraged on your current site?

Have you noticed any safety faults?

How eagerly do site foremen step in in safety faults?

How do you make sure your working environment is safe?

Do you know the requirements of your own tasks?

Have you seen the drawings about the things you are doing?

Do you do work samples of bigger tasks?

How is your work inspected?

Have you had any complaints of the quality of your work?

What kind of an atmosphere is on your site with workers / foremen)?

Is there any bullying noticed?

How is the cooperation between foremen working?

Are there any problems with foremen or workers?

Are you satisfied with your tasks / work place / foremen?

Do you get feedback on your own work?

How have you succeeded in your own work lately?

Do you have any development needs from previous period?



How are you?

When was you last health check?

What motivates you to wake up in the mornings?

Do you have any physical limitation that has an effect on your work?

Do you see any coming problems in health that could be anticipated?

Target examples

1. Quality

- Know the requirements of your own work
- Learn to read drawings
- Do work sample of bigger entities
- Take part in training of equipment
- Take part in planning your own work

2. Work Safety

- Discover x amount of safety faults / successes
- Take part in planning of work safety
- Don't get any complaint of own work safety
- Take part in work safety measurement
- Always clean your own work area

3. Piecework

- Give piecework offer
- Take part in piecework starting meeting
- Achieve piecework x % stage

4. Work ability

- Increase the team spirit
- Add exercise

5. Others

- Try new work tasks
- Go to x training
- Take part in making a fault list
- According to previous period
 - Don't be late anymore
 - Inform absences according to guidelines
 - Improve attitude to work
 - Clean someone else's wastes



How to ensure high quality of discussion

Before:

- Time is reserved beforehand and place is peaceful
- Both parties are well prepared before the discussion

During:

- Discussion content following template and freedom in topics allowed
- Give realistic and constructive feedback
- Summarize topics before moving to next one
- Set challenging but realistic goals
- Discussion is documented
- Don't bring up your own opinions

After:

- Agreed targets are followed regularly
- Collected feedbacks are summarized
- Information is delivered to all needed parties

Generally:

- Discussions are held in constant rhythm with consistency
- Discussions are used as a tool of developing the work community
- Link the discussion results as a tool for management