



IMPROVING WELL-BEING AT WORK

Company X

Eerika Thurlin

BACHELOR'S THESIS
November 2022

Bachelor's Degree Programme in International Business

ABSTRACT

Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu
Tampere University of Applied Sciences
Bachelor's Degree Programme in International Business

EERIKA THURLIN
Improving Well-being at Work
Company X

Bachelor's thesis 62 pages, of which appendices 17 pages
November 2022

Well-being at work has been a common topic of conversation for two decades and companies have started investing in it after realizing its importance. Good well-being at work improves profitability, customer and employee satisfaction, and brand image.

The purpose of this thesis was to evaluate the state of well-being at work in Company X and figure out ways to improve it. The topic was initiated by the author of the thesis career in Company X, her interest in well-being, and the company's owner's willingness to improve well-being at work. The study utilized an employee satisfaction survey that was out carried in the company during the fall of 2021. The survey was done by utilizing qualitative and quantitative research methods by collecting employees' feedback from different areas of work.

The theoretical section aimed to explain the definition of well-being at work and studied different theoretical frameworks about well-being at work. Theories support each other and were used later to analyze the survey results and create a comprehensive improvement plan that gives recommendations on how well-being could be improved and the employees' careers be lengthened in Company X.

Analyzing the survey results shows that overall employee satisfaction and well-being in Company X decreased in many areas between the fall of 2020 and 2021. The Covid-19 pandemic and recruitment challenges in the restaurant industry have created obstacles that negatively affect well-being at work. Company X has not yet found ways to defeat these problems.

Company X must implement well-being into the business strategy and reevaluate its current operations critically to improve well-being at work. Actions are needed in every factor of well-being. To improve their well-being at work everyone needs to be educated better of the factors and significance of well-being at work. Additionally, transparent communication and actions are needed in Company X.

The confidential material has been removed from the public report.

Key words: well-being at work, leadership, individual, organization, work community

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	5
1.1	Thesis topic and research question	6
1.2	Thesis objectives and purpose	6
1.3	Working methods and data	7
1.4	Thesis process	7
2	WELL-BEING AT WORK.....	9
2.1	Well-being at work definition	9
2.2	Factors of well-being at work	9
2.2.1	Individual	10
2.2.2	Organization	11
2.2.3	Leadership	12
2.2.4	Work community.....	12
2.2.5	Work	13
2.3	Why well-being at work is important?	13
2.4	Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs	15
2.5	Stairs of well-being at work	17
2.5.1	Psychological needs	18
2.5.2	Safety needs	20
2.5.3	Belongingness needs	21
2.5.4	Esteem needs	22
2.5.5	Self-actualization needs	24
3	WELL-BEING AT WORK IN COMPANY X.....	26
3.1	Employee work satisfaction survey results	27
3.1.1	Leadership, subordinates	27
3.1.2	Work community, subordinates	28
3.1.3	Work, subordinates	28
3.1.4	Organization, subordinates	29
3.1.5	Leadership, managers	29
3.1.6	Work community, managers	30
3.1.7	Work, managers	31
3.1.8	Organization, managers	31
4	IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR COMPANY X	33
4.1	Increase collaboration with the occupational health care provider.....	33
4.2	Extending managers' training program	34
4.3	Strengthen work community	35
4.4	Investing in human resources	36

4.5 Applying the plan	36
5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	42
REFERENCES	44
APPENDICES.....	46

1 INTRODUCTION

Work is a big part of our lives, and it is done for different reasons. For some, it is just necessary evil to receive livelihood while for others it might be the mission in life. (Rauramo 2008, 144–145.) Work should offer stimuli and fulfill different needs to increase well-being at work (Ojala & Ahonen 2003).

Well-being at work has been a common topic of conversation for the past decades. A hectic lifestyle in a competitive work environment has drawn us to a point where people need to find ways to deal with all aspects of life sustainably. Companies have started to gain more knowledge about the effects of well-being and how it affects profitability, customer satisfaction, and company image. Well-being at work has been emphasized and reevaluated during the Covid-19 pandemic after many companies needed to reorganize their operations.

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected people's lives for a few years and changing restrictions have forced the restaurant industry among other industries to live in the midst of uncertainty. The effects of the pandemic on well-being at work have been evaluated and studies show that people under the age of 36 who work on-site have experienced a decrease in their well-being at work. Women suffer more from the effects than men. The burnout risk is increased by workload, worry about contagion, and social obstacles e.g., wearing masks, social distancing, and interaction. (Kaltiainen & Hakanen 2021.)

The pandemic has affected young adults' mental health. During the fall of 2020 and spring of 2021 people aged 15-29 have increasingly used mental health services. Especially people working in the service sector are prone to have issues with their mental health. (Helsinki GSE Tilannehuone 2021.)

Well-being is extremely important in life. The better people feel the better our whole society works. Companies have an important role and those that invest in well-being have more motivated, engaged, and efficient employees.

1.1 Thesis topic and research question

The thesis is researching well-being at work and commissioned by Company X. Commissioner company is a mid-size restaurant business in the city center of Tampere. The company runs an employee work satisfaction survey annually to collect information from employees. The thesis is focusing on understanding the well-being at work factors and analyzing work satisfaction survey results.

The thesis topic was initiated by the author's career in Company X, her interest in well-being at work, and Company X's owner's willingness to focus on well-being at work in his business.

