Czech University of Life Sciences in Prague

Faculty of Economics and Management

Department of Management



Bachelor Thesis

Motivation of Employees

Comparison of Employees' Perceptions of Motivational Techniques in Two Companies

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--ASSIGNMENT OF THE PAPER HERE—

Declaration I declare that I am the only author of the bachelor thesis on a topic of "Motivation of Employees – Comparison of Employees' Perceptions of Motivational Techniques in Two Companies", and that all the figures used are of own production and in the list of resources I have stated all of the resources used.

Date:

In Prague

Signature of the author:

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Motivation of Employees - Comparison of Employees' Perceptions of Motivational Techniques in Two Companies.

Summary:

Presented bachelor thesis deals with problems of employees' motivation. The objective of the thesis is mainly to determine and compare the weaknesses in the motivational techniques in relation to employees of two companies – one from the Czech Republic and one from Germany.

Theoretical part covers explanation and description of motivation and basic terms related to motivation of employees, theories of motivation and basic motivators and incentives. Description of the two chosen companies and the realization and evaluation of the research is included in the practical part.

Concluding the thesis the reader is acquainted with the results of the research and recommendation of amendments of motivational techniques for each company.

Key Words:

Motivation, management, workforce productivity, human resource management, employee compensation, reward, incentives, cafeteria system, theory of motivation. Motivace zaměstnanců – Porovnání percepce motivačních technik zaměstnanců ve dvou společnostech.

Souhrn:

Předložená bakalářská práce se zabývá problémem motivace zaměstnanců. Cílem této práce je především určit a porovnat nedostatky v motivačních technikách s ohledem na zaměstnance dvou podniků – jedním z České republiky a jedním z Německa.

Teoretická část zahrnuje vysvětlení a popis motivace a základních termínů týkajících se motivace zaměstnanců, motivační teorie a základní motivátory a incentiva. Popis dvou vybraných společností, realizace a zhodnocení průzkumu je zahrnuto v praktické části.

V závěru práce je čtenář seznámen s výsledky průzkumu a jsou předloženy návrhy na změny motivačních technik pro každou ze společností.

Klíčová slova:

Motivace, management, pracovní produktivita, řízení lidských zdrojů, motivační program zaměstnanců, odměna, incentiva, systém kafetérie, motivační teorie.

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Thesis Objective

The aim is to compare how satisfied with motivation schemes are employees in two companies – Czech and German company. Identification of any shortcomings which will be the basic background for proposition of improvements of existing incentive system in each organization will be done.

Particularly for motivation and job satisfaction are closely linked together the research is focused mainly on overall employee satisfaction, including satisfaction with working conditions and relationships at the workplace, compensation systems and benefits as well as personal development.

The research will also indicate if there is a significant difference between approaches of the two companies and what tools is each company using to motivate their employees.

Research Methodology

A combination of qualitative and quantitative method was chosen to conduct the research for purposes of this bachelor thesis. To achieve the objectives, structured questionnaire and semi-structured interviews are used.

A questionnaire was used to collect empirical data from the employees. The advantage of questionnaires is that such research can be done without the researcher being present, which was convenient in the case of the research in the German organization.

Replies and results from completed questionnaires enable to compare what are the main differences in approach to motivation of employees, the motivation instruments used and employees' satisfaction with current motivational program.

The results also help to answer questions how satisfied are employees with their career development or with the education and trainings offered, and if for example communication and information awareness of employees need to be improved, what they think about the work environment and the culture of the organization they work in, and so on.

Interviews are one of the most common ways to collect data qualitatively. Semi-structured interview allows adding supplementary questions to the fixed ones so it creates possibility for both the interviewer and the interviewee to refine questions and answers. The interview was done to clarify certain patterns in the results of the questionnaire.

Theoretical Foundation

1. Theories of Motivation

1. 1 Development of Motivational Theories

Over the centuries a number of approaches had been applied to motivate employees. The progress in this area was caused not only by management activities (management objectives, style, etc.), but also by employees (development of their abilities, attitudes, activities, initiatives at work).

