Developing Employee Engagement at Helsinki Ravintolat

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Abstract

The idea for the thesis originates from the author's personal interest to develop management skills and work culture. The aim of the research is to find out which factors drive engagement in Helsinki Ravintolat and how engagement practices can be developed in all five restaurant units. Theories of antecedents of engagement, engagement practices, and organizational engagement are researched. The emphasis of the research is on employee perceptions, as engagement happens on a personal level. The final product is an action plan for the development of employee engagement in Helsinki Ravintolat. A product-based thesis involving the employees in the innovation process was a natural choice since the author has specialized in Imagineering and innovation during her studies at Haaga-Helia UAS and exchange studies at Breda UAS. The author has strong experience with workshop-based innovation and design processes.

The first phase of the thesis started in the spring of 2021. Theoretical background, the conceptualization of employee engagement, and its development on both practitioner and academic sides were researched. Due to the practical nature of this research, antecedents of engagement, engagement practices, and HR tools to develop engagement were researched.

The second phase of the thesis started in the autumn of 2022. The researcher analyzed the organization-wide employee survey by Pension Fund Administration and designed and facilitated five unit-level workshops based on the survey results. The workshops were engaging events on their own, as employees were included in the decision-making process and had a say in how they would like to develop their work and engagement practices. This was the first time in the organization's history that unit-level workshops were held. Working and taking the time to innovate together was considered beneficial and workshops made a yearly practice.

Concrete ideas to develop engagement and insights into employee perceptions of the engagement practices and organization were derived from the workshops. Results indicated that skill development and meaningful relationships at work were considered the most influential drivers of engagement, followed by inclusive leadership and positive perceptions of the organization. Some improvements related to skill development opportunities, inclusive leadership, and both personal and physical resources were made. A follow-up of the concrete actions will take place in the spring of 2023.

A research interview with the CEO was conducted to better understand the organizational goals, strategy, and actions related to the development of engagement. There is strong organizational support for skill development, inclusive decision-making, resources to do the job well, employee well-being, and community culture in Helsinki Ravintolat.

Keywords
Employee engagement, Engagement practices, Antecedents of Engagement

Contents

1   Introduction

This product-oriented thesis is based on the concept of employee engagement, and conditions that affect on the development of engagement. The aim is to find out which factors drive engagement in Helsinki Ravintolat and innovate concrete actions and new practices in the unit-level workshops with the employees of the commissioning organization, Helsinki Ravintolat.

To design a research and innovation workshop, the author has familiarised herself with the concept of employee engagement and its antecedents and consequences. The employee survey conducted by Pension Fund Administration (2022) and its results are analyzed, based on which the problem statement for the workshop are specified. According to the top management, the employee engagement efforts in Helsinki Ravintolat are connected to the development of employee experience, and therefore the workshops aim for the development of overall employee experience and engagement.

Besides innovating concrete actions to develop engagement, a workshop is an engaging activity on its own, as it includes the employees in the decision-making process and offers them an opportunity to share their points of view and discuss them as a team. The workshops offer a chance to observe employee perceptions of the personal drivers of engagement, current practices, and the organization. The participants learn from the facilitator and each other and are reminded of the existing development opportunities and engagement practices.

Finally, the concrete actions derived from the workshops are included in unit-level action plans with timelines and people responsible for those actions. The results of the workshop are analysed to find out which engagement-related factors the employees find most important. The author interviewed the CEO of Helsinki Ravintolat to gain a better understanding of the organization's engagement strategy and development ideas for the future.

1.1   Background

Multiple approaches to understanding the concept of employee engagement have emerged, due to the interest of both practitioner and academic communities. It is a widely used concept in the fields of human resource development (HRD), human resource management, psychology, sociology, and healthcare (Shuck 2011, Abstract). Learning about the evolution of the concept provides a deeper understanding of employee engagement

and helps to identify the context and past and present states of employee engagement (Shuck & Wollard 2010, 91.)

From practical approach, employee engagement has been studied as management-focused activity, which aims for better organizational outcomes (Gupta & Sharma 2016, Abstract.) Shuck and Wollard (2010, 103) define employee engagement "an individual employee's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral state directed toward desired organizational outcomes". Whereas the academic approach is concentrated on defining and validating the psychological concept of employee engagement to create an understanding of antecedent variables that shape the development of employee engagement, a practitioner approach focuses on ways the organization can use, measure, or develop engagement, and benefit from its outcomes, such as improved retention, commitment, and productivity (Shuck 2011, 305−306).

Understanding the concept of employee engagement and the conditions that lead to the development of engagement was necessary to analyse the employee survey results and design and facilitate the workshops. The process required ability to identify the factors that influence development of engagement positively or negatively, as the workshop exercises were derived from the results of the survey conducted by the Pension Fund Administration (2022). The author's goal was to design the workshops in a way that produces replies which are significant to the development of employee engagement and result in new discussions around the subject.

Workshops included themes such as psychological states that affect the development of engagement, job demands and resources and changes in engagement levels in different phases of employment. Employees were reminded of existing practices related to the development of engagement, such as flexible work arrangements, educational opportunities, and performance reviews.

The importance of theoretical knowledge of engagement was acknowledged during the process. However, this product-oriented thesis represents the practical approach to engagement, as it aims to produce positive outcomes for the organization and its employees. Saks (2006, 614) states that organizations trying to enhance employee engagement should create a long-term plan for the engagement, understand the constantly changing nature of engagement, focus on employees' perceptions of organizational support, address employees' needs and concerns, and offer sufficient resources, benefits, and suport. Therefore, the author suggests enhancing engagement needs more than just em-

ployee surveys: concrete actions to develop engagement, derived from employees' perceptions and ideas. Those actions should be measured, as the levels of engagement are constantly changing, and then further developed.

Vance (2006, 4−18) highlights different HR practices to enhance employee engagement, including job design, recruitment, selection, training, compensation, and performance management. The author suggests that all levels of the organization should be in the process of designing these actions and practices. The design process should be based on employee needs and perceptions, as Shuck and Wollard (2010, 105−106) underline the importance of understanding that employee engagement depends on the psychology of the individual employee. From this standpoint, a product-oriented thesis, including the design, facilitation and analyses of employee workshops seemed the most beneficial way to enhance engagement in Helsinki restaurants.

1.2   Research questions

The research question of this thesis (RQ) is defined: What are the most important factors driving employee engagement and how engagement practices should be developed in Helsinki Ravintolat? Furthermore, this research question is divided into four investigative questions (IQs).

- IQ 1: Which different dimensions of employee engagement make employees of Helsinki Ravintolat engaged or disengaged?

- IQ 2: What are the current levels of employee engagement at Helsinki Ravintolat?

- IQ 3: How are employee engagement and actions to develop engagement perceived in Helsinki Ravintolat?

- IQ 4: How is employee engagement currently incorporated into the business strategy and practices of Helsinki Ravintolat?

1.3   Benefits

According to Vorina, Simonič and Vlasova (2017, 246), engaged employees are able and willing to give discretionary effort, going beyond what's required in their position. Jose and Mampilly (2012, 425) mention higher productivity, better business results, increased commitment, lower absenteeism, higher retention, service quality, customer and employee

satisfaction, and increased organizational citizenship behavior as positive outcomes of engagement. Whereas the research by Bailey, Madden, Alfes, and Fletcher (2015,30), identified positive consequences of engagement as individual morale, task performance, extra-role performance, and organizational performance. Saks (2006, 611) states that job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, and lower intention to quit are positive consequences of employee engagement. Dutta and Banerjee (2014, 83) refer to employee retention as the organization's ability to retain its employees, which is influenced by organizational culture, pay and remuneration, flexibility, and job satisfaction.

Although many positive outcomes of employee experience are directly linked to the bottom line, developing engagement benefits the employees as well. As Morgan (2017,1) states, the employee engagement approach shifted some of the focus away from how the organization can add productivity to focusing on what the organization can do to offer value for the employees and understand how and why they work.

1.4   Commissioner

Helsinki Ravintolat is a Helsinki-based family business with a long history in the area. It's owned and led by a mother and her son. Helsinki Ravintolat consists of seven different companies. Classic restaurants in Töölö, Kuu, Carelia, Kuukuu, and Café Tintin Tango got a new sibling restaurant Viinibaari Apotek in Kamppi in 2020. In addition to the restaurants, there is also Hotel Finn in the city center of Helsinki and the wine-importing business Carelia Wines. Hotel Finn and Carelia Wines are not included in this thesis.

Helsinki Ravintolat made a 7,3 million turnover in 2019 and employed 50 people. In Helsinki Ravintolat, customer-oriented way of work, having sufficient resources to do the job well, participative and transparent decision-making, and rewarding the employees based on achievement of strategic goals are reality. The goal is that both employee and employer get value from their relationship. The organization's strategy includes recognizing the individual potential and developing the skill within the organization. The hierarchy of the company is low and anyone can come up with development ideas and take action to enhance company culture or business in general. Each restaurant unit aims to be unique and successful in its own category. (Helsinki Ravintolat, 2022).

2   Employee Engagement

The theoretical framework presents a discussion about the published engagement theories, their development, and analyses of differences between the concepts of employee- and work engagement. This chapter presents a summary and synthesis of the arguments presented in the peer-reviewed research papers. Understanding the different conceptualizations and theories related to engagement is necessary, as understanding the conditions, and practices that affect engagement is needed when designing and facilitating the workshop and action plan for engagement. (The University of Arizona Global Campus, 2022). As engagement has been studied by both academics and practitioners, the concept has constantly evolved and there are definitions of the concept, that differ from each other (Shuck 2011, Abstract.)

2.1   Conceptualizations and theories of Engagement

Engagement is a relatively complex concept. Shuck and Wollard (2010, 102) note that, there are researchers such as Kahn (1990) and Saks (2006) who consider engagement as a **personal decision**, and some researchers who might consider it an **organizational level variable**. Furthermore, the scholars refer to different subcategories of engagement, such as **work engagement** and **employee engagement**. Schaufeli (2013,1), makes a distinction between the two concepts: "Work engagement refers to the relationship of the employee with his or her *work*, whereas employee engagement may also include the relationship with the *organization*." Similar to work engagement, Maslach & al. (2001, 416) refer to job engagement as an individual's relationship with work." Whereas Saks's (2006, 604) research divides the concept of employee engagement into two categories: **job engagement** and **organizational engagement** proposing that engagement is specific to the role an individual is performing.

To clarify the differences, organizational engagement is different from **organizational commitment**, which is about one's attitude and attachment towards his/her organization, and therefore different from **employee engagement**, which refers to a level of individual's absorption in a work role performance, and as a role member of the organization, and the individual's cognitions, emotions, and behaviors related to those roles (Saks 2006, 602.)

Job engagement also differs from job satisfaction. A key difference between satisfied employees and engaged employees is how much effort they are willing to give to their work. Satisfied workers often perform well, but engaged workers are more driven and willing to go the extra mile. (Reynolds, 27 December 2016). Ealias and George (2012, 37) refer to **job satisfaction** as "the positive emotional state that occurs when a person's job seems to

fulfill important job values provided; these values are compatible with one's needs." Abraham (2012) proposed that job satisfaction is the antecedent of engagement.

Kahn (1990, 700) published an early theoretical framework of personal engagement and disengagement and defined engagement at work as "the simultaneous employment and expression of a person's 'preferred self' in a task that promotes connections to work and to others, personal presence (physical, cognitive and emotional), and active full role performances." Kahn (1990, 702) argued, that people employ or withdraw themselves based on their psychological experience of their self-role. Although Kahn (1990, 694) didn't use the words employee engagement, his theory considered an individual's role in different task behaviors, also as a member of the organization.

Kahn's article describes the **three psychological conditions**, **meaningfulness, safety, and availability,** and explains how these conditions affect the development of engagement and disengagement. According to Kahn psychological meaningfulness relates to elements of work that motivate or demotivate employee, psychological safety relates to elements of social systems that influence how threatening, predictable, and consistent employee experiences social situations, whereas psychological availability depends on employees' resources and distractions to engage with their job. (Kahn 1990, 703).

Kahn (1990, 703−704) describes **psychological meaningfulness** as "a feeling that one is receiving a return on investments of one's self in a currency of physical, cognitive, or emotional energy". Such meaningfulness is experienced when people feel worthwhile, useful, and valuable, are able to give to others, work in their roles, and receive something in exchange. Lack of meaningfulness often occurs when people feel that little is asked or expected from them and there is little room to give or receive in their work role performances. (Kahn 1990, 704).

Kahn (1990, 708) describes **psychological safety** "as feeling able to show and employ one's self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status, or career." He identified the four factors that had the most direct influence on psychological safety: interpersonal relationships, group, and intergroup dynamics, management style and process, and organizational norms. Trust, support, and openness in work culture and relationships create psychological safety and enhance engagement. Being able to try and even fail without the fear of consequences, being yourself, and feeling accepted as a member of the group are examples of psychological safety at work. (Kahn 1990, 708−713).

Kahn (1990, 714) refers to **psychological availability** as employees' physical, emotional, and psychological resources to engage in work and measures the levels of engagement based on the distractions they experience as members of the social systems.

May, Gilson, and Harter (2004, 30−32) empirically tested Kahn's (1990) theory and found a strong link between **engagement at work** and the three psychological conditions Kahn defined as meaningfulness, safety, and availability. According to their study, meaningfulness had the biggest influence on engagement. Job enrichment, opportunities to express oneself through work, and role fit were positive indicators of meaningfulness. Supportive supervisor relations and being yourself and being accepted were positive indicators of psychological safety whereas self-consciousness was considered a negative indicator of safety. Emotional, cognitive, and physical resources available were positive indicators of psychological availability whereas, high levels of stress, emotional stress or injuries have the opposite effect. (May & al. 2004, 30−32).

Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter's (2001) **burnout-antithesis approach** is another major early work on engagement. In their research paper, Maslach et al. (2001, 417) defined **job engagement** as "a persistent, positive, affective-motivational state of fulfillment in employees that is characterized by high levels of activation and pleasure." Burnout is described as a process of important and meaningful work with motivating challenges turning into unpleasant and meaningless. Their research found engagement and its main characteristics, energy, involvement, and efficacy as the opposite of burnout and its core dimensions, exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy. (Maslach et al. 2001, 417).

Maslach & al. (2001, 413) propose the mismatch between the person and the job increases the likelihood of burnout and those mismatches occur when issues are not resolved or the person finds changes in the work relationship unacceptable.

Six antecedents of burnout:
- Excessive workload due to a) too many demands that lead to non-recoverable exhaustion b) lack of skills or inclination c) a job that requires people to show emotions that differ from their actual feelings.

- Mismatch of control due to a) insufficient resources to do their work b) insufficient authority to do the job more efficiently c) responsibility exceeding one's authority.

- Lack of reward a) salary and benefits are not sufficient considering achievements and workload b) social rewards, hard work is ignored by others c) intrinsic rewards, pride of doing something important well

- Losing positive connection to work-community due to a) social isolation b) chronic and unresolved conflicts c) lack of social support

- Lack of fairness due to a) inequity in workload or pay b) evaluations and promotions are not handled in an appropriate manner c) one's voice or opinions are not heard

- Conflict of values due to a) lying or deceptive behavior is needed to do the job b) difference between the values of a person and the organization. c) personal aspirations for one's career don't match with the job.
(Maslach & al. 2001, 414−415)

However, Schaufeli and Wilmar (2011, 41) criticize Maslach & al.'s (2001) idea of burnout and engagement as opposites and state that at least to some extent, burnout and engagement may co-exist and suggest those should be measured independently. However, Schaufeli and Wilmar (2011, 44) suggest that under specific conditions, work engagement may lead to burnout .

Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes (2002, 268) were the first ones to study **employee engagement** at the business unit level, using a meta-analysis of 7,939 business units in 36 companies to research the connection between employee satisfaction, **engagement, and the business unit outcomes,** such as customer satisfaction, productivity, profit, and employee turnover. Harter & al. (2002, 269) described employee engagement as "the individual's involvement and satisfaction as well as enthusiasm for work."