The main research question is:

- How well-being at work can be increased in Company X?

The secondary research questions are:

- What do employees wish from the owner/restaurant manager/managers to feel better at work?
- What would keep the employees working longer for Company X?

1.2 Thesis objectives and purpose

The objective was to understand Company X's well-being at work situation during the time the survey took place in October 2021 and to find out improvement ideas that could be implemented into the work community and environment in a way that would increase well-being at work.

The theory part of the thesis aims to explain the definition, factors, and outputs of well-being at work. Based on the theory, employee work satisfaction survey data and the author's personal experience in Company X improvement ideas will be presented.

Well-being is directly affecting productivity, performance, quality, and company image. Increased well-being decreases sick leaves and staff turnover. (Rau-ramo 2008.) If the improvement plan is implemented successfully and found useful same ideas can be utilized in the other restaurants owned by the same owner.

1.3 Working methods and data

The thesis was done as desk research utilizing existing data collected in the employee satisfaction survey. The survey has been done using qualitative and quantitative research methods. Answers were separated by the occupation of the employees. Workers' and managers' results have been collected into two groups. The quantitative part of the survey has four main claims. Additionally, the main claims have diagnostic claims that help identify the reasoning of the main claims. The qualitative part of the survey collected free-form comments for three questions presented in the part three.

The survey was analyzed based on different theories presented in the theory part. The improvement plan is following the same theories and ideas will be introduced in a separate chapter.

1.4 Thesis process

The theory part of the thesis will introduce well-being at work theories from different perspectives. It will explain the concept from the employee's and employer's points of view as well as how leadership and productivity are connected to well-being.

In the empirical part, survey results are analyzed by utilizing the existing theories. The analysis is trying to understand the main strengths and issues in Company X from point of view of well-being at work.

The improvement plan is presenting ideas on how well-being at work in Company X could be increased. Well-being is a combination of physical, psychological, and social factors that create comprehensive well-being at work (Ojala & Ahonen 2003, 30–34). The improvement plan is aiming to cover all sections.

The thesis is partly confidential. Chapters that go through survey results or confidential improvement ideas will be hidden from the public thesis.

2 WELL-BEING AT WORK

Well-being at work is a broad and comprehensive term that everyone understands differently. It aims to understand how an individual feels during the work-day and how it affects their output. The more positive the image individual has about their work the higher their well-being at work is. (Ojala & Ahonen 2003, 27.)

2.1 Well-being at work definition

Well-being at work consists of many different factors and thus there are many different definitions for it. Different theories affect the definition. According to the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (2022), work should be meaningful, safe, healthy, and pleasant. Good well-being increases productivity and engagement. Additionally, stress and sick days decrease them.

Coping in work, the number of sick leaves, early retirements, and extending work careers are measures that are seen as measures of well-being at work. Employees see well-being being top management's responsibility while management expects employees to have good collaboration skills, and nobody wants to take the final responsibility. (Salojärvi 2010.)

Ultimately well-being at work is the shared responsibility of employer and employees and every individual has the opportunity to affect it and develop it in a way that everyone is satisfied (Ojala & Ahonen 2003). Leading well-being at work do-cent Marja-Liisa Manka (2015) states that well-being at work is a larger entirety that includes work organization, work community, work itself, and leadership. These factors are presented in Figure 1.

2.2 Factors of well-being at work

Factors of well-being at work create a model that covers dimensions such as motivation, work engagement, theory of action, and transformative learning. An

individual is in the center surrounded by different features of a workplace. Surrounding factors remain the same, yet each individual experiences well-being differently depending on one's personal features.