There are many various theories on motivation and each motivational theory has a slightly different focus and thus in some cases concepts of one theory might be contrary to other theory concepts.

"Principles of various motivation theories explain how compensation practices can provide motivation". 1

Individual can achieve their goals in many different ways, therefore individuals are variously motivated. One goal can also satisfy many needs. People have different needs and can change them often. The motivation is therefore different in different situations. That is why various theories that respond to different types of motivation have been developed.

Complexity of motivation, fact that there is no ready-made solution or single answer to what motivates people to work well, is the reason why these theories are important to managers. Theories of motivation provide a framework of how to motivate staff to work willingly and effectively.²

¹ STEWART L. G., BROWN G. K., Human Resource Management

² MULLINS L. J., Management and Organisational Behaviour

The common approach to study motivation is through understanding internal cognitive processes – what people feel and how they think. These theories are divided into two contrasting approaches: content theories and process theories.

Content theories are trying to explain things that actually motivate people at work. It is identifying needs and goals employees pursue. The main question is: what motivates?

Major content theories include: Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Alderfer's modified need hierarchy model, and Herzberg's two-factor theory.

Process theories are concerned with how behavior is initiated, directed and sustained. The main question here is the actual process of motivation.

Major process theories include: Expectancy theory by Vroom, Equity theory by Adams and Goal theory by Locke.

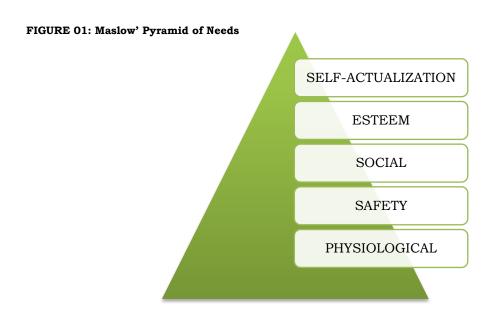
1. 2 Theory of Needs Satisfaction

According to this theory we can say that people always respond in accordance with satisfying their internal needs. Needs of each person are individual and developing and changing over time depending on various circumstances. If the motivational approaches are to be successful, the manager has to know:

- How the needs are generally influencing the behavior of workers
- How to estimate their inclinations, interests, needs, etc.

1. 2. 1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow's need theory of motivation became the basis for many other theories, opinions and recommendations for managerial behavior. Maslow describes men as psychological organism that is trying to satisfy its basic needs. These needs are not at the same level as the scheme below shows.



The needs are structured hierarchically and individuals can advance up only as each lower level need is satisfied. With satisfying certain level of needs, this level becomes less important and next, higher level increases on importance. I.e. needs higher in the pyramid can only be satisfied when the needs below are satisfied.

According to Maslow, people first try to satisfy their own basic needs or, where appropriate, needs of their family. On a picture referred to as **physiological needs**. These are needs necessary for survival including the need for water, food, air, appropriate climate conditions. In the work environment basic needs can for example refer to the wage, working conditions and so on.

If the needs classified as a physiological are satisfied, men are able to satisfy the needs of the second hierarchical level – the needs of existential **security and safety**. For the field of employment it might be the job security, insurance, health condition, work positions, prospect of promotion, money, etc.

On the third level of the pyramid are **social needs**. Men basically need to have other people around with whom they can talk, communicate and share their worries, concerns, fears and desires. From the perspective of a manager we can interpret it as the social conditions of cooperation and communication for ensuring social or other position. For example associations, friendships, informal working groups, etc.

After the social needs level comes the **esteem needs** satisfaction. Fourth level includes personal satisfaction and joy from work, the recognition of the role, usefulness, quality and personal merit of the employee, confidence in their own knowledge.

Self-actualization is the highest level of Maslow's pyramid. It is the highest level of engagement to the work process. It is the case where the work becomes a hobby.

1. 2. 2 Alderfer's Modified Need Hierarchy Model

This model modifies the hierarchy of needs as presented by Maslow in five levels into three-leveled hierarchy. These three levels are based on:

Existence needs – needs necessary for survival and physiological and safety needs of material nature.

Relatedness needs – social environment, relationships (love, belonging) and also safety and esteem.