Harter & al. (2002, 269) described emotionally and cognitively engaged employees as people who feel like an essential part of the work community, know the expectations of their work, have sufficient resources, and opportunities to develop their skills, and feel that they're doing meaningful work and have an impact on what they're doing. Thus, supporting earlier research on the three psychological conditions influencing the development of engagement (Kahn 1990, 703−714; May & al. 2004, 30−32.) According to Shuck and Wollard (2010, 100), Harter & al. (2002) was the first widely disseminated publication that suggested employee engagement-profit linkage and raised interest in the concept

Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, and Bakker (2002, 74), defined **work engagement** "as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption." Vigor means high levels of energy and resilience, willingness to put effort in one's job, dedication referring to strong involvement, enthusiasm, and pride towards one's job, and absorption, being immersed in one's job and feeling like time is passing quickly (Schaufeli & al. 2002, 74.)

Saks (2006) published an empirical study of the antecedents and consequences of employee engagement. The empirical study consisted of a survey completed by 102 employees working in different jobs and organizations. Saks (2006, 602) described employee engagement as "a distinct and unique construct consisting of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral elements that are associated with individual role performance." Moreover, Saks's (2006) study distinguished job engagement and organizational engagement and suggested that employees are likely to have at least two main roles, their work role and their role as a member of the organization. Building on Kahn's (1990, 694) statement that people engage or disengage with their job under three psychological conditions, meaningfulness, safety, and availability, Saks (2006, 604-605) connected three psychological conditions to individual and organizational predictors of employee engagement. Furthermore, he suggested that job characteristics have to do with the meaningfulness of the job, whereas perceived organizational support, perceived supervisor support, distributive justice, and procedural justice are related to psychological safety and rewards and recognition are connected to a sense of return on invested time and effort (Saks 2006, 604−605.)

Table 1. Definitions of engagement

Definition	Subcategories of Engagement and theoretical viewpoint.
Kahn (1990,700),"simultaneous employment and expression of a person's 'preferred self' in a task that promotes connections to work and to others, personal presence (physical, cognitive and emotional), and active full role performances"	Personal engagement at work
	Role performance
Maslach & al. (2001, 417), "a persistent, positive, affective-motivational state of fulfillment in employees that is characterized by high levels of activation and pleasure"	Job engagement
	Engagement as the opposite of burnout (Maslach & al. 2001)
Schaufeli & al. (2002,74), "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption."	Work engagement
	Engagement as a state of mind Schaufeli & al. (2002) Relationship between employee and work (Schaufeli, 2013,1.)
Harter & al. (2002, 269) ,"the individual's involvement and satisfaction as well as enthusiasm for work"	Employee Engagement
	Engagement as a state of mind (Harter & al. 2002)

	Relationship between employee and work (Schaufeli, 2013,1.)
"a distinct and unique construct consisting of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral elements that are associated with individual role performance."	Employee Engagement divided in job engagement and organizational engagement
	Role performance and antecedents of engagement (Saks, 2006)

Both developing employees' personal engagement with work, as well as the organization's engagement practices are included in the goals of this product-oriented thesis. Therefore, the concept of employee engagement is chosen over work engagement, which does not cover the employee's role as a member of the organization and organizational practices that predict engagement. More specifically, the author will follow Saks's (2006) footsteps and focus on analyzing antecedents of engagement at Helsinki Ravintolat based on three psychological conditions of engagement by Kahn (1990) and definition and antecedents of Employee Engagement by Saks (2006) in this thesis.

2.2   Antecedents of Employee Engagement

Saks (2006, 604), proposed six antecedents of engagement, based on on Kahn's (1990, 703) three psychological conditions, meaningfulness, safety and availability, and analysed how well they predicted job engagement and organizational engagement.

His study found **job characteristics** as a significant predictor of job engagement. The six job characteristics defined as autonomy, task identity, skill variety, task significance feedback from others, and feedback from the job, were derived from Kahn's (1990) foundational theory (Saks 2006, 604). Skill variety was found as the most significant variable to enhance job engagement, and therefore providing employees with opportunities to use their skill variety for meaningful and challenging tasks was recommended (Saks 2019, 34.) As Kahn (1990, 704) suggested, to create psychological meaningfulness, job characteristics should include variety and challenge, freedom of choice, and the opportunity to use one's skill set as well as contribute to something important.

Saks's study indicated that employees who have **higher perceived organizational support**, are more likely to accomplish their goals and become more engaged. The organizational environment should be safe and supportive and allow individuals to be themselves and even make mistakes without the fear of consequences. **Perceived supervisor support** was also defined as a predictor of engagement, and therefore the role of first-line

managers in building engagement and making sure employee has enough resources to do the job is important. (Saks 2006, 605). Having a supportive organization, practices, managers, and colleagues, and being able to show your true self are related to psychological safety (Kahn 1990, 708−713.) Sufficient emotional, cognitive and physical resources affect psychological availability to engage in work (Kahn 1990, 714.)

Procedural justice describes employees' fairness perceptions towards the processes determining resource distribution, whereas **distributive justice** is about how employees perceive the fairness of what they receive. Employees who positively perceive fairness in their work roles are more likely to also make fair decisions and become more engaged. (Saks 2006, 606).

Research by Shuck, Reio & Rocco (2011, 440−442) indicated that intention to quit is less likely when employees are effectively committed, have sufficient resources, and perceive their work as meaningful, and employees give discretionary effort when they have supportive management, the right level of challenge and feel like they contribute. Shuck & al. (2011, 442) suggest enhancing the development of employee engagement by training managers to create the right conditions for engagement to happen, utilizing talent management practices to develop employees' self-awareness and self-reflection skills.

Bailey & al. (2015, 1) conducted a systematic narrative evidence synthesis of 214 studies, which indicated significantly different conceptualizations of engagement. According to their research, there is growing interest in HRM views of engagement as a development- or performance-focused management style, which is radically different from thinking engagement as a state of mind (Bailey & al. 2015, 9) They research the most popular theories of engagement, and found five antecedents including psychological states, job design, leadership, organizational and team factors, and organizational interventions (Bailey & al. 2015.)

2.3 Engagement practices

Understanding how and why things are done in a certain way and building a high-performance culture that supports employees and makes them feel connected directly leads to engagement (O'Boyle, 17 September 2022.) Trompenaars and Prud'Homme (2004, 2) define **corporate culture** as: "1) how we do things, 2) what our tacit rules are, 3) what our guiding values, beliefs, and assumptions are; and 4) what we think is distinctive about our organization." SHRM (2021) states that organizational culture is formed of shared beliefs and values, established by leaders who communicate and reinforce these values and beliefs by various methods, impacting employee perceptions, behaviors, and understanding.

Therefore, the development of organizational culture and training managers to communicate organizational values efficiently should be an important part of the engagement development efforts of any business.

To create the right conditions to enhance engagement, supportive leadership is in an essential role. Alam, Mendelson, Boamahs and Gauthier (2022, Ahead of print), researched the relationship between employee engagement and different management styles providing more knowledge about the antecedents of employee engagement. According to the results of their two-stage hierarchical multiple regression study, reward management, performance management, a general management style related to managing job demands and resources, and transformational leadership were considered predictors of employee engagement (Alam & al. 2022, Ahead of print.)

Performance management is contributing to employee engagement according to multiple studies (Alam & al., 2022; Mone, Eisinger, Guggenheim, Price & Stine, 2011). Aguinis (2013, 2−3) defined performance management as "identifying, measuring and developing the performance of individuals and teams aligning performance with the strategic goals of the organization.

Schleisher, Baumann, Sullivan, Levy, Hargrove & Barros (2018, 2019) identified seven key tasks of performance management:

- Setting performance expectations
- Observing employee performance
- Integrating performance information
- Rendering of a formal summative performance evaluation
- Generating and delivering performance feedback
- The formal performance review meeting
- Performance coaching.
  (Schleisher & al. 2018, 2019).

Aligning personal and organizational goals predicts engagement by involving the individual in goal attainment, and employees should have an influence on their work, as it creates psychological meaningfulness (Gruman & Saks 2011,128−129.) Mone, & al. (2011, 207) introduce several manager behaviors associated with performance management, such as acting fairly and being trustworthy, encouraging innovation, valuing opinions and ideas, involving employees in decision making supporting development, and giving recognition and feedback.

The aim of **reward management** is to engage employees and align their interests with organizational goals, by rewarding people fairly, equitably and consistently and based on

the value they're giving for the organization. Fit for the company culture, objectives, and procedural and distributive justice should be considered when creating reward management strategy. (Armstrong 2007, 3−6).

> A reward may be anything tangible or intangible that an organisation provides to its employees either intentionally or unintentionally in exchange for the employee's potential or actual work contribution, and to which employee as individuals attach a positive value as a satisfier of certain self-defined needs
> (Shields, Rooney, Brown & Kaine 2007,12.)

There are different type of rewards, extrinsic tangible ones, such as salary, benefits, transactional rewards, and intrinsic intangible rewards, such as relational reward, workplace values, leadership qualities, opportunities for individual development. Predictability, flexibility, equity, and efficiency of the reward management strategy should be considered by the management. (Perkins, 2019). Effort bargain, what is to be done and what reward is connected to it, needs to be renewed continuously between employer and employee (Behrend, 1957, 505.)

Alam et al. (2022) study indicated **transformational leadership** is an antecedent of engagement. Transformational leaders have charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Avolio, 1994.) Individualized consideration refers to noticing an individual's abilities, aspirations, and needs (Walumbwa & al. 2015, 238) Recognizing the potential of different individuals at work and developing their skills by combining individual and organizational goals is likely to enhance engagement.

Alam & al. (2022, 3) suggest utilizing the **Job Demands-Resource Model** by Bakker and Demerouti (2007) as a general management strategy as research shows job demands are related to burnout and job resources on work engagement, extra-role performance, and organizational commitment. Demerouti and Bakker (2017, 274−275) categorize workplace factors into two different groups, job demands, and job resources, in the Job Demands-Resources Model firsts published in 2001 and then developed over the years.

In their model, job demands represent job's physiological, social or organizational aspects that require physical or psychological effort from employees and lead to certain costs. As examples of job demands are mentioned heavy workloads, emotional demands, and emotionally demanding interactions with clients or customers. Job resources help employees to reach their goals, reduce job demands and stimulate personal growth. Learning and development opportunities, performance feedback, social support, and autonomy are mentioned as examples of job resources. Job demands are considered predictors of exhaustion and burnout, and on the contrary, job resources influence future work engagement or disengagement. Their model also explains that resources influence motivation especially

when job demands are high. High demands with high resources, also referred to as active jobs, motivate employees to learn and try new things. As stated in the JD-R model, personal resources can play a similar role as job resources, and such qualities as optimism and self-efficacy can enhance work engagement, boost motivation and help to cope with the undesirable impact of job demand on the strain. (Demerouti and Bakker 2017, 274-275).

In his research, Saks (2006, 603) proposes that individual levels of engagement vary between different people and propose that social exchange theory by (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) explains these differences. According to (Cropanzano & Mitchell 2005, 874) **social exchange theory (SET)** is one of the most prominent models to understand workplace behavior. Cropanzano & Mitchell (2005, 875−876) state that one of the principles of SET is that over time, relationships develop into trusting, loyal and mutual commitments, and for this to happen, both parties of a relationship must follow certain rules of exchange and these rules and norms agreed by both parties of the relationship, form the guidelines for the exchange process. Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005, 876) state that reciprocity as interdependent exchanges is a prominent characteristic of SET, meaning a transaction between two parties, where one's action is followed by a response of another. It is a circle of giving and returning the favor for mutual benefit.

Opening up the view of Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005, 875-876), when an individual feels that he is being treated with trust and respect and gaining personal value from work, (such as recognition, new opportunities to develop oneself, and tangible or intangible rewards), he is doing good work and treating others with the same respect and trust. Over time, these exchanges of favors lead to meaningful relationships and feelings of engagement toward colleagues and the organization. Based on this theory of reciprocity in interdependent exchanges by Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005, 876), Jose and Mampilly (2012, 428) propose employees' satisfaction with human resource predicts engagement and emphasizes top management's responsibility to implement human resource practices and rewards that serve different groups of employees. Since employees experience the value of interdependent exchanges differently, managers and organizations should consider the employees' needs and concerns

To better understand how **engagement is measured** amongst the academics and HR surveys, it is beneficial to know these two popular methods, the UWES scale, and the Q12 survey.The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale measures vigor, dedication, and absorption, which employee experiences at work. (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003.) The study by Seppälä, Mauno, Feldt, Hakanen, Kinnunen, Tolvanen & Schaufeli (2009) supported using the 9-item version of the UWES scale in the research of work engagement occupational well-

being. Schaufeli and Salanova (2011, 40) state that the UWES is the most popular instrument for measuring work engagement.

The Gallup Organization has conducted employee engagement surveys for decades. However, their survey is strictly copyrighted, and therefore the questionnaire is not included in this research, but it is available on their website. Their Q12 survey refers to different factors influencing engagement, such as clarity in job roles, the meaningfulness of work and relationships at work, personal skill development and performance management, recognition and reward management, supervisory support, and sharing company values. (The Gallup Organization, 2022).

To conclude, the development of engagement is a long-term process that requires clearly determined and communicated organizational values, supportive management and individual consideration of employees' potential, needs, and concerns. Offering achievable yet challenging goals, giving constructive evaluations and feedback, rewards and recognition are examples of concrete actions to achieve organization's engagement goals. Furthermore, focusing on equity and ensuring psychological- and physical safety at work is required for engagement to develop. Balancing the demands of the job with sufficient resources creates the right conditions for engagement to happen. Finally, engagement levels vary from day to day, but employee surveys can give a general idea of the current situation. The results should be used to develop engagement practices further. All concrete actions to develop engagement should have a follow-up, to see how the current strategy is working.

3 Research Methods

The primary research methods used in this product-oriented thesis are qualitative. The author compares the quantitative employee survey conducted by Pension Fund Administration (2022) to Kahn's (1990) theory of personal engagement and three psychological conditions, and different antecedents of engagement (Bailey & al. 2015; Saks 2006.)

The workshops are the main product of this thesis, as well a research method and a participative way of developing engagement in Helsinki Ravintolat. The aim is to gather employees' perceptions of factors that engage or disengage them and include them in the process of developing engagement. The workshops are considered as a part of ongoing action research in Helsinki Ravintolat, as the research process hasn't finished by the time of returning this thesis.

Finally, a qualitative semi-structured research interview with the CEO is conducted to better understand the organizational perceptions and practices of engagement. The interview is considered as part of the action research in this thesis, and therefore the interview result can be found from the empirical part.

Qualitative methods are used to capture the attitudes, views and perceptions (Anderson, 2010.) Aim is to go in-depth about the themes that arise in the quantitative research survey conducted by the Pension Fund Administration and understand how engagement is perceived and should be developed in Helsinki Ravintolat. Qualitative research methods are described as collecting and analyzing non-numerical data to understand different phenomena and to find solutions to complex problems by breaking them down into smaller understandable pieces by meaningful deduction. Qualitative methods are suggested when the research focuses on individual experiences and beliefs. Furthermore, the qualitative methods offer the advantage of collecting 'raw material' as the researcher can build connections with the respondents, however, the researcher is reminded to stay as objective as possible in his or her views. (QuestionPro, 2022).

3.1 Comparing the employee survey results to theory

The author opens the theory behind the survey by Pension Fund Organization (2022) and compares different phrases and topics occurring in survey to the popular engagement theories. With the permission from the Pension Fund Organization, the author has gathered the numerical results in the table and presents the most important key points from the survey. The questions and categories that got lower scores, and are related to engagement or its antecedents, work as a problem-statements for the workshop exercises.

The employee survey conducted by Pension Fund Administration (2022), was sent out to 47 permanent employees from five different units of Helsinki-Ravintola and 38 employees (77,6%) replied to the anonymous survey. The survey was conducted online, and it consisted of 50 questions, which included relevant and scientifically proven questions related to employee engagement, and its antecedents and consequences. Likert scale- style survey asked the questions on a scale of one to five, from strongly disagree to strongly agree (Ankur, Saket, Chandel, Satish & Dinesh. 2015.) Employees replied to the survey during work hours, through the link they received in their email.

Pension Fund Administration (2022) has created the survey in cooperation with Aalto University. According to Pension Fund Administration (2022), the questionnaire is based on **the Circle of Organizational Health** and its eight categories: core, leadership, relationships, direction, capabilities, structure, execution, and renewal (Äkräs, Hintsa, Aro and Gratz 2018,13.)