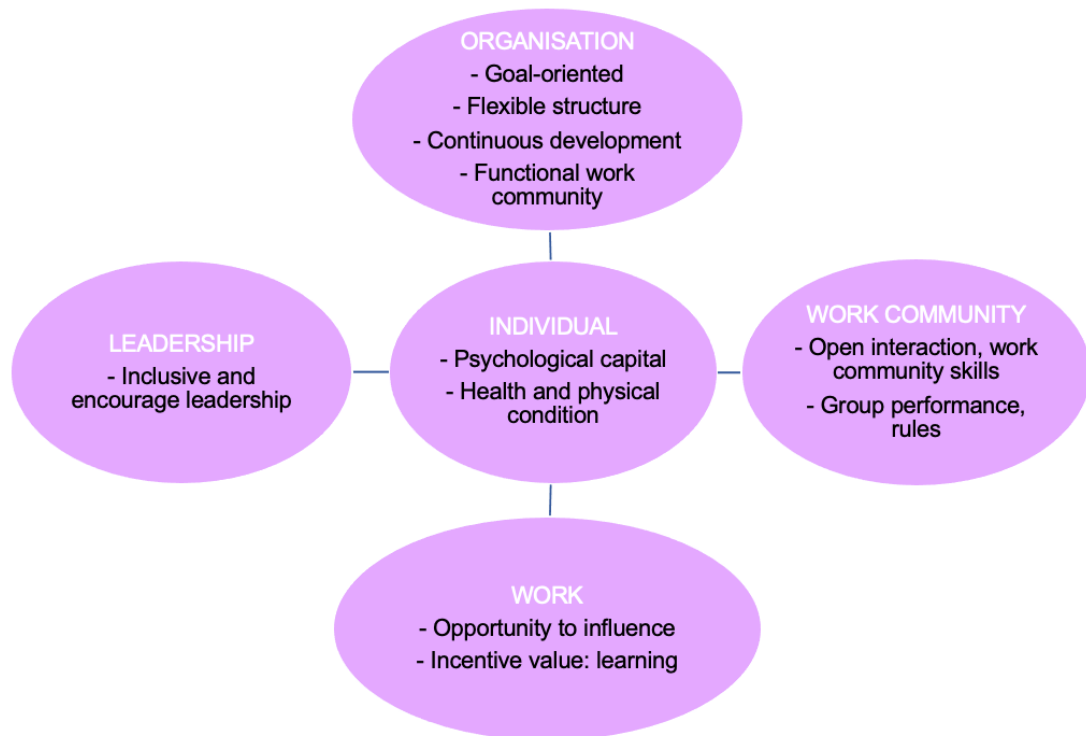


FIGURE 1. Factors of well-being at work (Manka 2015, modified)

2.2.1 Individual

An individual is the core of well-being and other factors support personal well-being. Individual's attitude, psychological capital, personality, and know-how together with health and physique form an entity that determines opinion about well-being at work. Attitude towards work is often more important than the capability to perform work. A bad attitude can prevent learning and decrease motivation. Psychological capital is partly hereditary and partly formed by the living environment. (Manka 2015.) According to the creator of the concept, Professor Fred Luthans (2007) psychological capital has four dimensions: self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience. These four dimensions dictate how an individual can handle hard situations mentally.

A person who wants to develop their know-how and is physically and mentally healthy is more positive and well-being. Managers who communicate with workers about their insecurities, expectations, and needs professedly are increasing well-being at work. Companies that can create a work environment that increases workers' psychological capital have more well-being employees. (Manka 2015.)

2.2.2 Organization

An organization where well-being is an essential part of business strategy is flexible, safe, goal-oriented, and sustainable. Well-being requires systematic planning, analyzing, and managing. A low hierarchical organization that works for a common goal, has a smooth information flow and a supportive learning environment has well-being workers. (Manka 2015.)

A well-being organization is goal orientated. The more employees are included in goal setting the more they are engaged in achieving them. A flexible structure releases more time for managers if they can share responsibilities with workers or team leaders. Clear rules and guidelines direct employees to a self-directing working model instead of just following instructions. (Manka 2011.)

A flexible organization adapts to changes fast and can serve internal and external customers better. An organization with skilled staff that trust and help each other is competitive and adaptive. Investing in training and work environment pays off in motivated, productive, and well-being employees who want to improve their work and expertise. Organizations must understand the current skill level of the staff and plan ahead for the future so adequate training can be organized on time. (Manka 2015.)

Organizations need to understand their workers to be competitive. Millennials (born 1980–2000) want a meaningful, challenging, and rewarding job where leaders are trustworthy and equal, and communicate their expectations clearly. Salary is not as important as good work community, good leadership, and well-being at work. Millennials need variety in their work, and they want to be heard by their superiors. (Valkama 2020.)

2.2.3 Leadership

Motivating leader increases well-being at work while bad leadership raises stress. Studies that have inspected leadership from workers' perspectives have categorized good leadership into four roles.

- A responsible leader is fair but a firm person who keeps promises. S/he works consistently and makes sure the work burden is reasonable.
- A present leader works side-by-side with workers to support them and understands the work requirements.
- A conversational leader listens to and discusses employees' needs and engages the work community openly to discuss changes or common things.
- Inspirational leader supports and encourages. S/he trusts workers for decision-making and gives feedback and recognition.

A lot is expected of leaders, and they often need to multi-manage. However, a good leader is supported by the team and does not need to survive on oneself. Good leaders bring out the team's good qualities (Manka 2011, 2015.)

2.2.4 Work community

A good work community is also an individual experience and consists of a variety of factors. Work should be a place where it is nice to come, one is respected and valued as oneself. A work community that is well-being, productive and empowering requires good working conditions, fair leadership, a supportive work community, and meaningful and smooth work. (Kehusmaa 2011, 110–112.)

According to Manka (2015), commonality and a good atmosphere are essential resources. Stress at work and in free time is more manageable when one has the community's support. A good atmosphere at work is the biggest reason to continue working for the same company. Good leadership is the foundation for the work atmosphere although it needs every employee's participation.

Social capital is teamwork skills and social relationships which improve individual's and work community's productivity. An active work community that shares

the same vision and values, trusts, and helps each other improves social capital and further well-being. A good atmosphere consists of good manners: saying hello, sorry, and thank you, helping others, and not leaving anyone behind. This might sound obvious but is often forgotten in busy workplaces with a bad atmosphere. (Manka 2015.)

2.2.5 Work

Work itself is part of well-being at work and work is found to be more motivating when an individual can affect it. By scheduling and choosing the used methods or operations workers can modify work to serve one's objectives and motives better. Work that is engaging, meaningful, and developing without being too exhausting adds to well-being at work. (Manka 2015.) More about the importance of work for well-being in chapter 2.5.5, Self-actualization needs.

Physical, psychological, and social factors create together an extensive image of well-being at work. Occupational health care service treats and nourishes all three dimensions thus, increasing well-being at work. (Manka 2015.)