Growth needs – self-actualization and self-esteem.

Alderfer, like Maslow, suggests that people advance through the hierarchy only if the lower level of needs is satisfied - existence needs first, through relatedness needs to growth needs. Unlike Maslow Alderfer also suggest that more than one need can be activated at the same time, the process can be downward and that it is not always necessary to satisfy lower level needs, but one need from one level can be substituted by another need from a different level.

1. 2. 3 Herzberg's Two-Factor Model

Frederick Herzberg, American professor of psychology, did researches in late fifties that, to some extent, modify Maslow's theory of needs.

There are two different factors affecting motivation and satisfaction at work. One set of factors comprises those which, if absent, cause dissatisfaction. These are 'hygiene' or 'maintenance' factors. However, to motivate workers to give of their best, proper attention must be given to a different set of factors, the 'motivator' or 'growth' factors.³

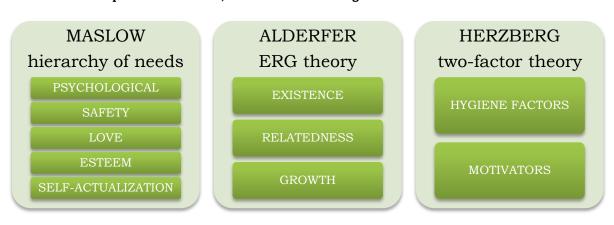
If motivation is the reflection of needs and **motivators** are means of their satisfaction concerned with job content, therefore motivators are influences satisfying human needs. Content of the work as well as own performance, conditions to work, results of work and achieved rewards are acting as motivators.

Hygiene factors are concerned basically with job environment. With adequate fulfilling of these factors it rarely motivates to higher performance, but when these factors are absent dissatisfaction leads to

³ MULLINS L. J., Management and Organisational Behaviour

decreasing performance. Hygiene factors might include company management, administrative procedures, and also work conditions and workplace equipment. Managers' concern in this case is to maintain hygiene factors on balanced level and to use motivators to improve performance.

FIGURE 02: Comparison of Maslow's, Alderfer's and Herzberg's Need



1. 3 Expectancy Theory

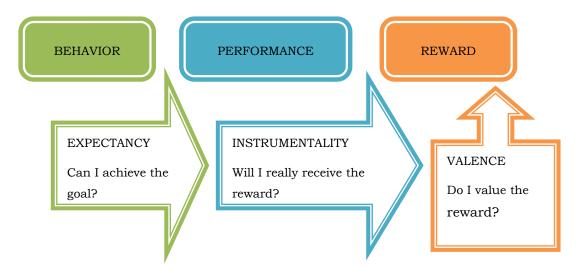
Theory developed by Vroom (1964) has its basis in the ancient principle of hedonism which assumes that behavior is directed towards pleasure and away from pain. Hence when there are possible choices people would choose the one leading to maximizing pleasure or on the other hand minimizing pain.

"Expectancy theory has become a significant basis for explaining what motivates people to work. It is probably the leading theory of motivation" ⁴ and it has a standing validity when designing effective incentive program by describing the factors that affects motivation.

⁴ ARMSTRONG M., Essential Human Resource Management Practice

According to professors Greg L. Stewart and Kenneth G. Brown this is a psychological theory suggesting that people are motivated by a combination of three beliefs: Valence, instrumentality, and expectancy.

FIGURE 03: The Framework of the Three Beliefs of Expectancy theory



Valence is the belief that the reward received is valuable. Only people who value the reward will be motivated to earn it. This concept points out that not everyone is motivated by the same thing.

Instrumentality is the belief that if requisite behavior or outcome is produced the reward will certainly be given. If the employees do not believe that they will receive the reward, they will not be motivated by it.

Expectancy is the belief of the ability to actually earn the reward. Employees are motivated if they believe that they are capable of desirable performance. Estimation of their skills, abilities, and other obstacles in the environment, for example lack of materials and equipment, are basic principles of the expectancy belief.

Expectancy theory says that to a successful motivation of employees all three beliefs must be present.