The Core refers to organizational culture, purpose, values, and reason for being, and **leadership** is about uniformity, acting as a role model, and developing a culture of trust and growth. **Relationships** are connected to the factors affecting psychological safety, such as openness, trust, and a sense of belonging. **Direction** is described as being goal-oriented and determined, able to find ways to reach goals, and believing in the organization is going in the right direction. **Competencies** represent different resources to do the job, both tangible and intangible, attitudes, processes, work practices, and how these competencies are managed. **Structures** represent the clarity in job roles and clear organizational structure and principles, which can vary based on the type of organization. **Execution** refers to executing the actions, measuring the outcomes of those actions, and celebrating the achievements**. Renewal** describes the continuous learning and development of the employee and the company itself. (Äkräs & al. 2018, 12−13).

The author discusses the survey questionnaire by Pension Fund Administration (2022) based on the words and phrases that relate to the three psychological conditions of engagement (Kahn, 1990) and antecedents of engagement (Bailey & al. 2015; Saks, 2006), and other themes that seem meaningful considering the theoretical background.

The survey measures psychological states, leadership, organizational and team factors, considered as antecedents of engagement (Bailey & al. 2015.) and job characteristics (challenges, use of different skills, task variety, and significance), perceived distributive and procedural justice, perceived supervisor- and organizational support, reward, and

recognition, defined as antecedents of engagement and satisfaction, organizational commitment and intention to quit (or retain), defined as consequences of engagement. (Saks 2006). Furthermore, words and topics related to clarity of job roles and organizational goals, and performance management practices occur in the survey.

The three psychological conditions of engagement, meaningfulness, availability and safety (Kahn 1990) are present in both, the survey (Pension Fund Administration, 2022) and the Circle of Organizational Health (Äkräs & al. 2018, 12.) The survey measures **psychological meaningfulness**, whether the work itself and the tasks one's doing feel valuable and meaningful and if the employee gains some personal value (eg. personal development) and has meaningful relationships at work. Questions related to **psychological availability** have connections to the job demands and resources model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) and levels of motivation and energy to employee engagement theory by (Schaufeli & al. 2002, 74.) Employee perceptions of **psychological safety** are connected to trust, openness, support, and meaningful relationships at work (Kahn, 1990, 708.) Furthermore, fairness and equity including perceived distributive and procedural justice (Saks 2006, 606), and both managerial- and organizational support experienced at work (Saks 2006, 605) also influence the psychological safety of the employees and are questioned in the survey.

In the survey conducted by Pension Fund Administration (2022, 4), a core category indicates the organizational values and goals, the meaningfulness of work, and perceived equity. Equity, the meaningfulness of work, and acting according to company values were estimated as excellent. People also felt that they can speak freely about the issues within the company. This indicates that employees experience Helsinki Ravintolat as a psychologically safe place to work since people don't fear the negative consequences of expressing their opinions or being themselves. However, in employee's intention to stay there had been a negative change since the last survey. Turnover intention is considered a negative consequence of engagement.

In the survey, leadership is described as a bridge between an organization's identity and executing its purpose. Good leadership requires consistency, acting as a role model, and developing a culture of trust and growth. The employees of Helsinki Ravintolat had positive perceptions of these elements of leadership but required more long-term goals to develop their growth. (Pension Fund Administration, 2022, 6). Goal attainment develops the feeling of purpose and engagement, creating psychological meaningfulness. Therefore, the author proposes that **goal attainment, giving constructive feedback** and other performance management practices that develop growth, are important development points in Helsinki Ravintolat.

A direction category represents the organization's ability to create a clear vision and strategy and gain a common understanding of the company vision and strategy on all levels of the organization. The employees of Helsinki Ravintolat perceived that they can participate in the decision-making and have an influence on work and different practices. According to the survey, the organization's vision and strategy are not fully understood or acknowledged by the employees. (Pension Fund Administration 2022, 7). However, the words 'vision' and 'strategy' are not used that much in daily work life, so asking about the organizational goals or ways to reach these goals might have resulted in different answers. The author proposes that being able to **make decisions that influence your own work** can develop meaningfulness that leads to engagement, and therefore creating opportunities where employees can develop improvements together is beneficial.

The skills category introduces organizational skill level and the ability to develop core skills further. The core skills include human capital, processes, and technology for the organization to gain an advantage over the competitors. Opportunities to use and develop one's skills and task significance were perceived positively. Perceptions of one's health are very good, but there are some developments to be made considering the lack of energy and motivation of the employees. (The Pension Fund administration 2022, 8). Finding out what kind of **resources** the employees need to feel energetic and motivated, and to **develop their skills** and career, can have a positive influence on engagement levels in Helsinki Ravintolat.

Communality refers to meaningful social relationships within the organization and outside of it. Empathy, openness, social support, and a sense of belonging are considered predictors of communality. Communality in Helsinki-Ravintolat is considered excellent and employees have meaningful relationships at work. Organizational and supervisory support are positively perceived. Employees generally like to work with their immediate supervisors and perceive that the organization encourages working together and sharing information. However, resources to deal with personal relationships are somewhat considered lacking. (The Pension Fund Administration 2022,10).

These results indicate communality aspects related to psychological safety (sense of belonging, social support, and openness), are positively experienced. Difficulties to look after personal relationships are related to employees' physical, emotional and psychological resources to engage. Therefore, the author suggests reminding employees of flexible work arrangements, the importance of rota-planning, and considering the personal decisions that influence the experienced resources. Actions that support social relationships and

communality at work affect engagement positively, and therefore it's beneficial to find out how the organization can support communality efforts in Helsinki Ravintolat.

In the survey, practices are described as clarity of organizational structure and operational models, including decision-making, roles, and responsibilities. Clear practices enhance employees' feeling of autonomy. In Helsinki-Ravintolat, job roles and responsibilities were considered clear and employees experience achievements at work. However, employees don't keep enough breaks during a day. (Pension Fund Administration 2022,11).

The clarity in job roles can be enhanced with a good introduction and training, therefore the author suggests perceiving during workshops what kind of experiences have about the onboarding phase and enhance the psychological meaningfulness of the job. Not having enough breaks influence the performance and motivation of employees. This is a common issue in a busy service industry, and its effects on general well-being, motivation, concentration and might even cause physical symptoms such as headaches and exhaustion. The author proposes a discussion in the workplace related to **break practices**, leading by example and offering sufficient resources to take a break.

Execution refers organization's ability to get things done – how efficiently the organization works. Most employees agreed they can reach their goals, but many wished for more regular feedback. The employees generally felt they receive gratitude for the work well done. Almost all employees consider the quality of a product and the service to be good, which indicates people are proud of what they do. (The Pension Fund Administration 2022,12). Performance management practices, such as **goal attainment, and performance feedback** are considered to engage employees and these themes should be further discussed in the workshop.

Business Development describes the organization's ability to renew itself and encourage people to learn and develop themselves. In Helsinki-Ravintolat, most employees feel encouraged to develop themselves and their skills. Although the employees are generally satisfied with the organizational and managerial efforts, less than half of the employees perceive that organization develops its actions faster than the competitors. (Pension Fund Organization 2022). Therefore, **including the employees in the design of engagement practices and the development of the organization** is suggested.

Table 2: Results of the employee survey (Pension Fund Administration) 2022, on a Likert scale 1-5, *All includes also replies from Unit C

Group	N	%	Avg.	Core	Leader-ship	Direction	Skills
All*	39/4	77,6	4,2	4,3	4,3	4,3	4,3
Unit B	8/8	100,0	3,9	4,1	4,1	4,2	3,9
Unit E	11/15	73,3	4,6	4,7	4,7	4,7	4,7
Unit A	6/8	75,0	3,9	3,9	3,9	4,1	4,4
Unit D	9/10	90,0	4,2	4,5	4,5	4,4	4,3
Group	N	%	Avg.	Com-munal-ity	Practices	Execution	Business Develop-ment
All*	39/4	77,6	4,2	4,3	3,9	4,1	3,9
Unit B	8/8	100	3,9	4,2	3,5	3,9	3,7
Unit E	11/15	73,3	4,6	4,7	4,3	4,6	4,3
Unit A	6/8	75	3,9	4,1	3,9	3,6	3,4
Unit D	9/10	90	4,2	4,3	3,6	4,4	3,9

To conclude, the survey results Pension Fund Administration (2022) indicated development areas such as goal setting, constructive feedback, which are also considered as performance management practices. The lack of emotional, physical and psychological resources to do one's job and balance between personal life and work was also on issue for some employees. Work/life balance is an important factor affecting employee well-being, performance, and engagement. Most employees don't keep enough recovering breaks during workday, which might also influence on motivation and energy levels. Finding out how to develop job resources and break practices might increase engagement levels. Although employees perceived their own performance good, many considered the competition develops faster. Therefore, including employees in the development of the organization, their personal skills and work environment is suggested.

However, most employees considered their health to be good and perceived the organization's efforts to support their well-being positively. Based on the survey results, employees' experience of psychological safety is on a good level. Community culture at work is rated highly in all units, employees agree with the core values of the organization and have meaningful connections at work. (Pension Fund Administration 2022).

3.2   Action research

Action research is a strategy of researching reality while trying to change it, and its purpose is to create action that leads to change, concentrates on social practices, problem-solving and involves people in the process. In this research strategy, the action represents three things. It is the subject, method and the goal of the research. The action research begins by defining a research problem, and based on this problem, research- and modification plan are created. Actualization of this plan is estimated and analysed, actions are modified accordingly, then implemented and analysed again. This goes on until the set goals are reached or realized unattainable. Questionable about action research is its objectivity, and the very idea that the goal of the reality is to change it, which is against the traditional view of academic research (Jyrkämä, s.a.).

The employee engagement workshops, the end-product of this thesis, are part of the participative action research process. The participative employee workshops are designed to answer the research problem, while already leading the change to a more open and supportive work culture that engages employees. Topics such as recognition, support, and constructive feedback are present in the workshops. Furthermore, there is an educational element in the workshops, as the facilitator presents the HR tool that is used for managing engagement in different phases of employment and encourages the discussion about different management styles to develop engagement. Employees will also learn from each other.

These all elements are included in a one-and-a-half-hour workshop and the three exercises it is consisted of. The gathered data from the workshops include the concrete actions to develop engagement and written data from the exercises that provide insights into employee perceptions of the drivers of engagement, practices, and organization are gathered in written form from the post-it notes, and cause-effect analysis handouts, and the written feedback from the workshops provided by the HR.

The analysis of this written material is done by relational content analysis that focuses on the fact that a certain theme exists in the data (theme-based coding). Then the relationship between different words is analyzed. (Columbia University, 2019). A qualitative content analysis is focused on the matters, topics, and themes of the material. It is based on the coding method, in which the researcher recognizes and names the contentual elements from the material. In theory-based coding, the researcher selects which matters in the material are interesting based the theoretical understanding. Based on the content of the material, deductions are made, the importance of different factors is analysed, and

common and different factors are compared. At this point, the research problem is usually clarified. (Vuori, s.a.)

There are two main types of content analysis, in this case the author uses the relational analysis over conceptual analysis, as it takes a step further and connections between the occurring 'code' words can be made. The research question being: *What are the most important factors driving employee engagement and how engagement practices should be developed in Helsinki Ravintolat?* the author selected the words, topics and themes from two categories: three psychological conditions affecting engagement (Kahn, 1990) and antecedents of engagement by (Bailey & al. 2015; Saks 2006) but allowed herself to add categories during the coding process if needed. The author decided to code the existence of the concept instead of the how many times it is mentioned in the text and accept similar words and terms. (Columbia University, 2019).

The empirical part of this thesis explains the process of designing and facilitating the workshops, including the project plan and concrete actions derived from the workshops and feedback provided by the HR manager, who wrote down the notes and concrete actions from the workshop. Her role in the facilitation of the workshops is also clarified in the empirical part. After the workshops, a research interview with the CEO is conducted. More about the interview is in the subchapter below.

In the discussion chapter, the success and development points of this project, and suggestions for further research are concluded. However, the action research won't be fully completed by the time of returning this thesis but continues by implementing concrete actions derived in the workshops in each unit, follow-up in January, and planning a new, developed version of the workshop for the next autumn.

3.3   Research interview

Lastly, a semi-structured research interview with the CEO of Helsinki Ravintolat is conducted to gain an in-depth understanding of organizational engagement practices and perceptions. A semi-structured research interview is a qualitative research method often used in human and social sciences. The aim of it is to provide knowledge of certain phenomena the interviewer has pre-determined and researched and get the interviewee's descriptions of these phenomena in relation to real life, not reflections or theorizations. (Brinkman 2013, 21). A semi-structured interview is constructed of pre-determined open-ended questions but allows room for additional questions derived from the communication between the interviewer and the interviewee (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree 2006, 315.)

This method was chosen instead of a structured interview because it offers certain flexibility to deep dive into matters the interviewee finds important and ask additional questions that offer new insights. The aim of this interview is to gain specific information and views of the CEO, not collecting large amounts of research data from multiple participants, in which case the structured interview would have been an easier way to handle the large amounts of data. However, an unstructured interview could easily get too conversational and informal and miss the research objectives.

The risks related to this method can be biased thinking and overcontrolling the conversation to some direction to gain certain types of replies from the interviewee, or on the contrary, the interviewee giving answers pleasing the interviewer (George 2022.) Especially in this case, when the interviewer is not very experienced and the interviewee and interviewer work for the same company there is a high risk of being biased. However, it might also be a benefit that the interviewer is familiar with the interviewee and the organization and its practices. To overcome these risks, the interviewer has researched different interview methods and ways to set the open-ended questions in an objective way.

The guidelines for the interview are being as objective as possible, not expressing personal opinions at any point of the interview and focusing on the way that the interviewee experiences things, gaining additional knowledge that benefits the research, and offering more insights by asking questions on point. In addition, the interviewee aims to ask the interviewee to give real-life examples and explain things and the existing practices in his own words.

A semi-structured research interview with the CEO of Helsinki Ravintolat was chosen as a qualitative research method to better understand how employee engagement is perceived by the head of the organization and implemented into business strategy. The interviewer aims to identify organizational goals for the development of employee engagement, organizational processes, management styles, and concrete actions to develop engagement. The implementation and follow-up for concrete actions derived from the workshop ideation results are also discussed.

Whereas analyzing the data from the employee survey by Pension Fund Administration (2022), and conducting the workshops were focused on the employee's perception of employee engagement and employee experience in general, the interview with the CEO clarified how employee engagement is perceived and developed within the organization.

To analyze the results, the author uses content analysis. There are several ways to do content analysis. In this case, the analysis process follows closely the way that the interviewee speaks during the interview, to map how employee engagement and engagement practices are perceived and manifested by the CEO of Helsinki Ravintolat, rather than aiming for an abstract description of the phenomena. (Vuori, s.a.).

The employees' individual views and ideas for developing engagement are the most beneficial part of this research as engagement is an individual-level construct that should be studied on an individual, rather than organizational level. (Shuck & Wollard, 2010,105.) However, understanding the organizational perceptions, goals, and resources is necessary when creating a realistic, organization-wide action plan for employee engagement.

The interviewer prepared for the interview by identifying the research questions, studying the theory of employee engagement thoroughly, analyzing the results of the employee survey and employee workshops, rehearsing the interview with a friend, and preparing the interviewee by setting a time limit for the interview, conducting the interview in a relaxed environment, explaining the structure of the interview and concept of employee engagement beforehand, as well as notifying the interviewee that interview is recorded with the phone.

The interview was conducted in Finnish 8th of November, in person, at the restaurant Carelia. At the time of the interview, the restaurant was closed to customers. As the CEO and interviewer know each other and have worked together, the CEO was reminded to clarify things that might already have been discussed in an informal setting, for research purposes. Such occasions were a lunch together with the CEO, and the HR manager, where the results of the workshops and action plans were discussed. However, this event wasn't recorded as the CEO wanted to keep it informal and do the interview separately in a calmer environment. The official interview was recorded, and the pre-set time limit was one and a half hours. Afterward, the recording was turned into a text transcript.