2.3 Why well-being at work is important?

Well-being consists of many factors and thus affects the workplace in multiple ways. A person whose well-being at work has decreased is less motivated, productive, and less like to continue in a company where they do not feel good. (Ojala & Ahonen 2003.) Occupational health specialist Päivi Rauramo (2008,18) has listed reasons why focusing on well-being at work pays off:

- productivity, performance, quality
- cost savings
- legal obligations
- social responsibility, ethics
- employer image
- humanity

A healthy and safe work environment is directly affecting the company's profit. The most cost-effective is to minimize health and accident risks in the company and work closely with an occupational health care provider to prevent accidents and illnesses. Sick leaves cause major costs and perhaps disorder in operations e.g., a shortage in staff. This might lead to missing sales, lower performance, and poorer quality. Smooth operations are the key factor in productivity growth. (Rauramo 2008, 18–19; Ojala & Ahonen 2003, 69–73.)

Legal obligations regulate work conditions and health standards. Organizations that can outstand the legal obligations and enhance the work conditions by keeping up with the new trends and international standards lift their company image and competence. (Rauramo 2008, 18–19; Ojala & Ahonen 2003, 37–38.)

New generations bring new values. Companies should understand these values and those who can offer a workplace where individuals can grow and achieve things that are important to them are seen as good employers. Companies that support personal growth and the needs that workers require in their life at the moment and in the future are more likely to have employees that feel good at work. (Ojala & Ahonen 2003, 46–49.)

The effects of increased well-being at work on productivity and profitability are sometimes hard to measure. Figure 2 illustrates the effects and impacts.

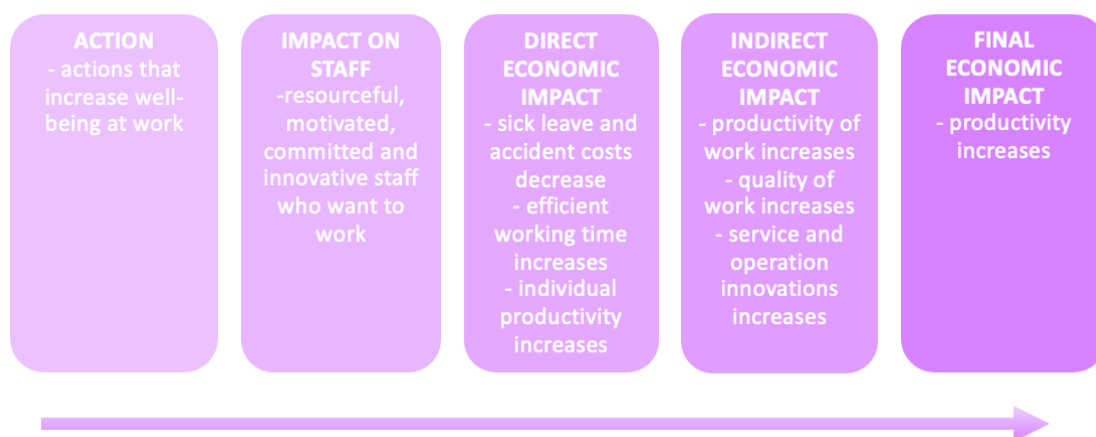


FIGURE 2. Actions that increase well-being at work effects productivity and profitability (Kehusmaa 2011. Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. modified)

When workers' well-being increases, so do their performance. An employee that feels good is more productive, wants to learn more, and generates new ideas on how to develop the workplace. When deciding to focus on well-being at work it is vital to understand that effects take time to show, and commitment and consistency are key factors. The first effects might be non-measurable just as feeling better at work. Next start showing a decrease in sick days, and individual increased performance. These lead to indirect economic impacts where quality and innovation increase. Long-time effects include profitability and company image increase. Studies that measure well-being at work and productivity note that companies usually get the money they invested in well-being back 10–20 times. (Ojala & Ahonen 2003, 72; Kehusmaa 2011, 81–82.)

2.4 Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs

In 1943 psychologist Abraham Maslow introduced A Theory of Human Motivation. According to Maslow humans have five basic needs: physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. These needs dictate human behavior and allow self-development through motivation. At the bottom of the pyramid are the physiological needs (Figure 3). Only after human has fulfilled the prior needs adequately do the needs of the next level start to emerge.



FIGURE 3. Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow 1943, modified)

Physiological needs are basic human needs that keep us alive. If a person is suffering from hunger, they are not able to think about other needs before the basic needs are fulfilled at least on some level. (Maslow 1943; Rauramo 2008, 29–33.)

Safety needs are basic needs along with physiological needs. Safety needs bring balance and stability into our lives. Safety from violence, financial security, and health security are examples of safety needs. Every person has a very different conception of safety and living in fear is a major barrier to self-development and well-being. (Maslow 1943; Rauramo 2008, 29–33.)

The next two steps are psychological needs. Belongingness and love needs deal with emotional relationships and social interactions. Humans want to belong to some social groups. They want to be loved and show love in return. (Maslow 1943; Rauramo 2008, 29–33.)

Esteem needs can be divided into two levels. The lower level is based on respect and acknowledgment from others and the higher level is based on self-assessment. According to Maslow, a healthy person has a desire for high self-esteem and self-respect. Additionally, humans want to make achievements and be respected by others. (Maslow 1943; Rauramo 2008, 29–33.)