1. 4 Equity Theory

Equity theory was the early form of justice theory which is based in psychology and holds that judgments about the fairness of outcomes related to efforts are the key principal.

Equity theory compared employees' inputs and outcomes to the inputs and outcomes of other employees. Employees would feel inequity if they think that they work harder than another employee who is paid the same salary. That might lead to decreasing the input of those employees feeling inequity.

Equity theory is an example of what is known as **distributive justice**. Distributive justice is concerned with the fairness of outcomes or in other words employees' belief that the amount of salary or rewards they receive is fair.

Concerned with a fairness of procedures used to allocate outcomes is **procedural justice** focusing on the process of deciding who gets which reward.

"Compensation strategies tend to be seen as more fair when they are free of favoritism, encourage employee participation in decision about how rewards will be allocated, and allow for appeal from people who think they are mistreated".⁵

Seeing the organization's behavior as fair leads to greater satisfaction and commitment and thus to a better performance.

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⁵ STEWART L. G., BROWN G. K., Human Resource Management

1. 5 Goal-Setting Theory

This theory is based in cognitive psychology and says that behavior is motivated by conscious choices. Many studies highlight that people setting specific goals tend to perform better.

"Setting goals can improve performance through four specific motivational processes:

- 1. Goal focuses attention away from other activities toward the desired behavior.
- 2. Goal gets people energized and excited about accomplishing something worthwhile.
- 3. People work on tasks longer when they have specific goals.
- 4. Goals encourage the discovery and use of knowledge.

In sum, having a goal can improve performance by focusing attention, increasing intensity and persistence, and encouraging learning".⁶

This theory is effective only if the goals are achievable. If the goal is clearly beyond reach it may harm the performance with a sense of frustration instead of motivating. According to a psychologist Albert Bandura (1925) goal setting theory emphasizes the importance of self-evaluation and self-efficacy (a belief in one's ability to accomplish goals). Therefore goals should be combined with training practices to make sure that employees will develop skills needed to achieve certain goals.

According to 'Human Resource Management - Linking Strategy to Practice' book, goal setting can be combined with compensation in a number of ways:

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⁶ STEWART L. G., BROWN G. K., Human Resource Management

- Offering a reward only for those completing a difficult goal. This
 method is encouraging the employees to better performance. The
 negative side of this method is that employees that will miss the goal
 will become frustrated.
- Offering a reward to those who achieve progressively higher
 performance and goals. Initial reward is received when achieving
 easy goal. Employees that will stretch further and will achieve more
 difficult goals will receive larger reward. The down side to this
 method is that some employees could be satisfied only with the
 initial reward and will not try harder to achieve larger ones.
- A third method is to set a difficult goal and a reward for achieving it
 is decided after the performance is done. This allows to take into an
 account different effects affecting the performance (environmental
 conditions, how hard the employee appeared to work and how close
 to the goal he/she got)

1. 6 Reinforcement Theory

This theory comes from the field of psychology and says that behavior is caused by **antecedents** (environmental cues) and **consequents**.

Consequents can be positive (rewards) and negative (punishments).

"Antecedents are factors in the environment that cue someone to engage in a specific behavior. Consequents are results associated with specific behavior. These two are linked together because the antecedent causes people to think about the consequent".

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⁷ STEWART L. G., BROWN G. K., Human Resource Management

Contingency is an important principle of reinforcement theory that tells us that a consequent motivates only when contingent – that means depending on the occurrence of behavior.

Using reward such as money to encourage high performance motivates only when it is contingent on specific behaviors and outcomes.

The main idea of reinforcement theory is that people will engage in the behavior for which they are rewarded and contingency suggests that a reward should be given only if the desired behavior occurs. Otherwise the reward will not motivate. Reinforcement theory also suggests that compensation should be based on performance so that better performers receive higher pay (so called pay-for-performance).

"Employees whose pay is contingent generally perform better than employees whose pay is not contingent. Linking pay to performance can be particularly beneficial when it is part of an overall program of performance assessment, goal setting and feedback".8

"It has been suggested that behavioral theories based on the principle of reinforcement or the law of effect are limited because the explanation of the present choices of individuals is to be found in an examination of the consequences of their past choices".