3.4 Results from interview

All views in this text are presented by the CEO of Helsinki Ravintolat during the semi-structured research interview that took place 8th of November in Restaurant Carelia.

First, Hauta (8 November 2022) states that the organization's engagement efforts are connected to the development of employee experience, which starts from recruitment and continues the period an employee works for the company. The employer brand of Helsinki

Ravintolat, quick decision-making and low hierarchy, employees participating in the decision-making processes, and competitive benefits, which are openly stated on the website, generate attraction and a fluent recruitment process.

During employment, practices such as employee surveys and going through the results with the employees and offering them a chance to have an influence on their own work and workplace, are designed to enhance engagement and employee experience. Resources to do one's job are constantly developed, for example, safe environment and equipment and general conditions, such as controlling temperatures at work, developing break practices, and offering healthy snacks. Psychological safety has an important role as well: equity and being able to be yourself, are essential parts of company culture. Zero tolerance to any kind of discrimination exists, and the early support processes are designed for problematic situations.

The previous practices related to engagement are discussed during the interview. There hasn't been a specific engagement action plan previously, besides certain protocols for the problem situations at work and yearly practices included in the unit-level action plan. Those practices include annual- and weekly meetings, training, and yearly performance reviews. There are also managerial training opportunities to develop leadership and HR skills, such as the early support for employees-training in cooperation with the Pension Fund Administration in the coming spring.

The CEO himself believes in coaching leadership and encourages the other managers in the organization to similar management styles. He believes that asking "How you would do this" is more efficient than simply stating the numeral goals. Although the numbers are guiding the actions made, employees have a strong influence on decisions made and ways of working.

As an employer, Helsinki Ravintolat aims to balance work and home life with flexible work arrangements. In addition to different training, Helsinki Ravintolat encourages personal development by offering opportunities to work in different units, or even work rotation, where two employees exchange places between two units. Furthermore, extra resources are given to offer employees more opportunities for knowledge sharing within workdays, such as resourcing more time to menu changes, so employees can try the wine and food pairings and learn.

The goals for engagement are measured via absenteeism, the aim is three per cents, and the employee survey average, the aim is four (out of five). The retention rate is followed,

but currently, it is not used as a measure of engagement, as covid is still influencing retention.

The vision of the organization is that both employee and employer gain value from a mutual relationship. The value that the employer is offering the employee relates to personal development and proceeding with one's career. Meaningful relationships and community culture at work are very important motivations for employees. Development of the community culture is encouraged by eating together at work, and organizing employee refreshment days at the unit level, but also organization-wide once a year. However, Hauta considers there should be a clear line between work and free time. Hauta (8 November 2022).

Transparency in decision-making is executed by printing the monthly goals for the employees, keeping weekly meetings open for all the employees, and sharing information on sales on a weekly basis. Delegating and sharing responsibility, showing trust, being allowed to make mistakes, and learning by doing are encouraged.

Giving feedback at the right place, and at the right time should be implemented in organizational practices and there should be sufficient resources for that. The CEO states, that implementing 'the coffee conversations between managers and employees' are the goal for the next year. Getting performance feedback at the beginning of the employment is crucial, therefore the organization has implemented goal attainment discussions at the end of the introduction period and checklists for the onboarding phase.

Furthermore, The CEO considers actions derived from the workshops realistic and concrete. Many of the ideas have already come to reality, and the rest are put in unit-level action plans. In January there will be a follow-up for the concrete actions. One of the CEO's goals is to include the managers in the HR efforts, such as going through the survey results with employees in the future. Developing performance reviews towards a more relaxed format, rather than having long surveys and uncomfortable environments such as the office, leaving out micro-management, and keeping a low hierarchy by being approachable and having a sense of humor is how the top management of Helsinki Ravintolat, including Hauta himself, is developing employee engagement. (Hauta, 2022).

4   Employee Engagement workshops

The empirical part of this research defines the reason for this project, and a process of creating it, including the goals, criteria to assess the outcome, theories and idea behind workshop methods, and execution plan. Moreover, the results include both concrete actions decided during workshops, and insights of employee perceptions of engagement, practices and organization, which are derived from the written data produced by the participants.

4.1   Project plan

The starting point for this research was the author's personal interest toward engagement and managerial practices. The author works as a duty manager in the commissioning organization, Helsinki Ravintolat. **The commissioner** is a family-owned organization that consists of seven different companies including five restaurants, a hotel and a wine importing business. The employees of five restaurants, Carelia, KuuKuu, Kuu, Tintin Tango and Apotek are the focus group of this research. The restaurants are located in Helsinki, Finland.

The author sat down with the CEO, and discussion about the authors idea to research employee engagement at Helsinki Ravintolat, led to the idea of going through the results of yearly employee survey, conducted by Pension Fund Administration (2022), in a workshop. The CEO asked for designing concrete actions to develop engagement and employee experience, and include employees in this decision-making process. During the research, the author realized the workshops can also be engaging events on their own and offer an opportunity to gather more insight into employee perceptions of engagement, practices, and the organization. Therefore, an action research approach was implemented

The goals of the employee workshop are:

- Derive concrete actions to enhance engagement with people responsible and timeline. This is a goal set by the CEO.

- Create a culture of openness, support, and trust at work to develop engagement.

- Offer an experience of working together towards common goals.

- That employees learn from the facilitator and from each other

- Research employees' perceptions of the organization, organizational practices, and factors that drive engagement

Development points and important topics for the workshop derived from the results of the employee survey by Pension Fund Administration (2022), included constructive feedback and other performance management practices, the lack of emotional, physical, and psychological resources to do one's job, and balance between personal life and work, break practices, including employees in the development of the organization and retaining employees and improving their growth within the organization. Generally, the results were already good, and most of the employees did not struggle with these themes. However, the author believes that all employees deserve to go work feeling enthusiastic, energetic, and happy.

Workshops with focus groups are held in five restaurant units, Carelia, Kuukuu, Kuu, Café Tintin Tango, and Viinibaari Apotek, within one month from the employee engagement survey. The workshop was two-fold. First, the survey results (The Pension Fund Administration, 2022) are shared with the staff members, and then workshops are held in small groups. The participants are restaurant managers, sommeliers, duty managers, service staff, coffee shop employees, and chefs and cooks. Using a facilitator for the workshop makes it possible for the restaurant managers and head chefs to participate in the workshops at the same level as other employees.

The workshops are held during designated work hours, meaning it is compulsory and paid work time for all participants. All employees working more than 60 hours a week were invited. For practical reasons, the workshops are held in the restaurant's own dining hall or cabinet. Some of the units do not have screens, therefore the workshops don't include slideshows, but flip boards and printed exercises are used. Examples of printed materials can be found in the appendices.

The unit-level innovation workshops offer an opportunity to improve the culture of openness and support in different restaurants of Helsinki Ravintolat, encourage discussions and innovation related to engagement and development of engagement practices, and research employee perceptions towards current practices, management, and organizational support. However, the main goal, set by the organization's top management, is to involve the employees of Helsinki Ravintolat in the design process of concrete actions that develop engagement. Advancing the culture of inclusive decision-making and development of employees are also listed in the mission statement of Helsinki Ravintolat (2022.) As Morgan (2017, 24) states about engagement: "Focusing on an action is better than focusing on a feeling because it looks at a tangible impact."

Therefore, **the criteria** to measure the success of the workshops is:

- Are concrete actions to develop engagement with timing and people responsible for those actions gathered?

- Did employees' replies indicate which factors engage employees in Helsinki Ravintolat?

- Was the atmosphere encouraging openness, trust and, support?

- Did the structure, content, and execution support development innovation and discussions of important themes?

The workshop themes and exercises are designed based on the theory of engagement and its relation to development points and important themes derived from the survey results by Pension Fund Administration. Bakker & Demerouti (2017, 274), suggested in their job-demand resource model, that job resources influence engagement. Since the employee survey conducted by Pension Fund Administration (2022) indicated some employees struggle to balance their job demands and resources, don't feel energetic or have resources to handle personal relationships. Job resources and strains became one of the workshop topics and are discussed during two exercises. One of the problem statements in the second exercise is that the employees don't have enough resources to develop themselves.

Kahn's (1990, 703-714) three psychological conditions affecting engagement, the psychological meaningfulness of work that relates to personal skill development, goal attainment, and meaningful relationships at work, the psychological safety that refers to a sense of belonging, openness, and trust, and the psychological availability, that influences by physical, emotional, and psychological resources, are all related to the exercises in the workshop. The aim is to innovate practices that enhance the employee experience from those parts, and the first exercise that considers different phases of employment and employees' changing motivations is expected to encourage the conversation around these themes. In addition, this exercise gathers the employee perceptions of the organization and its practices. Autonomy, skill variety, task significance, feedback, perceived organizational and managerial support, and fairness are considered as antecedents of engagement (Saks, 2006.) The author will use these words and themes when analyzing the data gathered from the workshops, to determine what engages employees of Helsinki Ravintolat.

Including employees in the development of the organization and its practices is discussed in the second exercise. According to Kahn (1990, 706) having an influence on one's work

and feeling of being valuable are positively linked to the psychological meaningfulness of work. Employee survey results by Pension Fund Administration (2022), also indicated that some employees consider the competitors to develop faster than Helsinki Ravintolat. Therefore, the second exercise has a problem statement: Employees want to influence the development of the organization.

The development of break practices is also considered in the second workshop exercise as the survey results indicated that most employees don't have enough recovering breaks during a workday (Pension Fund Administration, 2022, 11.) This might affect energy levels, efficiency, and motivation of employees, and is a common problem in the service industry.

The final exercise is about giving and receiving constructive feedback and recognition, which are considered development points in the analyses of the employee survey. The aim of this exercise is to encourage a culture of openness and support, aspects related to psychological safety (Kahn 1990, 708.)

The role of the facilitator is to design workshop exercises, prepare the materials and set up the workshops. Furthermore, the facilitator introduces the goals of the workshops, themes behind the exercises, divides groups, takes care of the pace and timing of these exercises, encourages conversation and ideation by asking significant questions from the participants, explains if something is not understood, and concludes the ideas and insights from the workshop. Keeping the general atmosphere relaxed and conversation flowing throughout the workshop is the biggest challenge for the author.

The role of the HR manager during workshops is to present survey results within 30 minutes, and tell employees why the survey has been done, what has been done well, and where improvements are needed (breaks, resources to develop, inclusion, feedback). During the workshops, the HR manager's role is to listen and make notes on the excel sheet about the general atmosphere and attitudes, themes that raise a lot of discussions, the facilitation of the workshop, and the specific actions that employees innovated during workshops meanwhile the facilitator (the author) encourages the conversation. Due to the short time (1,5 hours), the conclusion of the concrete actions must be partly done during the workshop. The HR manager also assists, if the participants had a specific question related to organizational processes or goals or whom to contact with a certain issue. HR also helps in the decision-making of who can be the person responsible for certain concrete actions, as she knows the roles and characteristics of employees in different units better than the facilitator.

The implementation of workshops is planned carefully to create a relaxed and open atmosphere and to ensure the flow of ideation in a tight timeframe. The author considers factors such as different groups, amounts of participants, and spaces the workshops are held, which require certain flexibility in the implementation of workshops. A pre-planned structure and timing, clear division in roles of the facilitator and the HR manager, and content of exercises give frames for the workshop and are needed to reach the pre-set goals.

Table 3: The schedule and participant amounts for workshops

10.10.2022	12pm-2pm	UNIT D	12 participants
17.10.2022	12pm-2pm	UNIT B	10 participants
17.10.2022	18pm-20pm	UNIT A	9 participants
24.10.2022	14pm-16pm	UNIT E	14 participants
18.10.2022	11am-13pm	UNIT C	4 participants

The workshop is twofold, after HR has explained the survey results and matters to be developed, the facilitator has one and a half hours to explain the goals and structure of the workshop, go through three different exercises, the employee life cycle, the cause-effect analysis, and roleplay, and then conclude the workshop. The challenges related to a tight time frame are acknowledged by the facilitator.
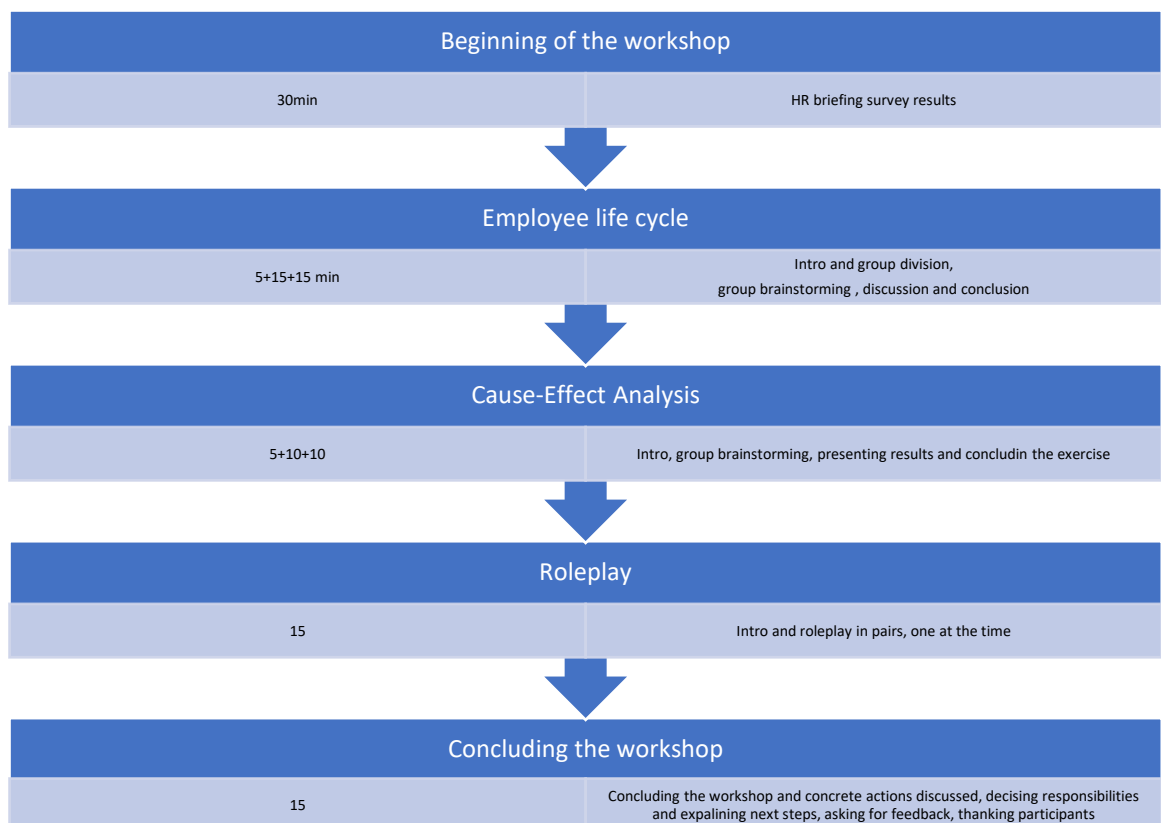

Beginning of the workshop

| 30min | HR briefing survey results |

Employee life cycle

| 5+15+15 min | Intro and group division, group brainstorming , discussion and conclusion |

Cause-Effect Analysis

| 5+10+10 | Intro, group brainstorming, presenting results and concludin the exercise |

Roleplay

| 15 | Intro and roleplay in pairs, one at the time |

Concluding the workshop

| 15 | Concluding the workshop and concrete actions discussed, decising responsibilities and expalining next steps, asking for feedback, thanking participants |

Figure 1. Timing and structure of the workshop

4.2 Workshop methods and exercises

The first exercise is **creating an employee lifecycle,** also used as a practical tool for HR and managers to enhance employee experience in each stage of employment. One of the most recent definitions of the employee lifecycle is by Gladka & al. (2022), who researched the conceptual bases of the employee lifecycle and created a new definition based on it.