Self-actualization needs occur after all other needs are fulfilled. Humans have the urge to utilize their full potential. Humans want to develop as a person and achieve their dreams. They want to test their limits physically and mentally. (Maslow 1943; Rauramo 2008, 29–33.)

After all needs are fulfilled, a person should be the healthiest and the most creative version of themselves. However, according to Rauramo (2008) in a welfare state, the average citizen has fulfilled:

physiological needs	85%
safety needs	70%
belongingness and love needs	50%
esteem needs	40%
self-actualization needs	10%

Afterward, Maslow admitted that the theory is not as straightforward, and a person can start searching for fulfillment for other needs despite some needs that are yet to be fulfilled. Flow experience is a phenomenon that people experience when they immerse themselves in expressing themselves e.g., artists creating art. Self-fulfillment need is so strong that other needs like hunger or rest forgot. (Kehusmaa 2011, 16–17.)

2.5 Stairs of well-being at work

Based on Maslow's theory of human motivation, Rauramo (2008) has created Stairs of well-being at work –model. The model utilized the same steps known from Maslow's theory but transferred them to working life. Despite the imperfect theory, the model describes the different levels of well-being comprehensively. The purpose of the model is to understand factors and modes of operations that affect motivation and well-being at work. Figure 4 demonstrates the different steps and what they expect from the organization and from the individual. Methods of evaluation or measurement are also presented in the figure. (Kehusmaa 2011, 16–17.)



FIGURE 4. Stairs of well-being at work (Rauramo 2008, modified)

2.5.1 Psychological needs

Psychophysical needs create the foundation for the model. To fulfill these needs the work must be physically and mentally suitable and stimulating for the employee in a way that enables sufficient free time. Mentally or physically too easy or too hard work leads to decreased motivation and strain. In case the worker does not recover enough from work and other daily activities they start struggling. Work burdens physically, psychosocially, and cognitively. It is important to understand that every worker experiences strain differently. (Rauramo 2008.)

Physical strains mean load that affects the musculoskeletal and cardiovascular systems. Working positions and movements, moving heavy objects, operations, and working conditions e.g., temperature, noise, and lighting define the level of strain. Organizations can ease the physical strain by varying tasks among workers as repetition of motion also adds strain. Additionally, training staff to work ergonomically e.g., lifting heavy loads and using aids helps prevent injuries. The worker's part is to make sure they stay physically fit to be able to work and that they get enough sleep and healthy food. (Rauramo 2008.)

Psychosocial factors at work consist of leadership and organization of work, teamwork, communication, and interaction skills as well as individual behavior in the work community. When workers feel that workload and rush are manageable, work is meaningful, and they have a chance to affect their work they experience less burden. A sense of rush makes us often feel important and productive. Unfortunately, it makes us compromise quality and personal relationships. Constant rush leads to sick leaves, strain, reduced quality, and poorer well-being. (Rauramo 2008.)

Understanding causes for rush and managing them improves well-being. There might be too much work for the existing personnel, work might be poorly organized, or operations may need development. Managers have a vital role in rush management. They need to evaluate if changing roles or targets has an effect. Workers whose job description is precise and who know what tasks to prioritize feel less stressed and rushed. Additionally, an organization can advance well-being at work by giving diverse work tasks and making sure work is periodized as it prevents fatigue and loss of workflow. (Rauramo 2008.)

A cognitive process transforms processed information into behavior. Internet, social media, and technology have added cognitive burdens. Employees are expected to know more and use knowledge in their work. If work issues cannot be left at work and issues bother during free time stress and the chance of burnout increase. Prolonged stress might escalate into burnout. Burnout can be also caused by a trauma or major change in life. Prolonged stress causes decreased work engagement and thus smaller productivity. (Rauramo 2008.)

The worker's responsibility is to recognize changes in his/her life and be able to understand when their well-being has decreased. Employers and management team should recognize changes in workers and offer them a chance to discuss their changed situations. By understanding the changed situation and current needs of the workers, issues could be addressed in the early stages and sick leaves could be avoided. Occupational health care is an important factor in the first step of the stairs of well-being at work thus, working closely with them is improving well-being. (Rauramo 2008.)

2.5.2 Safety needs

Safety is a critical part of well-being, at work and in free time. The permanence of work, steady income, and buffer for unexpected financial expenditures nourish well-being. Physical and psychological safety together with equality enhances stability in life. A fixed-term contract or part-time job serves well the life situation of others while others experience insecurity. Terminations affect the mental health of the dismissed person as well as the rest of the staff. Thus, managers should be trained to handle inquiries about terminations so that insecurity does not spread. (Rauramo 2008; Kehusmaa 2011, 55–56.)

Organizations and working life trends are changing constantly. Changes cause insecurity as workers wonder if they can handle the change and how it affects their work. Change is experienced as more manageable and positive if workers have the possibility to affect the change and be part of it. Change must be thoroughly planned, effects on well-being must be evaluated and processes to be organized so that well-being at work does not suffer. Staff must first understand what, why, and how before they can engage emotionally and thereafter sustainably to the change. (Rauramo 2008.)