Insufficient attention is in the case of this theory given to the expectations that might influence people, and no attention is given to in advance distinguishing the class of outcomes that would strengthen or weaken their responses.

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⁸ STEWART L. G., BROWN G. K., Human Resource Management

⁹ ARMSTRONG M., Essential Human Resource Management Practice

1. 7 Agency Theory

"An agent in this case is someone who acts on behalf of principal. Thus a company's employees are agents of the owners of the company, who are the principals. An interesting feature of the agent-principal relationship is that the interests of agents are not necessarily the same as the interests of principals. Agency theory suggests that we can gain insight into motivation by thinking about these differences". 10

One area where the interests of agents and principals differ involves risk.

"A general principle of agency theory is that wage rates should be higher when employees bear risk. For this reason incentive plans that pay for the performance are only effective when they give employees the opportunity to earn more than they could earn with fixed wages, such as hourly pay". 11

For example employee bearing some of the risk of sales being high or low and getting wage according to the sales. Principals – the owners would benefit from the risk. For the employees bearing the risk of the possibility that the wage might not be as high as average wage without bearing the risk, might be undesirable unless there is at least potential of a bigger reward.

"A second general principle is that pay should be structured so that managers and employees receive higher rewards when they do the things that increase value for owners and shareholders".¹²

That means that the owners often cannot oversee the actions of the employees, so the rewards must be structured according to the desirability of the actions to the owners.

¹⁰ STEWART L. G., BROWN G. K., Human Resource Management

¹¹ STEWART L. G., BROWN G. K., Human Resource Management

¹² STEWART L. G., BROWN G. K., Human Resource Management

1. 8 Manager's Attitudes Towards People

Motivation theories X and Y published by Douglas McGregor (1960) and motivation theory Z published by William Ouchi in 1981 do not explain causes or mechanisms of human motivation, but they explain managers' behavior. These theories basically say that managers have X, Y and Z beliefs about people. These different beliefs lead to various behaviors of managers toward the employees, naturally with different consequences - X, Y and Z.

1. 8. 1 McGregor's X and Y Theories

According to McGregor the style of management adopted is a function of the manager's attitudes towards people and assumption about human and their behavior. These two suppositions, Theory X and Theory Y, are based on polar assumptions about people and work.¹³

Theory X assumes that average people are lazy and avoid responsibility and need to be controlled, directed and threatened with punishment to achieve objectives of an organization. People lack of ambition and motivation occurs only at the psychological and security levels.

"The central principle of Theory X is direction and control through a centralized system of organization and the exercise of authority". 14

The integration of individual and organizational goals is the principles of the **Theory Y**. It assumes that for an average people it is natural to work,

¹³ MCGREGOR, D., The Human Side of Enterprise

¹⁴ MULLINS L. J., Management and Organisational Behaviour

they can be self-directed and self-controlled and the commitment to objectives of an organization is a function of rewards associated with their achievement. Average workers can learn to accept responsibility and motivation occurs at the esteem and self-actualization levels as well as at the psychological and security levels.

"It is the task of management to create the conditions in which individuals may satisfy their motivational needs, and in which they achieve their own goals through meeting the goals of the organization". 15

1. 8. 2 Theory Z

"The problem of productivity will not be solved with monetary policy nor through more investment and development. It will only be remedied when we learn how to manage people in such way that they can work together more effectively. Theory Z offers several such ways". 16

Characteristics of the Theory Z described by Ouchi are as follows:

- Emphasis on a long-term employment with relatively slow process of evaluation and promotion and moderately specialized career paths;
- Collective responsibility and decision-making with implicit informal control mechanism supported by explicit formal measures;
- Broad concern for the welfare of co-workers and subordinates should be a natural part of working relations as well as informality among employees.

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¹⁵ MULLINS L. J., Management and Organisational Behaviour

¹⁶ OUCHI W. G., Theory Z

1. 9 Conclusion on Theories of Motivation

Overall, most of the theories might not always provide universal explanations.