> It is a period of time of employee-employer interaction, which begins from the moment of attraction of the required employee on the labour market and lasts until the employment termination; this is the period of time during which the employer develops and implements appropriate personnel marketing measures within cycles of attraction and retention that lead employee through several employment stages, characterized by cyclical changes of their engagement level.
> (Gladka & al. 2022, 48)

Swingler (2017, chap.4) explains that the employee life cycle includes all the points of interactions between an organization and the employees, both formal and informal. The purpose of the exercise is to research these interaction points, and find out, which experiences at work people have found engaging or disengaging. A successful employee experience leads to employee engagement, therefore acknowledging the kind of experiences that make employees engaged in the first place is beneficial to any organization (Morgan 2017, 22.) Accordingly, Cattermole (2019, 258) recommends utilizing the employee lifecycle to enhance engagement and increase retention and names the six key stages of the employee lifecycle as attraction, recruitment, onboarding, development, retention, and separation. These names for the stages of the employee life cycle are used in the first exercise.
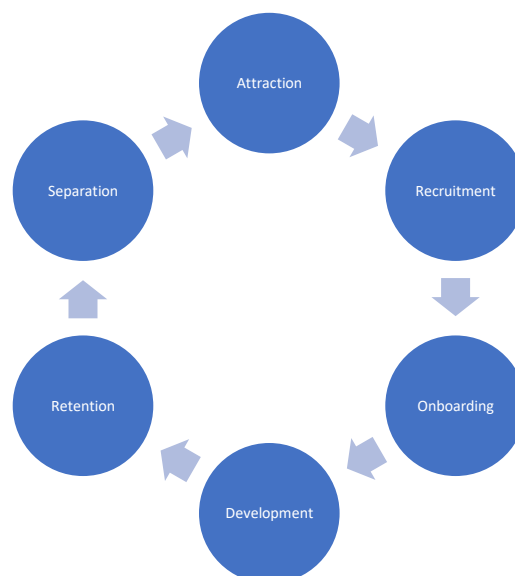

Figure 2. Cattermole's (2019, 258) six stages of the employee lifecycle.

However, the employee lifecycle was first mentioned by scholars, when Smither (2003), named the life cycle stages as an introduction phase, a growth phase, a maturity phase, and a decline phase. According to his study, the employee lifecycle starts from the introduction phase, the time after hiring when a new employee is introduced to a company and establishes a productive role or position within the firm. This is followed by the growth phase when the employee goes through learning processes to become more valuable and productive to the organization. After the growth levels off, maturity is reached. In the maturity phase, the employees have mastered their jobs and are at risk of stagnation. The maturity phase is often followed by decline or rejuvenation, but relatively few reach these later phases, as most employees leave their jobs during the introduction or growth phase. From the managerial point of view, risks and challenges and the needs and characteristics of the employee differ depending on which phase each employee is in the life cycle. Smither (2003, 21).

Recognizing these phases on the managerial level and being able to re-engage the employees through certain employee marketing actions helps to grow and keep the skill within the company. In addition to finding out the drivers of engagement, the employee life cycle exercise encourages the participants to discuss concrete actions and practices that can be done to support their personal development and perceptions of current organizational and managerial support.

The execution of this exercise takes a total of 45 minutes. At the beginning of this exercise, the facilitator presents Cattermole's (2019, 258) six stages of the employee lifecycle and Gladka & al.'s (2022, 48) view of the cyclical changes in engagement level and the relationship between employee and employer during employment. From Smither (2003, 21), the facilitator will explain the risks and challenges, such as the risk of stagnation and poor introduction, from a managerial viewpoint. An introduction will take 5 minutes, and after that, the participants are divided into three groups, Size of the groups is 3 to 5 people and optimally there is a mixture of front-line managers, service staff, and kitchen staff, to present a wide range of views and new ideas. Each group covers two stages of the employee life cycle, and they will have 15 minutes to discuss and write it on post-it notes and then put the post-it notes on the wall (or empty tables in a row) under the correct phase of the employee life cycle. After this, a facilitator will go through what participants have written down, raise more significant questions and remind them of current management practices and development opportunities within the organization, and finally concludes the findings.

List of questions for the employee life cycle exercise:

- 1a. What raised your interest in this organization before you worked here?

- 1b. And which factors in general create a great employer brand?

- 2a. Explain your recruitment experience in a few words.

- 2b. What is a good recruitment experience like?

- 2a. Do you remember what it was like when you started here? What made you stay?

- 2b. How would you describe a good introduction period?

- 3a. How would you like to develop your skills or work environment and culture right now?

- 3b. How should an organization engage employees after the introduction period?

- 4a. Which factors make you stay in this organization?

- 4b. Which factors make people stay in one organization for a long time? How can one develop further when already knowing 'everything' about their work?

- 5a. What kind of reasons made you change your workplace?

- 5b. How can an organization support them with this chance?

The second exercise utilizes **the cause-effect analysis** tool called a fishbone created by Kaoru Ishikawa in the 1960s. The fishbone was originally used as a quality control tool, but nowadays it's a common tool in business and management analysis. This visual tool helps to focus, identify issues, solve root problems and smaller concerns and create discussions between the participants. This is how it works: First, a problem(s) needs to be identified. The base of the analysis is the core problem, which should be written on the left side of the paper, centered vertically. Then a vertical line should be drawn from there to create a space where the chart of contributing elements can be added. Draw a vertical line to each element that associates with your problem. Then continue branching those contributing elements -lines with horizontal lines indicating the causes of those contributing factors. If needed, causes can be subdivided. (Indeed Editorial Team 2022).

List of problem statements for cause-effect analyses

- Employees don't have regular recovering breaks at work

- Employees don't have enough resources to develop themselves.

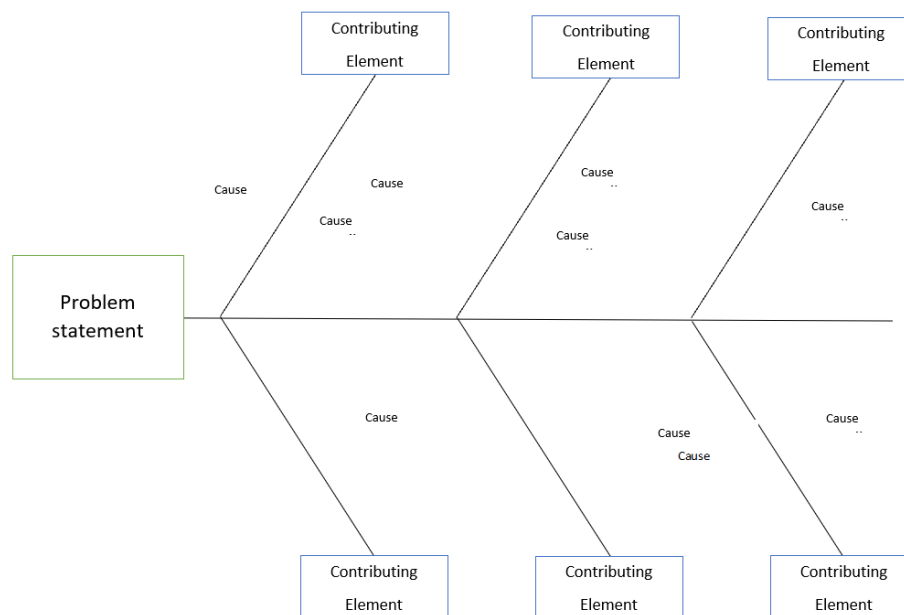- Employees want to be included in the development of the company

Figure 3: Fishbone model adapted from (Indeed, 2022)

The estimated time for the second exercise is 25 minutes. Participants have 15 minutes to find answers to one of the problem statements in small groups, preferably including one manager and a mix of kitchen and service staff members. The facilitator is there to help if any questions or problems arise and ask questions to take the conversation to the next level. After 15 minutes, the facilitator concludes the exercise and encourages a conversation about development ideas between all participants. Concrete ideas are once again written down and concluded at the end of the exercise.

The innovation method brainwriting 6-3-5 was considered instead of the cause-effect analysis, as it's an effective way to produce a lot of replies in a short time and gives room for those who might have a lot of good ideas but are not the first ones to talk. The brainwriting 6-3-5 innovation method refers to six members of the innovation group, who write three solutions to the problem in each five-minute ideation round. There should be five rounds in total. First, the moderator explains the problem statements, and during each round, the participant or the group will write three solutions to this problem statement. During the

next rounds, the notes are passed to other participants who will continue coming up with new ideas or adding to the existing ones. When the time is up, each participant group will read the ideas stated in the paper out loud and the moderator will conclude the ideas. (Meier, 2022). According to Macnaught Digital (2022), the perks of this method are efficiency, non-verbal nature, as everyone can express their ideas, and an easy documentation, as all ideas are on paper.

Since the facilitator wants to encourage the participants to find concrete solutions to the problem statements by asking significant questions to spark the ideas to go further and gain insights from employee perceptions, a discussion-like format fits better to a plan. Moreover, the timeframe is tight, therefore focusing on one problem per group and then discussing them together seemed a more efficient way to gain more ideas.

The last exercise, **roleplay** is an effective way to explore insights and emotional layers and is used for both prototyping and active learning. It can improve both communication and social skills within a group, but as a downside, some participants might easily feel uncomfortable. Making the environment comfortable and safe is necessary when using this method. (Designorate, 2022).

Employees of Helsinki Ravintolat perceived they didn't receive enough feedback about their work (Pension Fund Administration, 2022,11.) Discussion with the HR manager revealed there might be a need for development not only in giving constructive feedback, but also that feedback would be given between all employees, not just from managers to employees, but also another way round and between the kitchen and service employees. Therefore, role-play includes everyday situations at work, and employees giving feedback to each other despite their status at the workplace.

Roleplay is a light exercise at the end to lighten the mood and end the workshop in a positive mood, it works as a conversation opener and team builder and lowers the barriers for giving feedback to managers and encourages them to give feedback in an encouraging and developing manner.

The workshop starts with the facilitator explaining how feedback should be polite, offer constructive ideas, and be given regularly to all employees, also from employees to managers. The facilitator has written everyday feedback situations and designates some of those feedback-giving moments to be presented by employees.

At the end of the workshop, the concrete actions gathered during a workshop are concluded and the people responsible for those actions are chosen. The next steps, introducing ideas to top management and putting them on the action plan or execution, are explained. Finally, the facilitator is thanking everyone for their participation and asking feedback and opinions about the workshop

After the last workshop, the author, the HR manager, and the CEO will discuss the execution and the results and feedback from the workshops and consider further actions to develop engagement. The informal meeting is organized 27th of October, briefly after workshops. It is not recorded due to the request from the CEO.

4.3 Results from Employee Engagement workshops

In all five restaurant units, the workshops resulted in concrete actions to develop engagement (with timelines and people responsible), although the level of participation and results varied between different units as could be expected. Based on the written data from the exercises and notes written during the workshop, the employee perceptions of drivers of engagement, organizational practices, and performance- and reward management were analysed. The HR manager's feedback from the workshop is also included at the end of the workshop results section. The workshops were considered a beneficial way of developing employee experience and engagement practices, and therefore it was made a yearly practice.
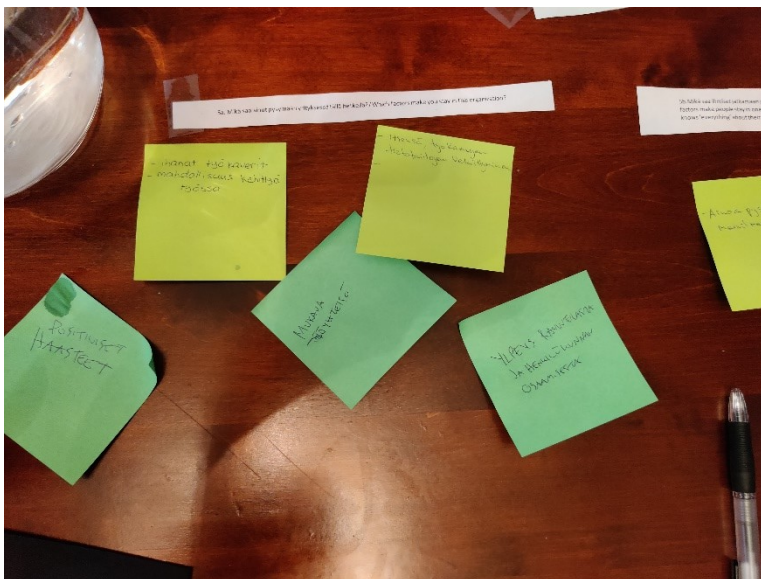

Figure 4: Replies for the employee lifecycle exercise

Concrete unit-level actions derived from the workshops are listed in the table below Respect for the participants, any names of the participants or names of the restaurants are not mentioned there.

Table 5: Concrete unit level actions derived from the workshops

Where	Resources	Skill Development	Practices
Unit A	Modifications to rota-planning: longer shifts in order to get more days off. Tested by the manager during the next list.	Inclusive leadership: Employees are included in menu planning, and benchmarking competition once a month. Participating in company-wide skill workshops. Opportunities for work rotation raised the interest of participants.	Employees plan friendly selling competitions to set motivating goals. Transparency in monthly goals. Printing the introduction guide on the wall to clarify stories behind the workplace
Unit B	Healthy snacks available, rota-planning: more two days off in a row, and long-term planning a common lunch break for staff. Work environment: Enhancing the washing up/bar area in the future	Participating in company-wide skill workshops, such as seafood workshops and lectures on combining food and wine (New workshops innovated by employees)	One additional staff meeting at the beginning of the year. Enhancing communication, Calling in when sick.
Unit C	Team day was requested, as they hadn't had any so far with this team. Work environment: Fixing the problem with the kitchen ventilation	Participating in company-wide skill workshops. More recognition for work well done was requested	Having a lunch break during work hours as a normal practice.
Unit D	A break room for the staff: a fridge and a microwave included. Focus on the rotation of days off on weekends.	Developing skills during work hours, more resources for menu changes. Organizing skill workshops: barista course, handling different ingredients, and combining food and wine.	One additional staff meeting at the beginning of the year
Unit E	The organization sponsors employees who decided to participate in a marathon. Including other units in the challenge The more educational and recreational programs combined.	Developing skills by participating in company-wide workshops and visiting events related to the field. Cocktail workshops and planning playlists for restaurants were mentioned as individual interests	Inclusive leadership in planning the food and drink was considered to work well. Introducing this practice to other units

In unit A, the employee lifecycle exercise indicated that the employees have positive perceptions of the employer. They mentioned a fluent recruitment process, a warm and safe introduction period, appreciation for the team, and a supportive environment. The employees gain energy from positive interactions with customers and colleagues. Skill development opportunities, such as participating in the wine lectures and working in different units, and having new challenges were mentioned as development ideas.

The cause-effect analysis of job resources resulted in concrete actions related to the development of personal resources including modifications to rota-planning. The manager implemented this already in the next shift list. Planning longer shifts to get more days off in a row. In this exercise, they also wished for more positive feedback, constructive criticism, goal attainment, and rewards for their achievements, which indicates that both performance and reward management practices can be developed further. Team spirit, support, trust, and an open atmosphere were mentioned to support personal resources.
The cause-effect analysis about breaks indicated that the employees have good physical resources for having a break, but 'old-fashioned' thinking that you shouldn't keep breaks, the group pressure if others are not having breaks, and the realities of the busy customer service job sometimes come in the way. Manager's encouragement for taking a break was mentioned to affect positively. According to the cause-effect analysis and notes from the employee life cycle, the meaningfulness of work should be enhanced by inclusive leadership, participation in decision-making, skill development workshops, and opportunities for work rotation.

Concrete actions, such as including employees in menu planning and benchmarking competitors once a month, were derived from the cause-effect analysis. Moreover, the same exercise practices such as transparency in information sharing were developed by printing the monthly goals and introduction guide on the wall and discussing the goals more openly. Employees were included in goal attainment, and they decided to plan friendly selling competitions. The first selling competition started a week after the workshop.

In **unit B** The employee lifecycle raised a lot of conversation for the positive perceptions of the organization. The post-it notes indicated that employees appreciated the family-owned company with long traditions and a good reputation. Many had ended up working through the recommendation. The recruitment process was experienced fluent, although one reply indicated it was messy. Low hierarchy, committed colleagues, and opportunities to develop oneself were mentioned in the notes, as well as the importance of salary and benefits. Employees were interested in developing their personal skills by participating in company-wine skill workshops, trying different ingredients, and opportunities to work ithe n different units were mentioned in the post-it notes.