A good workplace is organized and safe. Considered layout, reasoned placement of machines, tools, etc. as well as the possibility to keep the workplace easily clean serves work and staff. Workplace exposures workers to a physical, chemical, and biological load. Physical exposures are noise, tremors, lighting, temperature, and air condition. Chemicals help staff at their work, but they need to be handled correctly to maintain safety. Chemicals need to be labeled correctly and staff should be trained to use them correctly. Biological exposures cover e.g., bacteria, molds, viruses, and microbes. Correct operations slow down the spreading and reproducing of harmful biological growth. (Rauramo 2008.)

Bullying, interference, and discrimination at the workplace affect well-being. An organization should encourage individualism and intervene in any inappropriate behavior immediately. We teach children how to behave and include everyone in the play. In working life rush and competition between employees often lead to unwanted behavior. Employees might end up working overtime to appear more

productive and important to the company even if it affects their well-being negatively and creates more unwanted pressure on others. Occupational health and safety support well-being and active health and safety representative or team can help organizations maintain high standards. (Rauramo 2008; Kehusmaa 2011.)

Safety requires managing and controlling. Safety measures protect knowledge, properties, goods, work environment, and stakeholders e.g., staff, customers, and investors. Legal obligations regulate minimum standards for safety measures, but safety should be everyone's priority. Risks must be recognized and evaluated to whom the risk concerns to be able to minimize the risks. Additionally, dangerous situations must be observed to avoid similar situations in the future. (Rauramo 2008.)

2.5.3 Belongingness needs

Community and communality are prerequisites for human existence and activity. Interaction with other people and the environment shape self-esteem as our behavior receives feedback. Well-being is increased when individuals and their personalities are valued, and they can express themselves freely. Communality has different forms. Symbolic community forms when beliefs, feelings, and experiences are shared. A functional community shares the same goals that are tried to achieve as a team. A person is part of multiple communities during their lives e.g., family, friends, activity teams, religious and political groups, and work communities. Being loved, accepted, noticed and meaningful are the core of these needs of belongingness. (Rauramo 2008.)

The work atmosphere is based on a perception of individual staff members and forms a trinity of organization, leadership, and work community. A good atmosphere is hard to measure as everyone experiences it differently and it includes diverse matters. However, some similarities can be seen as a foundation for a good atmosphere. Respectable supervisor-subordinate relationships, good manners, humanity, and adequate flow of information are examples of features building a good work atmosphere. (Rauramo 2008; Kehusmaa 2011.)

The diversity of people and their features should be valued in workplaces. Despite the fact that a homogeneous group gets along faster, a diverse group performs better in a long run. Utilizing individual strengths, views, creativity, and knowledge create an effective work community. Understanding and appreciating diversity might require time and effort. Managers have a big role in showing examples and making sure all inappropriate behavior is eliminated immediately. (Rauramo 2008; Kehusmaa 2011.)

Trust is a very big part of relationships and work communities. Especially, trust between managers and workers is essential. Workers do not support or commit to a leader they do not trust. Trust must be earned, and it requires transparency and commitment. Parties must be able to discuss grievances and expectations at work. Promises need to be kept to allow the trust to grow. (Rauramo 2008.)

2.5.4 Esteem needs

Maslow divided esteem needs into lower and higher levels. The first mentioned is social respect given by others and the latter is self-respect. At work, the community, supervisors, customers, and the authorities of the industry modify individuals' conceptions of respect and self-esteem. (Rauramo 2008.)

As stated earlier managers and supervisors are in key roles when thinking about well-being at work. Everyone is capable of improving well-being at work, still, top management has a responsible role. They need to assure that managers are not only capable and professional but also own leadership and interpersonal skills. Well-being at work is part of leadership and managers need to observe the work environment, staff, and operations. Managers must identify grievances e.g., excessive work burden, and find solutions to maintain well-being. When managers earn the trust of workers and show true interest in their well-being the work community works in a way that enhances managers' well-being as well. (Rauramo 2008.)

Working methods are changing and thus should leadership. Today's leaders are expected to motivate, inspire, and understand instead of just dividing commands

and supervising. Everyone wants more feedback and they want to be valued and meaningful. (Rauramo 2008.)

Work culture can be divided into three different levels. Figure 5 illustrates how some parts of the work culture are seen and heard and some are not.