"In fact people are far more varied and complex then these theories suggest. To state that there are strong similarities between people leads to the conclusion that there is 'one best way' to motivate and reward them, which is simply not true". 17

Individual differences, current circumstances, impact of social forces and changing environment will not always fit into definition of one or another theory.

To prevent mistakes towards employees in the motivation sphere, it is appreciated to be familiar with most of these theories for implementing an effective incentive program. These theories will help to understand the behavior of certain people at certain times. For example the differences between what motivates younger people who are starting their career and mid-career employees looking for promotion or employees with limited possibility of promotion.

"The manager, therefore, must judge the relevance of these different theories, how best to draw upon them, and how they might effectively be applied in particular work situations". 18

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¹⁷ ARMSTRONG M., Essential Human Resource Management Practice

¹⁸ MULLINS L. J., Management and Organisational Behaviour

2. Motivation Instruments

Tools that managers use to motivate employees have different forms and might have different efficiency and urgency, but basically are divided into direct and indirect motivational methods.

2. 1 Direct Instruments

Direct instruments are used by managers by giving direct orders and expecting their subordinates to obey. These instruments have a specific form of organizational documents for recurring situations. Directives, guidelines and instructions are standing orders that will help managers to desist from repetitive decision making and determining detailed methods of procedure. It also ensures unified approach to similar tasks and it is an important part of the know-how of the company.

In contemporary businesses direct instruments such as rules, regulations, prohibitions, directives, and so on are indispensable. It defines the basic regulations for standard functioning of the organization, it induces discipline, but also in emergency situations direct orders are the only possible form of motivation.

2. 2 Indirect Instruments

These are used for defining a space for independent behavior when particular approaches, and to some extent achieved results, are left to each employee's will. These management measures usually have a long-term validity and the subordinates are expected to be more initiative and enterprising in their work.

Indirect instruments include:

- **Economic instruments** salary, rewards, bonuses, sanctions, shares and profit-shares, subsidies and also benefits in kind (company vehicle, mobile phone, etc.)
- **Non-economic instruments** praise, public recognition, work environment, team relationships, humanization of the work, etc.

2. 3 Undesirable Motivation

Motivational methods, used by managers, are supposed to have positive impact on performance of the staff. Employees are exposed to a number of factors that might cause negative impulse for their behavior. In this context, it is an undesirable motivation or in other words **de-motivation**. Undesirable motivation is done unconsciously and the sources might be:

- Poorly chosen or misused motivational methods with counterproductive effects
- Wrong management practices (preference of some workers, poor communication channels or information systems)
- Vague or confusing commands
- Absence of management directives
- Low awareness of business intentions and visions of the future activity
- Contradiction of words and acts (something that management wants but is not taking any step toward it itself or a broken promise)

There are also elements that might de-motivate if missing. For example higher salary might not increase motivation for better performance, but on the other hand low salary is a strong de-motivator.¹⁹

2. 4 Motivators and Incentives

In times when skilled labor is scarce it is necessary to provide employees with more than just excellent earnings, prestigious work position, an employee benefits package is needed so that employees are interested in their current function adequately long. With the working week, which includes more than 60 working hours, people might not decide whether their work fulfills them, but rather, how motivated they feel.

Listed below are motivators and incentives that help manager to keep employees motivated.

2. 4.1 Performance Evaluation

Salary, bonus salary elements, but also recognition, acknowledgement, praise and criticism of employee's performance are included in evaluation of employee's performance.

2. 4. 1. 1 Salary

Effective method of evaluation is a raise or a bonus. It is always necessary for managers to keep in mind that if the employee performance evaluation

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¹⁹ CLEGG, B. Instant: Motivation

is done through financial bonuses that it is necessary that the link between performance and reward is sufficiently clear and distinct to understand. The basic rule is the fairness and transparency. But it is not the most powerful motivational tool. Employers should, in addition to increasing the salary, implement other incentives to motivate. Relying on a salary increase without trying to look deeper into employees' needs is a mistake. It is believed that 75% of employees, who received a raise of the salary as an incentive to stay in the company, left the company within six months anyway for the raise is only temporary motivator. The reason is the fact that after the salary is increased once there usually is no custom in reducing it down even when the performance decreases.