The employees in unit B innovated with the cause-effect analysis to improve resources and energy levels by focusing on rota-planning and organizing more 'two days off' in a row. Healthy snacks for breaks were also requested. To improve a community culture at work, employees innovated having a common lunch break for staff, although making this possible required some long-term planning according to the managers. Understanding of the daily situations and support from the work community was experienced positively. To improve physical resources at work, employees requested to improve the washing-up area in the bar.

To develop practices, the employees added one additional staff meeting at the beginning of the year and committed to enhancing communication, especially when handling large orders and calling in when sick. Also, communication between the sales department and the restaurant was discussed. To develop participative culture and organizational practices, opportunities and resources, time resources are mentioned in the handout. The development processes were told to happen in the middle of the workdays.

Unit C wanted to improve a community culture by having a team day, as they haven't had one before. Physical resources needed fixing in the kitchen, where they experienced problems with the kitchen ventilation. The need for recognition of the work well done was discussed and employees also ended up giving recognition to each other right away. One of the employees expressed that he comes to eat on his own time, therefore the practice of having a lunch break during a workday as a norm was discussed. This small group produced very little written data, as the innovation process required some encouragement and asking significant questions from the participants. However, the notes written indicated they had a high respect for the owners, and a tight-knit team and they were proud of their work and premises they work at, both service staff and kitchen were included in the design of the menu.

Unit D the cause effect analysis derived to multiple results. The employees decided to improve personal resources by focusing on rota planning, especially the rotation of having days off on Saturdays. Physical resources were improved by adding a break room downstairs and ordering a staff fridge and a microwave. The breakroom was organized in the office during the following week after the workshop. Communality was increased by adding a goal that kitchen staff would also sit down with the rest of the staff during lunch break. The kitchen staff started to have lunch with service staff, usually one or two members at a time. In the handouts, it was mentioned that the development of one's work skills could be paid work time. Moreover, achievable goals, challenges, training opportunities,

and proceeding with one's career were considered motivating. Making a difference between work and free time was mentioned to enhance personal resources.

The employee life cycle resulted in development ideas of personal skill development, as the employees designed organization-wide workshops, such as a barista course, handling different ingredients in kitchen skill workshops, and lectures on combining food and wine. These were planned to happen during the spring of 2023, as the pre-Christmas season is too busy. To enhance practices, one additional staff meeting at the beginning of the year was added to the action plan. Word of mouth and recommendations from colleagues were mentioned as reasons why the employees ended up working for this organization. Meaningful relationships at work and positive challenges were mentioned. According to the post-it notes, communication, break practices, and one's own leadership skills could be developed. Roleplay exercise didn't produce any written material, but especially in this unit it worked as a feel good exercise, which enhanced the openness and ended a work shop in a positive and humorous way.

Unit E employee life cycle exercise demonstrated positive perceptions about the organization and its practices. According to the post-its, employees were happy about the work community and proud of what they do. Skill development and recreational activities combined were requested, although the participants couldn't, at this moment, think of specific ideas for this. One of the employees described the introduction period in the notes "warm and welcoming."

In the cause-effect analysis exercise, the employees gave exceptionally good feedback about rota-planning, and acknowledging employees wishes related to it. The employees wished to increase personal resources by adding more sporting goals in life and asking the organization to sponsor them for a half-marathon. More educational and recreational team events were requested again during this exercise. The employees were excited to participate in organization-wide skill workshops such as wine lectures and seafood skill workshops in the spring, after this opportunity was mentioned for them. Furthermore, individual employees mentioned their interest in developing playlists in Helsinki restaurants and organizing a cocktail workshop. Inclusive leadership efforts, such as planning the menu and drink list together worked well in this unit. These practices working exceptionally well, could be followed in other units alike. In this unit, employees had good physical resources to have breaks, and didn't experience need for any change related to practices. The only thing affecting negatively to breaks according to them, was a busy nature of work, especially in the kitchen and secondly, own initiative to take a break.

After the workshop, some of the employees have already participated in wine lectures in a different unit, and one of them requested the author to do some shifts there to use and develop her wine knowledge.

The workshop replies from all units demonstrated employees' satisfaction with the organization, management, and work culture, and the pride in what they do, which all **indicated high levels of engagement.** However, these results are not reliable measures of engagement levels as people might express only positive opinions in front of their colleagues. On the other hand, these results were in line with the employee survey (Pension Fund Administration, 2022), which indicated very good levels of engagement based on the author's analysis.

The relational content analyses of the research material from the workshops indicated that employees in all units considered aspects of the psychological meaningfulness of work, such as development opportunities, challenges, proceeding in one's career, and meaningful relationships at work, very important and were generally proud of the work they are doing, which indicates they consider their own work effort valuable. Feeling of being valued is also connected to the meaningfulness of work. Participation in decision-making and opportunities to develop their work culture and community were mentioned to positively affect their engagement. Recognition, concrete goals, and rewards were also mentioned as motivational factors by some participants

Matters associated with psychological safety, such as supporting colleagues, low hierarchy, openness, and trust were also mentioned. The employees perceived positively the employer brand and had a positive employer brand image of family-owned restaurants with long traditions. Generally, people were happy with the company benefits and considered they have a positive influence on their well-being and motivation.

Most things described as disengaging were associated with psychological availability, including stressors related to work, personal well-being and energy levels, and poor balance between work and home life, which in some cases could be improved with rota planning. Individual comments were mentioned about a lack of gratitude for work well done and the attainment of short- and long-term goals, which both relate to psychological meaningfulness. In one of the restaurant units, inclusive leadership and participating in decision-making was considered a development point, although in most units this aspect of leadership worked very well.

Figure 5: Innovation workshop

4.4 Feedback from workshops

A feedback from the workshops is translated from the feedback the HR manager of Helsinki Ravintolat gave to the author. Names of the units are anonymous in this thesis to protect the participants' anonymity.

In unit A, the manager was first quite reserved, which was reflected in the atmosphere of the group. After a little while, people relaxed and participated very actively. The timing was exactly as it should be. The atmosphere was affected by the manager who was reluctant. Right after getting past resistance, the employees were very inspired to find out concrete actions to develop their work experience, especially inclusive ideation, and decision-making. The HR manager considers the employees were excited to participate and believes that the biggest changes will be seen in this unit.

In unit B, there was first little nervousness in the air, but after a while, the participants relaxed. One of the managers was very active and it made everyone else eager to participate. The timing almost went long, the last exercise felt a little rushed. The atmosphere was open, and people were able to discuss things. There were concrete results, but some of them were moved for further discussions, such as staff meetings by the manager. People discussed eagerly what attracted them to work for the organization and the employer brand in general, which was likely as the team in this unit was partly quite new.

In unit C, the workshop was well received. Some encouragement was needed, a small number of participants might have resulted in this. The timing was good. This wasn't the most talkative group, but some concrete results were gathered. The most important result

from this workshop was that the group experienced doing something together and ended up giving recognition to each other.

In unit D, the workshop was received very well, the participants were excited and did the exercises without any hesitation. People were ready to question and develop things without prejudice. The timing was late. The atmosphere was open and people brought up their opinions and developed ideas without fear of negative reaction from the manager. Clearly, the most relaxed and open environment out of all five workshops. Exceptionally many realistic concrete actions, due to active participation and ideation.

In Unit E, the workshop was received well and open-mindedly, although the participants were excited about the staff party after, which might have influenced their ability to focus on the workshop. The timing was about to be late, and the ending was rushed. The atmosphere was open, but the participants should have been challenged a little more as there weren't that many concrete actions. The participants insisted everything is well and fine, and although the results from the employee survey were excellent, there is always something to improve.

Generally, the workshops were worth doing, and an inclusive workshop is a great way to go through the survey results. The workshops will be facilitated again next year, although it will need two facilitators, as the other one should focus on making notes. Preferably, the facilitators shouldn't be managers of the same unit the workshop is held. Some managers were at first a little skeptical about the new concept, but eventually, recognition was received from every unit, both managers and employees. The three exercises might have been too much for one and a half hours, as the roleplay exercise was often done too quickly due to the time pressure. The main results from the workshops were utilizing already existing skills and knowledge organization-wide: all employees are welcome in workshops organized in other units. Work rotation will offer new perspectives, knowledge, skills, and flexibility, and make staff parties and educational events possible for other units. (Nyman, 7 November 2022)

5   Discussions

Academical value of this study can be criticist, since action research as a strategy, fights against the very nature of academic research, as the realities that are researched are changed simultaneously. (Jyrkämä s.a.) Furthermore, the researcher was not fully objective, as she works for the commissioning organization. However, the practical value of this product-oriented thesis is good. A new way of including employees in the decision-making and development of the organization was demonstrated for the managers and employees of Helsinki Ravintolat. The official follow-up of concrete actions and the next pulse survey are yet to come, but some concrete actions are already implemented. The end-product of this thesis, the workshops, were praised by the employees and top management of Helsinki Ravintolat.

The author acknowledged the research ethics and respected the privacy of the participants and referred to different units anonymously, although the results are public. The participants were told at the beginning of the workshop that the workshops are part of the thesis and the results gathered in the final report. Furthermore, the author asked permission to publish this research and discussed the content of it with the Pension Fund Administration and the CEO, and the HR manager of Helsinki Ravintolat. The author respected the work of others when referring to sources and marked the references and direct quotations carefully and according to her best knowledge. Finally, the contradiction between the author's role as a researcher and the employee of the commissioning company is recognized and expressed openly. (Smith, 2003).

Assessing the workshops against determined criteria indicated that the workshops were successful, as concrete actions to develop engagement with timing and people responsible were derived from the workshops. Actions are now in unit-level action plans and follow-up is coming in January. Units A and D produced exceptionally many concrete results, whereas B and C produced a sufficient number of concrete results. However, in unit E, there were very few concrete actions considering the number of participants. In this unit, the participants were excited about the staff party after, and the facilitator failed to challenge them enough to produce more concrete results.

Research material from the workshops included words and themes, that were analyzed in relation to engagement theories, and the factors that drive engagement were determined from all units, although the written data from unit C was quite small, partly due to a small number of participants and more discussive nature of this workshop to encourage ideation.

The atmosphere of the workshops is analyzed based on feedback from the HR manager who assisted the author in all workshops. The author did not realize to gather written feedback from the participants. Generally, the atmosphere was open and encouraged innovation and discussions during the workshop. In units A, B, and C the first moments were a little reserved, but in a moment, everyone relaxed and discussed openly. The participants did not fear expressing their opinions. However, in unit E, the atmosphere was so relaxed, it affected the productivity of the participants negatively.

The content of the workshop was good, but the timeframe for three exercises in one-and-a-half hours was too tight, and therefore the conclusion of the workshop was often done in the hurry or not done at all. The roleplay exercise was considered fun, but there was very little research value from this exercise and the author's opinion is it could have been left out and replaced with the proper conclusion and ending of the workshop. Inclusive workshops were considered a good way of including employees in the decision making and recognition from the employees and managers was received.

5.1   Conclusion

This product-oriented thesis focused on finding out which factors drive engagement and how engagement should be developed in Helsinki Ravintolat. The goals for the end product the workshops also included the aspect of driving a positive change in engagement by including the employees of Helsinki Ravintolat in the design process of concrete actions to develop engagement, creating a culture of openness and support to develop engagement, offering an experience of working together towards common goals, sharing knowledge of engagement, while gathering insights of factors that drive engagement, and employee perceptions of current practices and organization.

The workshops demonstrated that the employees of Helsinki Ravintolat have good ideas to develop their work and engagement. The research data from the workshops also indicated there are some variations between the restaurant units and practices, such as inclusive decision-making, goal-attainment, rota-planning, and break practices. Multiple concrete actions to develop engagement were gathered from the workshops, such as organization-wide skill workshops, improvements to rota-planning, inclusion in decision-making, physical resources and break practices. Many of those ideas have already been implemented, and the rest are written in the unit-level action plans.

In the spring of 2023, there will be a follow-up for the workshops, a new employee survey and then the developed version of the workshops is planned to be organized the next autumn. In this thesis, the workshop was also considered a method of action research, where the subject of the research is studied while driving a change of the same subject (Jyrkämä, s.a.) However, this action research isn't fully completed yet but continues as described above. The author wishes that others can learn from both, the successes and failures of this research. Results to investigative questions (IQs) are concluded below.

IQ1: Which different dimensions of employee engagement make employees of Helsinki Ravintolat engaged or disengaged? The author analyzed the results comparing them to Kahn's (1990) theory of personal engagement and the three psychological conditions engaging or disengaging the employee: psychological availability, safety and meaningfulness. Factors that make work feel meaningful, such as opportunities to influence one's work, challenges, personal skill development, and meaningful relationships at work, had a strong positive influence on employees' engagement according to the research data. Support from colleagues was mentioned in every workshop, multiple times, and therefore it is also considered to have a strong positive influence on psychological safety, and therefore engagement at Helsinki Ravintolat. Employee perceptions of the organization were positive. The currently most disengaging factors at work were related to psychological availability: lack of energy and motivation due to multiple different factors from sleep problems to different life situations. Goal attainment, feedback, and recognition were also considered development points in most units.

IQ 2: What are the current levels of employee engagement at Helsinki Ravintolat? Analyses of the results from the employee survey indicated that levels of engagement are good, and the workshops results supported this theory. Employees of Helsinki Ravintolat perceived the organization, work culture and community positively and felt proud of their work. However, this situation changes from day to day, and therefore engagement and employees' needs and wishes should be a focus point when developing new HR practices.

IQ 3: How are employee engagement and actions to develop engagement perceived in Helsinki Ravintolat? The organization offers employees new achievable challenges, opportunities for skill development, and proceeding in one's career. Furthermore, Helsinki Ravintolat is transparent about salaries, rewards, and benefits. Low hierarchy and a culture of participative decision-making make influencing one's work and work conditions possible. The communality and well-being of employees are also financially supported by

the organization. (Hauta, 8 November 2022). During the workshops, employees were eager to innovate engagement ideas and participate in decision-making (Nyman 7 November 2022.)

IQ 4: How is employee engagement currently incorporated into the business strategy and practices of Helsinki-Ravintolat? There wasn't any specific plan to develop engagement, although efforts to develop the skill within the organization and including employees in the decision-making are part of the company strategy. Furthermore, the mission statement says that bringing out the potential of the employees is the basis of leadership, and both employees and the organization should get value from the employment. (Helsinki Ravintolat, 2022). Some actions related to measuring and developing engagement already existed before starting the thesis process. Employee surveys, a shorter pulse survey in the spring, and a longer survey in the autumn were used to measure factors that relate to development and outcomes of engagement. Performance reviews in the spring, staff training throughout the year, flexible work arrangements, and certain written procedures for problem situations and guidelines for the introduction period existed before. (Hauta 8 November 2022).

5.2   Suggestions for future research

This research and the workshops were designed to develop employee engagement in Helsinki Ravintolat, and had more practical, rather than academic goals. Although a workshop can be an efficient way to innovate solutions to specific problems and act as an engaging event on its own, it is not the most accurate tool to measure the levels of engagement. For the ones considering similar ways to innovate development ideas for engagement, the author suggests diving into the theory around the concept to understand what kind of conditions are needed for engagement to develop. Researching engagement practices and antecedents of engagement is beneficial when developing engagement.

Development of employee engagement should focus on the perceptions of employees, and therefore finding out the concrete actions that make their work experience better or more meaningful is useful. Concrete actions should be scheduled, and specific people should have the responsibility of making the plans into reality and following up on the results and outcomes. Based on these observations, the action plan should be further developed. The employee surveys are a sufficient way of measuring a current engagement level, but on their own, they have very little impact on engagement.

5.3   Reflection on learning

The thesis project has been very educative yet challenging at the same time. Getting a grasp of such a complex concept as employee engagement and finding a way to improve it in a way that benefits a specific company and its employees, is a process that needed a lot of consideration, communication- and time management skills, and patience. There are many things that could've been done better, such as communicating more with the thesis counselor to get advice on how to determine the scope of the study and different research methods more clearly or gather the data, especially the participant feedback from the workshops, more efficiently. The timing and the ending of the workshop should have been considered more carefully, as one and a half hours of the workshop turned out to be a very short time. This can be considered a good lesson for the next time.