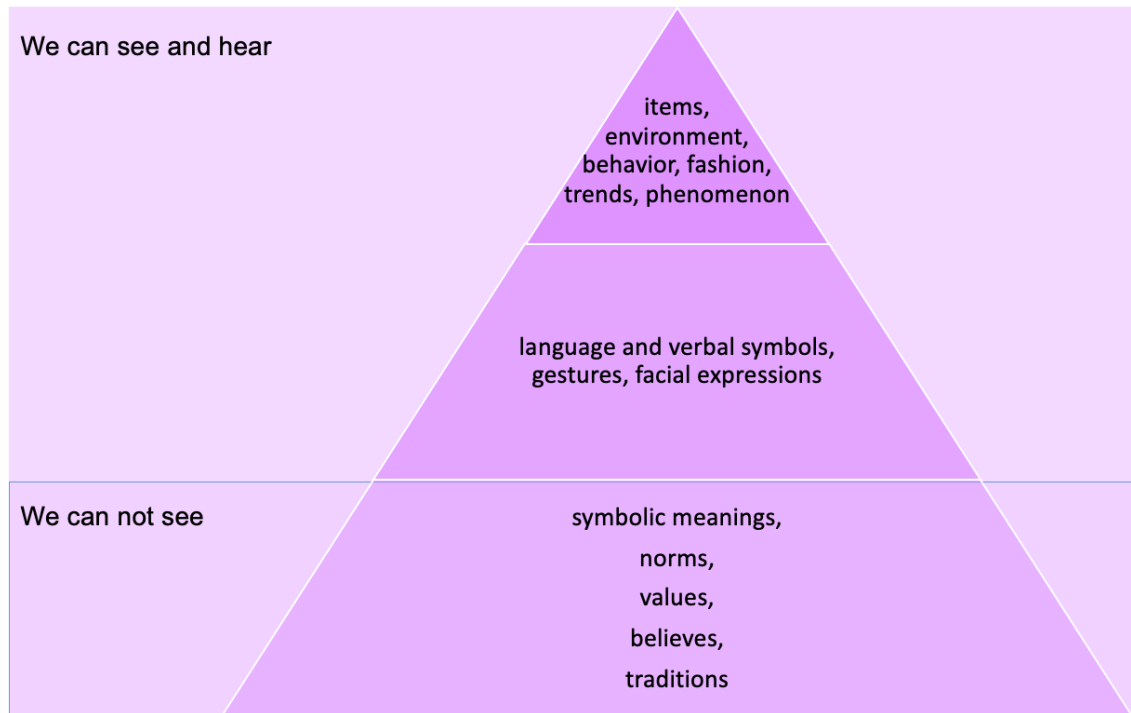


FIGURE 5. Cultural levels (Rauramo 2008, 151. modified)

Work culture defines the norms of how people are expected to behave and look at work. Often the cultural features that cannot be seen are set by the organization's authorities. However, if values and beliefs conflict with the values and beliefs of the workers' well-being at work will decrease. Core values are often the success factors of the company and everyone in the company should relate to those values to have well-being and profitability. (Rauramo 2008.)

Receiving feedback is important for self-esteem and for well-being. Feedback allows the person to improve themselves and it makes them feel noticed and valued. It is important that everyone at the workplace knows how to receive and give feedback. Top management and corporate level usually collect feedback from employees in a form of a survey. Feedback should be carefully thought, reasoned, and analyzed so that well-being would increase. (Rauramo 2008.)

2.5.5 Self-actualization needs

Work is a place where we learn many new skills and gain knowledge. People want to learn more, and it builds competency which is seen as very important as people change companies more often than before. Massachusetts Institute of Technology system scientist, Peter Senge (2006) has divided organizational learning principles into five disciplines (Figure 6).

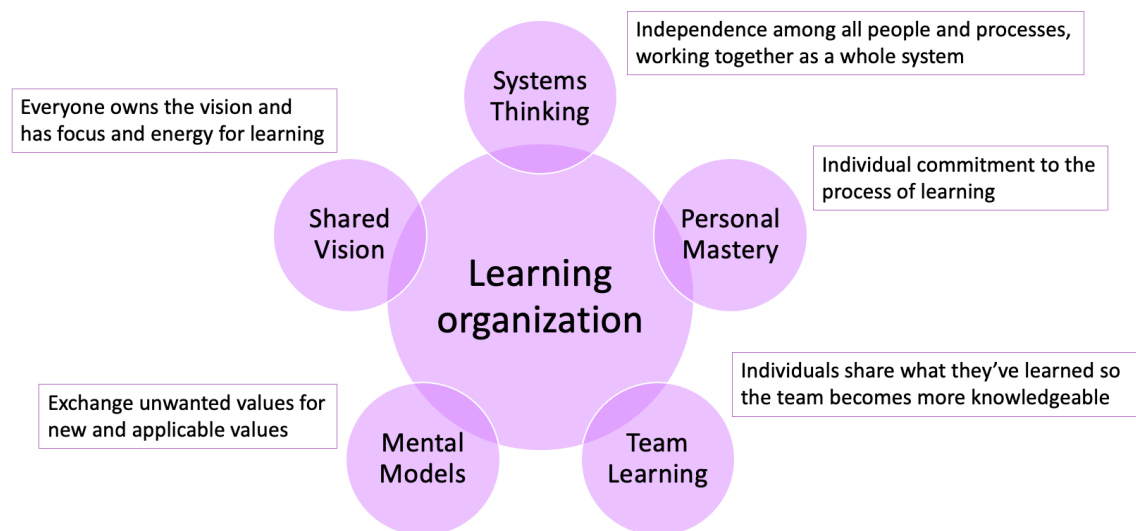


FIGURE 6. The Fifth Discipline (Senge 2006, modified)

Personal mastery requires companies to form their operations in a way that encourages workers to educate themselves and on the individual level ability to learn to achieve results (Rauramo 2008). Mental models mean understanding the meanings of personal visions and conceptions of the organization and the ability to develop them. A shared vision is exchanging ideas and building a common understanding of a goal and a strategy to achieve it. Team learning demands teamwork skills and a willingness to share and receive knowledge to improve the competence of the team. System thinking is used to understand and analyze the overall picture of the company instead of focusing on smaller operations. (Senge 2006.)

Lifelong learning fulfills self-actualization needs and increases well-being when a person can educate him- or herself and develop their work. Work itself, training organized by the employer, and the worker's own willingness to learn increase

expertise. The employer's responsibility is to organize adequate training and the employee is responsible to be willing to learn and advance training through their action. The well-being work community is prone to develop their expertise and work environment. When employees are motivated and actively included in planning and developing processes the company and work community will benefit more as everyone can share their expertise in their field. (Rauramo 2008.)

A well-being person needs stimuli and challenges that offer insight and learning. Well-being at work and profitability are connected to the worker's ability to affect, plan, and develop their work. Employees that have earned the trust of their superiors are motivated to increase their well-being and enhance the learning of the work community. (Rauramo 2008.)

5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the thesis was to understand the state of well-being at work in Company X and find ways to improve it. Additionally, the thesis aimed to find ways to lengthen the employees' careers in Company X. The thesis utilized the employee satisfaction survey data that is out carried in the company annually and the personal experience of the author of the thesis. The presented improvement ideas are based on the different well-being theories and frameworks introduced in the theoretical part. Each idea is planned to improve at least one of the factors of well-being at work (Figure 1).

Well-being at work is a complex concept that builds from many factors and therefore increasing it requires careful planning and execution. Successfully out carried plan increases additionally profitability and brand image. To achieve comprehensive well-being at work all factors of well-being (Figure 1) need to be in good balance. The work itself, work community, organization, and leadership factors need to respond to individuals' needs on each level of the stairs of well-being at work (Figure 4). Ultimately, the individual must have the right mindset toward the different factors, or the employer's efforts to increase well-being are pointless.

Education and transparency are important aspects of well-being. Employees are often interested in improving well-being at work but might focus only on one area that needs improvement and are unaware of all the different factors and layers that affect it. It is important to recognize that the individual is in the center of well-being and the change usually needs to start from there. Transparency in the company helps recognize the development points in oneself and others and the team can assist and motivate others in change.

Company X has gone through big changes in a short time including changes that the Covid-19 pandemic brought as well as big changes in the staff. Employee satisfaction survey indicates decreasing in the overall satisfaction level, however, many things can be solved with small changes. If well-being can be increased, the employees' careers will likely become longer. This would further increase Company X's profitability by decreasing the recruiting and orientation costs.

As the thesis process was prolonged due to the author's other studies the current well-being at work situation in Company X might have changed significantly and presented improvement ideas might not be valid anymore. However, well-being requires constant work, and utilizing the presented methods shall help the company in the future as well.

As further research Company X needs to find ways to work closely with the occupational health care provider to guarantee a better preventive care plan. To out carry the changes by following the eight-step plan the company might need to do further research such as collecting more information from the employees.

REFERENCES

Ahonen, G. 2011. Työpahoinvoinnin kustannukset ovat nousseet Suomessa megamittoihin. Kauppalehti. Published 2.3.2011.

Company X. 2021. Employee work satisfaction survey. 10/2021. Unpublished. In thesis authors' possession.

Helsinki GSE Tilannehuone. 2021. Koronapandemia ja mielenterveyserot eri sosioekonomisissa ryhmissä. Published 16.08.2021. Read 2.1.2022.
<https://www.helsinkigse.fi/corona/koronapandemia-ja-mielenterveyserot-eri-sosioekonomisissa-ryhmissa/>

Kalttiainen, J. & Hakanen, J. 2021. Työterveyslaitos. Työhyvinvoinnin kehittyminen korona-aikana. Webinaari. 4.11.2021.
<https://www.slideshare.net/THLfi/koronan-yhteiskunnalliset-vaikutukset-tyolot-ja-tyturvallisuus-250652369>

Kehusmaa, K. 2011. Työhyvinvointi kilpailuetuna. Hämeenlinna: Kariston Kirjapaino Oy.

Luthans, F., Avolio, B., Avey, J. & Norman, S. 2007. Positive Psychological Capital: Measurement and Relationship with Performance and Satisfaction. Leadership Institute Faculty Publications. Lincoln: University of Nebraska. Read 5.2.2022. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227636268_Positive_Psychological_Capital_Measurement_and_Relationship_with_Performance_and_Satisfaction

Manka, M-L. 2011. Työn ilo. Helsinki: WSOYpro Oy.

Manka, M-L. 2015. Stressikirja: mistä virtaa? Helsinki: Talentum.

Maslow, A. 1943. A Theory of Human Motivation. Psychological Review, 50, 370–396. Toronto: York University. Posted 08/2000. Read 29.1.2022.
<https://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Maslow/motivation.htm>

Ministry of social affairs and health. 2022. Wellbeing at work. Read 13.1.2022.
<https://stm.fi/en/wellbeing-at-work/data-and-research>

Otala, L. & Ahonen, G. 2003. Työhyvinvointi tuloksentekijänä. Juva: WSOYpro.

Rauramo, P. 2008. Työhyvinvoinnin portaat – viisi vaikuttavaa askelta. Helsinki: Edita Prima Oy.

Salojärvi, S. 2010. Minä välitän -kolumni. Talouselämä. Published 4.3.2010.

Senge, P. 2006. The fifth discipline: the art and practice of the learning organization. London: Random House Business.

Valkama, H. 2020. Nuoret työntekijät ovat epälojaaleja ja kärsimättömiä – mutta paljon parempia työntekijöitä kuin vanhempansa. Yle. Published 22.1.2020. Updated 23.1.2020. Read 10.2.2022. <https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-11158277>