Facilitating a workshop and creating exercises to create discussions and encourage the innovation process felt like a natural way of doing things, due to the author's specialization in Imagineering and Innovation and previous experiences of facilitating and participating in innovation workshops. The fact that the workshops were organized for the first time in the company's history and received such good feedback that they are organized again next autumn, proves there is a place for participative development methods that involve employees in innovation processes and decision-making.

The experience the author gained during this project is extremely valuable and advances one's career in the direction she's hoping to develop it. The CEO of the company has already asked if the author could participate in the development of the HR processes in the coming spring. Presenting one's interest in developing engagement and organizational practices in front of colleagues from different units, has already resulted in many contacts to the author, whether there is an opportunity to come and try working in our restaurant unit or participate in the wine or food lecture. Noticing the results of innovation workshops in action has made this project feel meaningful.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1. Workshop materials

EMPLOYEE LIFE CYCLE (30 min, 5+15+10)

Employee lifecycle viittaa nimensä mukaisesti työntekijän matkaan yrityksen mukana, se on ns. talent management-työkalu, jolla pyritään ohjaamaan esimiestyötä ja sitouttamaan osaavia työntekijöitä eri työuran vaiheissa.
Työntekijän elämänkaari alkaa siitä hetkestä, kun työntekijä kiinnostuu yrityksestä, tähän viitataan englanninkielisellä termillä attraction. Kiinnostus yritykseen voi esimerkiksi juontaa juurensa kaverin puheista, instagram-mainoksesta tai omakohtaisesta käynnistä yrityksessä.

Seuraava vaihe on rekry (recruitment), mikä on aika itseselitteinen termi, mutta työntekijäkokemukseen vaikuttaa monta erilaista tekijää ja vaihetta rekryssä. Rekrytointia seuraa tutustumisvaihe, johon englanniksi usein viitataan sanalla onboarding tai introduction period, jonka aikana työntekijä tutustuu yrityksen työntekijöihin, toimintatapoihin ja perehdytetään tehtäviinsä. Hyvä huomioida, että ihmiset, joita ei perehdytetä kunnolla menettävät usein motivaationsa tai jopa irtisanoutuvat tässä vaiheessa.

Sitä seuraa development, työntekijän eteenpäin kehittymisen vaihe, joka pitää työntekijän mielenkiinnon yllä ja sitouttaa työntekijää yritykseen. Eteenpäin kehittäminen on motivoiva ja sitouttava tekijä, ja työntekijä on yleensä tehokas työssään tässä vaiheessa.

Kun työntekijä on niin sanotusti pro omassa työssään ja tuntee työtehtävänsä läpikotaisin, viitataan retention-vaiheeseen, eli irtisanoutumisen vastakohtaan, työssä pysymiseen, jolloin pyritään erilaisin keinoin, palkan ja urakehityksin, eduin ja innostavin uusin haastein pitämään ihminen yrityksessä. Jos kehitys pysähtyy, voi ihmisen motivaatio ja suoritusteho laskea.

Viimeinen vaihe, eroaminen, englanniksi separation, viittaa luonnollisesti siihen hetkeen, kun työntekijä eroaa firmasta. Tähän on monia eri syitä, mutta näistä syistä on hyvä päästä perille, esimerkiksi lopetuskeskustelun avulla. On hyvä pitää

mielessä, että se mitä firmasta puhutaan, vaikuttaa vahvasti työntekijäbrändiin. Eroaminen yrityksestä on siis myös henkilöstöjohtamisen näkökulmasta merkittävä hetki.

Tutustutaan tähän työkaluun pienen harjoituksen muodossa. Jaan teidät kolmeen ryhmään, ja jokainen ryhmä vastaa kahden työntekijän elämänvaiheen kysymyksiin seuraavan 15 minuutin aikana. Jaan ne teille suomeksi ja englanniksi. Kysymyksiä on yhteensä 4 per ryhmä, ja osa niistä ovat henkilökohtaisia näkemyksiä yrityksestämme, ja osa yleisen tason kysymyksiä. Kenenkään ei ole pako kirjoittaa henkilökohtaista näkemystä, jos ei halua. Vastaukset kirjoitetaan post-it lapuille, ja laitetaan oikean kysymyksen alle tuohon pöydälle. Lopuksi käydään vastaukset yhdessä läpi

Briefly in English: The next exercise is about a talent management tool called Employee Life Cycle. The idea is to create a better understanding of the six stages of the Employee Life cycle Cattermole (2019), attraction, recruitment, onboarding, development, retention and separation. Participants are divided in three groups, each group covers two stages of employee life cycle, and they will have 15 minutes to discuss and write it on post-it notes and then put the post it notes on the table under the right phase. After this, a moderator will go through what participants have written down and conclude the findings.

ATTRACTION

1a. Mikä sai sinut kiinnostumaan tästä yrityksestä ennen kuin hait töihin tänne?/ What raised your interest in this organization before you worked here?

1b. Mitkä tekijät yleisesti luovat hyvän työnantaja brändin?/ What creates a great employer brand?/

RECRUITMENT

2a. Kerro rekrytointi kokemuksestasi parilla sanalla?/ Explain your recruitment experience in a few words

2b. Millainen on hyvä rekrykokemus?/ What is a good recruitment experience like? (Consider communication, application, and interview processes, is a recruiter free from bias?)

ONBOARDING

3a. Mitkä asiat saivat sinut uutena työntekijänä jäämään yritykseen (esim. perehdytys, omat tavoitteet, työkaverit, työpaikan ilmapiiri?/ Still remember what it was like when you started here… (introduction period, training, getting to know people, setting the goals) What made you stay?

3b. Mitä asioita mielestäsi onnistuneella koeajalla kuuluisi tapahtua/käydä läpi?/ How would you describe a successful onboarding period?

DEVELOPMENT

4a. Miten haluaisit kehittää omia taitojasi, työympäristöä tai -kulttuuria juuri nyt?/ How would you like to develop your skills or work environment and culture right now?

4b. Miten organisaation tulisi sitouttaa ja kehittää työntekijöitä koeajan jälkeen?/ How should organization engage employees after onboarding period?

RETENTION

5a. Mikä saa sinut pysymään yrityksessä tällä hetkellä?/ Which factors make you stay in this organization?

5b.Mikä saa ihmiset jatkamaan yrityksessä pidempään? Miten voi kehittyä kun osaa jo 'kaiken'?/ Which factors make people stay in one organization for a long time? How can one develop further when already knows 'everything' about their work?

SEPARATION
6a. Millaiset tekijät ovat saaneet joskus sinut vaihtamaan työpaikkaa?/ What kind of reasons made you change your workplace?
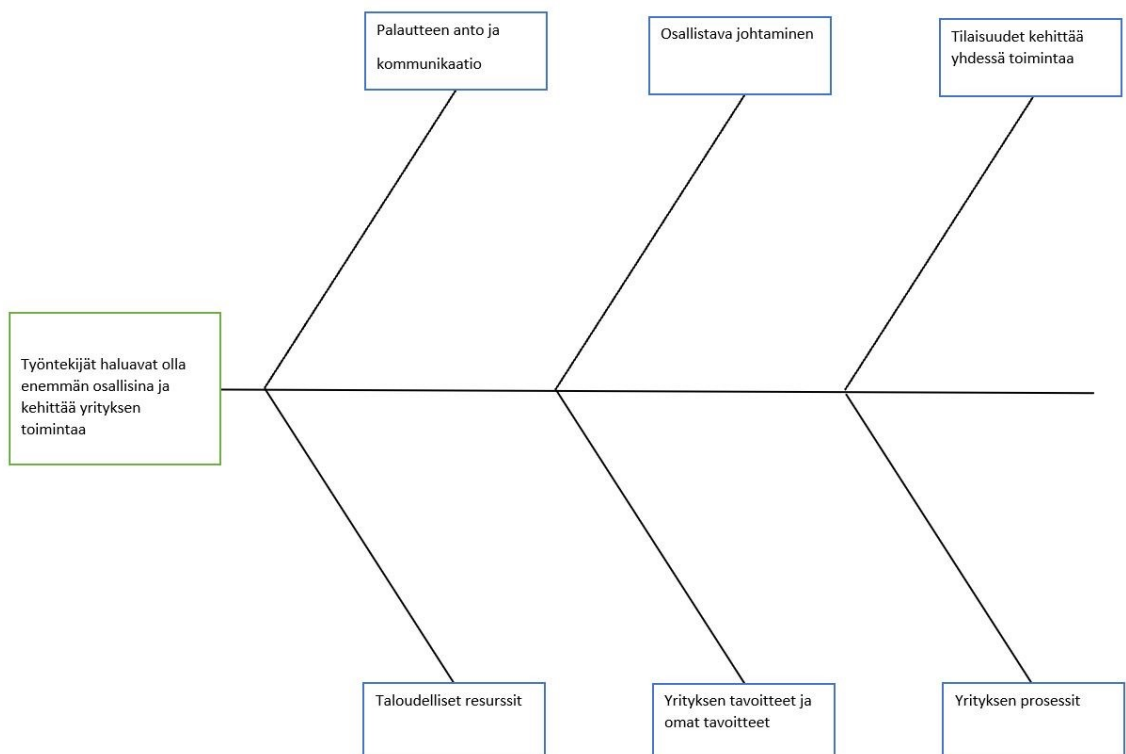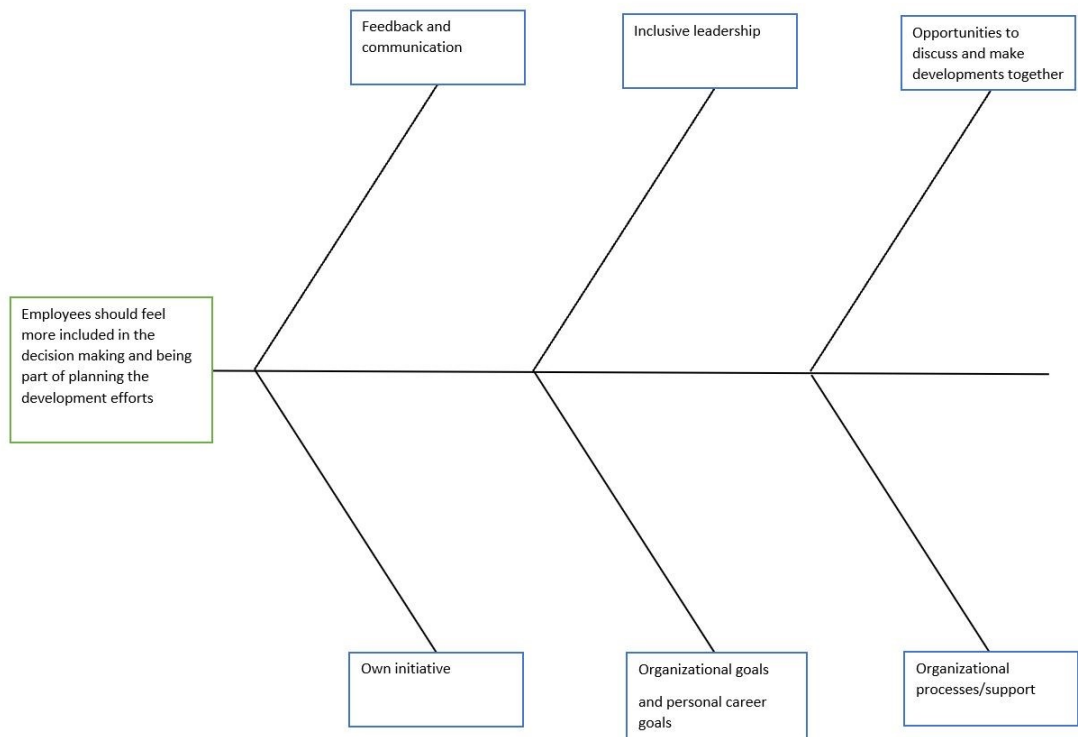
6b. Millaisista syistä ihmiset vaihtavat työpaikkaa tai lopettavat työt? Miten työnantaja voi tukea heitä muutoksessa?/ What kind of reasons people have to change their workplaces or leave their jobs. How can an organization support them with this change?
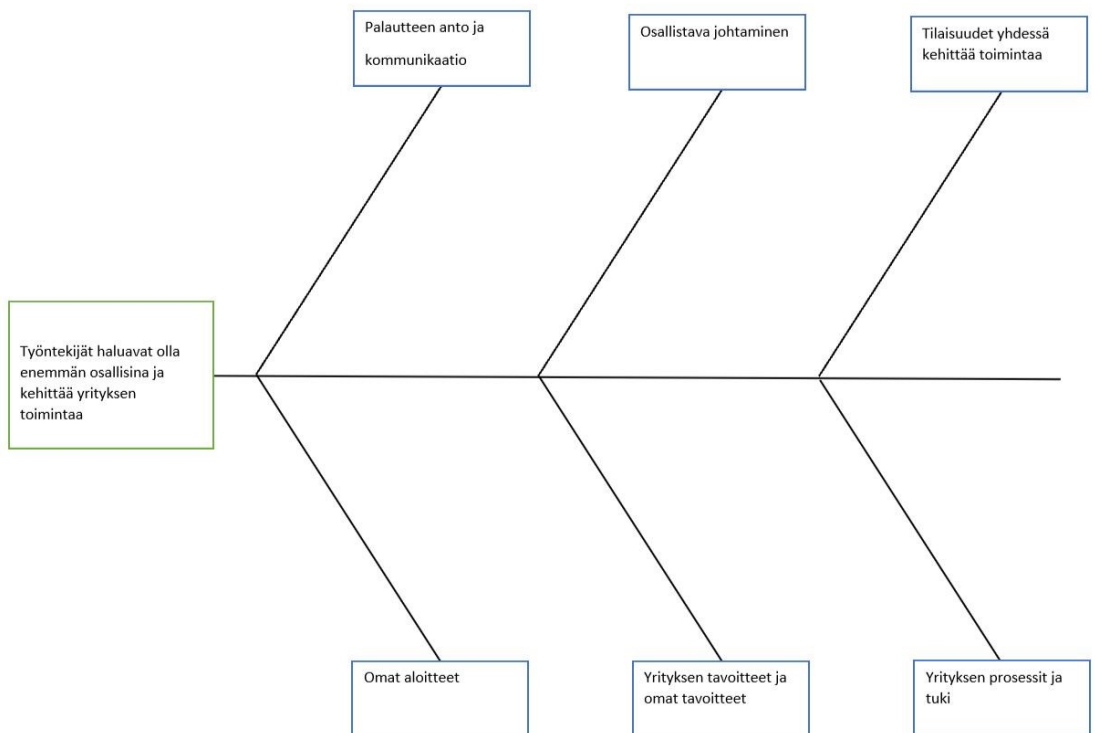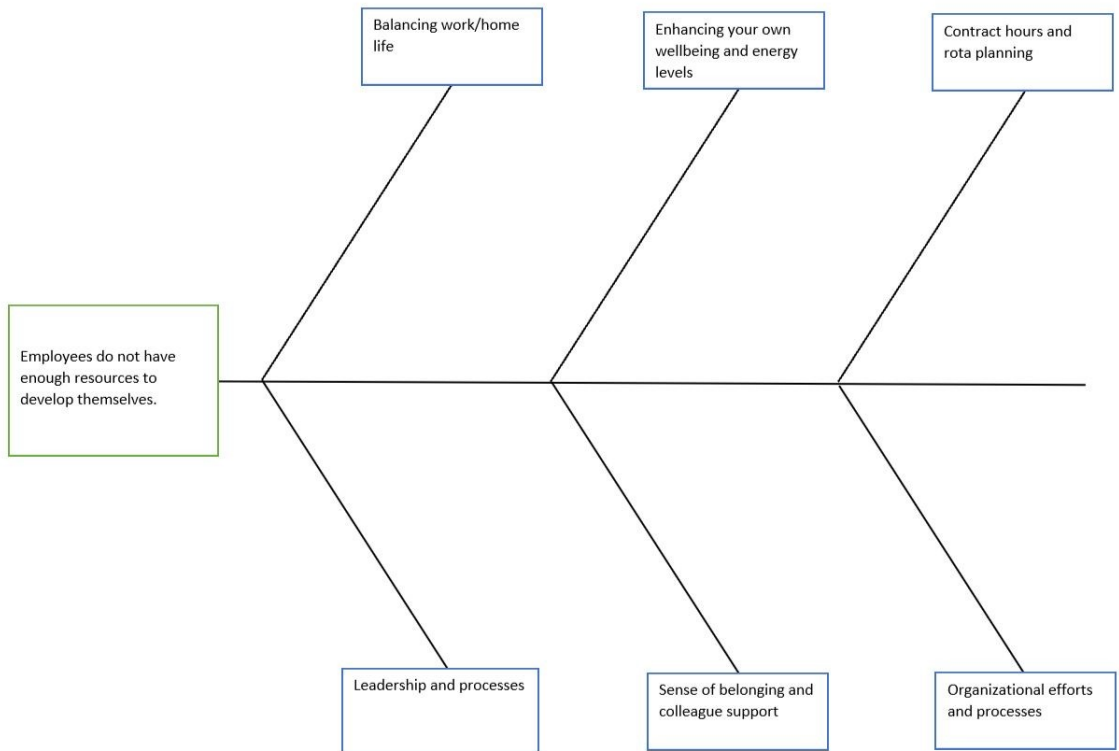
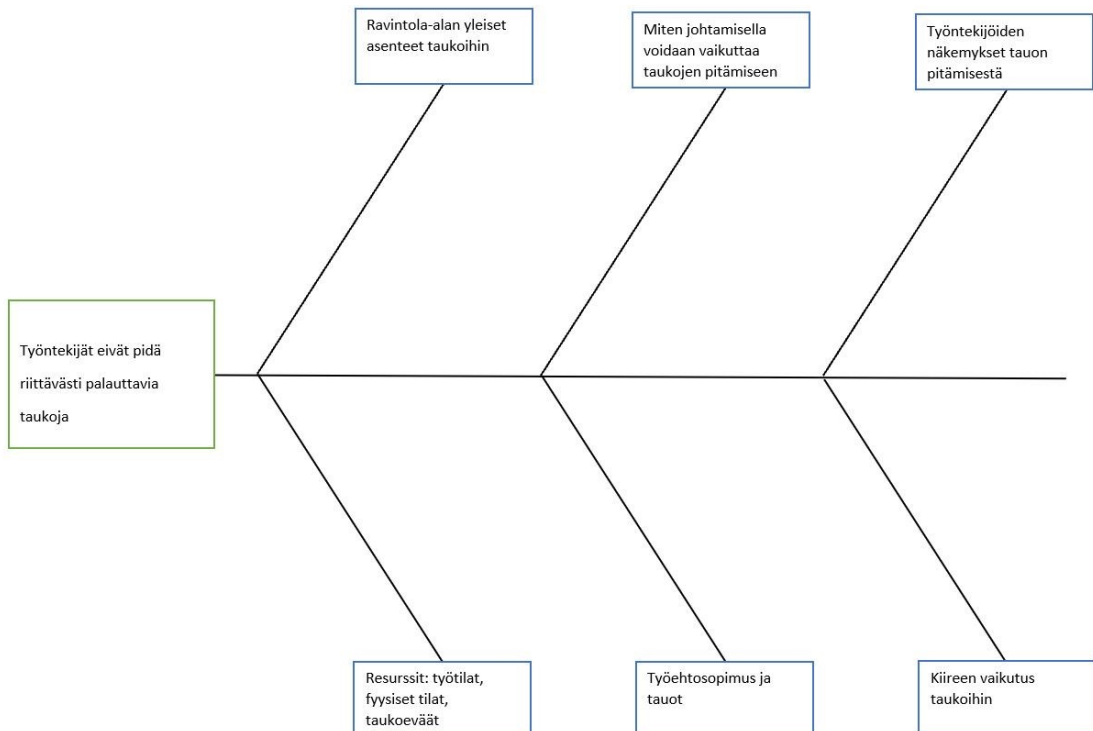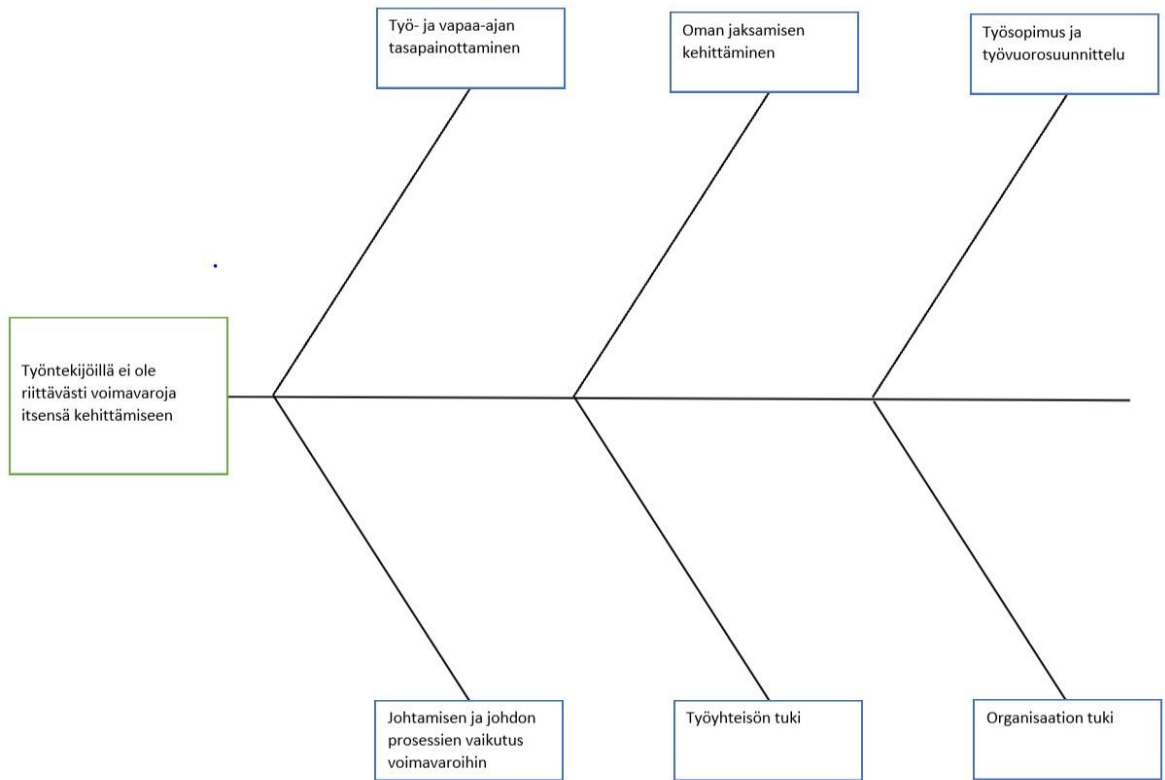CAUSE-EFFECT ANALYSIS/ FISHBONE EXERCISE (30 min 5+15+10)

Seuraava harjoitetta varten tarvitsette kynän ja jakamani paperit. Jaan teidät taas kolmeen ryhmään, ja aikaa keksiä vastauksia on n. 15 minuuttia, ja sen jälkeen käydään harjoituk-set yhdessä läpi. Työkalu, jota käytetään on nimeltään FISHBONE tai syy-seuraus ana-lyysi, alunperin kehitetty laaduntarkkailutyökaluksi 1960-luvulla.

Fishbonessa ensin määritellään ongelma, joka lukee paperin vasemmassa aidassa kes-kellä. Tämän päivän ongelmat on johdettu työyhteisövire-kyselyn vastauksiin perustuen. Olen myös kirjoittanut valmiiksi syitä tai kategorioita, jotka vaikuttavat näihin ongelmiin po-sitiivisesti tai negatiivisesti. Voitte myös lisätä omia alakategorioita tai kirjoittaa jo valmii-den otsikoiden alle millaiset tekijät vaikuttavat näihin ongelmiin. Neuvoa saa kysyä jos ei ymmärrä jotain. Olen tulostanut varoiksi myös englanninkieliset monisteet.

Briefly in English: Kaoru Ishikawa created the cause-effect analysis tool called a fishbone in 1960s and used it originally as a quality control tool. Nowadays it's a common tool in business and management analysis. This visual tool helps to focus, identify issues, solve root problems and smaller concerns and create discussions between the participants. This is how it works: First, a problem(s) need to be identified, which has been done via em-ployee survey. The base of your analysis is the core problem, which should be written on the left side of paper, centered vertically. Then a vertical line should be drawn from there to create a space where the chart of contributing elements can be added. Draw a vertical line to each element that associates with your problem. Then continue branching those contributing elements -lines with horizontal lines indicating the causes of those contrib-uting factors. If needed, causes can be subdivided (Indeed 2022)

Feedback and communication

Inclusive leadership

Opportunities to discuss and make developments together

Employees should feel more included in the decision making and being part of planning the development efforts

Own initiative

Organizational goals and personal career goals

Organizational processes/support

Palautteen anto ja kommunikaatio

Osallistava johtaminen

Tilaisuudet kehittää yhdessä toimintaa

Työntekijät haluavat olla enemmän osallisina ja kehittää yrityksen toimintaa

Taloudelliset resurssit

Yrityksen tavoitteet ja omat tavoitteet

Yrityksen prosessit

Balancing work/home life

Enhancing your own wellbeing and energy levels

Contract hours and rota planning

Employees do not have enough resources to develop themselves.

Leadership and processes

Sense of belonging and colleague support

Organizational efforts and processes

Palautteen anto ja kommunikaatio

Osallistava johtaminen

Tilaisuudet yhdessä kehittää toimintaa

Työntekijät haluavat olla enemmän osallisina ja kehittää yrityksen toimintaa

Omat aloitteet

Yrityksen tavoitteet ja omat tavoitteet

Yrityksen prosessit ja tuki

Työ- ja vapaa-ajan tasapainottaminen

Oman jaksamisen kehittäminen

Työsopimus ja työvuorosuunnittelu

Työntekijöillä ei ole riittävästi voimavaroja itsensä kehittämiseen

Johtamisen ja johdon prosessien vaikutus voimavaroihin

Työyhteisön tuki

Organisaation tuki

Ravintola-alan yleiset asenteet taukoihin

Miten johtamisella voidaan vaikuttaa taukojen pitämiseen

Työntekijöiden näkemykset tauon pitämisestä

Työntekijät eivät pidä riittävästi palauttavia taukoja

Resurssit: työtilat, fyysiset tilat, taukoeväät

Työehtosopimus ja tauot

Kiireen vaikutus taukoihin

FEEDBACK-ROLEPLAY (15min)

Seuraava harjoite vaatii teiltä heittätymistä, eli esitetään erilaisia palautteen anto-tilanteita. Lue saamasi lappu ääneen ja esitä parin kanssa. Esitetään tilanne kerrallaan ja muut seuraavat vierestä. Muistakaa että palautteen on tärkeää olla ystävällistä, kehittävää ja liikkua kaikkien työntekijöiden välillä. Palautteen anto ei ole yksinomaan esimiehen tehtävä.

Esittäkää tilanne pareittain: a) Olet uusi työntekijä. Koet, että tarvitset nopeasti apua ison tilauksen hoitamiseen tai tarvitset kollegoidesi apua annosten nostamiseen isolle seurueelle, mutta kaikilla tuntuu olevan kauhea kiire. Miten toimit tässä tilanteessa? b)Sinulla on itselläsi kova kiire, mutta uusi työntekijä tulee pyytämään apua. Miten vastaat hänelle?

Annoksen ulkonäössä on mielestäsi parantamista, ja annat siitä palautteen kollegallesi kehittävällä tavalla. Voit itse keksiä mikä annoksen ulkonäössä mättää.

Näet, että työkaverisi on ollut tänään tehokas/tehnyt hyvää myyntiä/auttanut muita. Miten annat hänelle kehittävän positiivisen palautteen?

Esittäkää tilanne pareittain: a) Koet, että et ole saanut riittävää perehdytystä juomatuotteesta/tilausten tekemisestä/uusien pääruokien valmistuksesta. Miten kerrot tästä esimiehellesi? b) Miten esimiehenä vastaat työntekijälle.

Olet esimies ja huomaat, että työntekijä on jatkuvasti uupunut ja epämotivoituneen oloinen. Miten puutut tilanteeseen.

Olet ollut jo pitkään yrityksessä ja olet leipiintynyt työhösi. Haluaisit kehittyä tai edetä eteenpäin urallasi. Työpaikan vaihtaminenkin on käynyt mielessä. Miten käyt läpi tilanteen työnantajan kanssa.

Työkaverisi saapuu vartin myöhässä töihin, koska bussi oli myöhässä. Miten käyt asian hänen kanssaan läpi kehittävästi? Esittäkää tilanne pareittain.

Tulet avaamaan ravintolaa ja edelliseltä illalta on jäänyt sotkua. Pöydät ovat pyyhkimättä ja siellä täällä lojuu kahvikuppeja. Miten annat asiasta palautteen kollegoillesi.

Esittäkää parin kanssa tilanne, jossa käytte läpi palautteen keittiön ja salin välillä. Asiakas antaa palautteen, että kala on raakaa/salaatissa on hius/pihvi on sitkeä.

Esittäkää pareittain: a) Kollegasi vain seisoskelee kahvi kädessä, vaikka tiskipiste pursuaa likaisia astioita ja muutakin tekemistä riittäisi. b) Miten sanot asiasta hänelle? Olet juuri ehtinyt ottaa pienen juomatauon kiireen keskellä, kun kollegasi komentaa sinua takaisin töihin. Miten vastaat hänelle?

Esittäkää tilanne pareittain: a) Tuntuu, ettei vapaatoivettasi ole taaskaan huomioitu. Eikä ollut ensimmäinen kerta! Miten kerrot tästä esimiehelle? b) Työtekijäsi on pyytänyt vapaata tärkeän menon vuoksi, mutta et ole löytänyt mistään korvaavaa työntekijää ja ravintola on täyteen varattu. Miten vastaat hänelle, kun hän kysyy, miksei ole saanut päivää vapaaksi?

Esitä parin kanssa. a) Menetät hermosi: "Etkö ole vieläkään oppinut, taas meni x asia väärin?" b) Kollegasi sanoo sinulle tai työkaverillesi kiireen keskellä jotain, mikä särähtää pahasti korvaasi. Miten annat kehittävän palautteen asiasta.

Huomaat, että työkaverisi vie annoksia pöytään esittelemättä niitä asiakkaalle. Miten annat hänelle kehittävän palautteen asiasta.

Näet, että työkaverisi tekee hommat puolitiehen ja jättää sotkua jälkeensä. Miten annat kehittävän palautteen.

Appendix 2. Interview questions

IQ3 How are employee engagement and actions to develop engagement perceived in Helsinki-Ravintolat? (Organizational/ top management's perspective) is divided into sub-questions.

  − What kind of concrete goals the organization has for enhancing employee engagement and why?

  − What kind of employee engagement practices do you see as most beneficial for the employees and the organization?

  − The leadership and different management styles can be used to develop engagement. What kind of leadership and management styles you would encourage Helsinki Ravintolat? Examples of implementing certain management styles can also be mentioned.

  − In all units, personal skill development was considered an important driver of engagement. How can the organization support personal skill development?

  − In your opinion, how do the concrete actions decided during workshops benefit the employees and the organization, and are they realistic? Is organizing this type of workshop beneficial in the future?

IQ4 "How is employee engagement currently incorporated into the business strategy of Helsinki Ravintolat?" divided into sub-questions:

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      − On the company website, (Helsinki-Ravintolat, 2022), the mission statement says the organization offers value for its employees. Could you kindly enlarge what it means in practice?

      − Did the organization already have an existing action plan or practices to develop employee engagement and if so, what kind of actions and practices does it include?

      − In the strategy statement, it is mentioned that responsibility and power of decision-making are transparently shared within our organization. (Helsinki Ravintolat, 2022.) Could you kindly enlarge what it means, and how it affects employee engagement?

      − How do the organization and its managers currently support the employees who struggle to balance the demands of the job and psychological and physical resources?

      − The supporting work community was considered an important resource for the employees. How is community culture supported by the organization?

‒ What kind of organizational practices or performance management processes could support the development of the employee within the organization