2. 4. 1 2 Criticism

At the workplace employees will at some point face the criticism. Good managers always have on mind that when they are attempting a correction of certain behavior or during trainings they cannot be focused only on the negative aspects. Instead they should highlight the positive aspects and advice possible solutions to the negative ones. Not getting any or poor feedback from the superior managers creates a problem.

Employees that have a feeling of being dragged down by only negative criticism or incorrectly formulated feedback will get frustrated and their activity at work worsens. Excessive criticism of those who do not work well means, under certain circumstances, more problems than it solves. For example it might lead to unfair competition between the employees.

Although a healthy competition is often considered beneficial, managers need to aware favoritism of employees and watch out for unfair competition, which is de-motivating. Favoritism may lead to that less aggressive employees are left out. To maintain a healthy competition and

motivation level it is important to also support employees who are not performing so well.

2. 4. 1. 3 Attention and Recognition

If employees are not recognize for their contribution to the company, at least by the managers saying "good job, you did that well" or simply "thank you", they might translate it the wrong way and become too self-critical and that might even, in some cases, lead to quitting their job. If the employees will feel their hard work and effort are not appreciated, the assumption is that it is not worth it or good enough.

2. 4. 1. 4 Praise

Adequately praising the staff and appreciating their achievements is also connected to what was mentioned above. Praise is not effective if expressed late, if pointless, or if exaggerated. Another mistake that managers do is so called "praiseful sandwich". That is when the negative aspects are mentioned in between praises. Then often happens that the employee do not hear the criticism that was hidden in the middle.

It is also important that employees are highlighted for their achievements done in team work. When individuals are automatically included in a collective valuation together with their colleagues, it de-motivates the hard-trying ones. On the other hand employees should not be praised for everyday tasks which might lead to higher passivity of employees.

2. 4. 2 Work diversity

Employee should be familiar with the job description defining the main tasks and responsibilities before entering the job position. Monotonous work might lead to carelessness and thus reduced quality of work performed. Diversity within reasonable limits, which is a presumption for employee's satisfaction, can revive monotonous task or job. It is therefore in the interest of the employer that the content of the work varies and is interesting with training activities, possibilities of development and changing the work activities. Entertainment and non-working events are great if it is to disrupt the monotonous routine. However, all involved must be comfortable with it.

2. 4. 3 Career development

As mentioned above, real chance of career development is one of the motivational factors influencing employee's effectiveness. The main activity related to career development is a training plan for individuals or groups so that the staff has the opportunity to use and develop their potential skills and abilities that are required for the performance of their work positions and increase their chances of career advancement.

2. 4. 4 Information and Communication

Employees have to see reasons behind the tasks otherwise they will not feel the need to do the job accurately and can easily take over the task and execute it as quickly as possible, thus not as efficiently as possible. Delegating tasks should be empowering and motivational. Key factor is communication, where information is openly shared. Employees that are

aware of the organization's goals and/or goals of a team know what is expected from them and have a better sense of belonging with the organization and can better express themselves in case of a problem affecting their performance. A team is strongest when it is unified and individual team members help each other, communicate and are able to benefit from the strengths of individual members to achieve goals.

Mutual openness and awareness is a prerequisite for a functional and productive team. It significantly affects not only the overall company or team atmosphere, but also has a very strong, impact on the immediate results. It is thus very powerful competitive tool.

The thought that every worker needs to have all the information necessary for the performance of his/her work was very powerful in 1911, when Frederic Winslow Taylor formulated the 'Principles of Scientific Management' in order to achieve high performance of workers in mass production, and it is still valid nowadays even with all of the differences that can be found in the dramatic increase in the scope and speed of change, in far greater interdependence of the various parts of the business system, in globalization, in information technology, in a substantial increase in knowledge and general education of people, the mobility of workers and last but not least in their scale of values and motivations.²⁰

2. 4. 5 Working Environment

Workplace overwhelmed with company policies and rules create unnecessary tension. On such a workplace staff either hates their bosses because of the enforcement of such rules or the rules continually

33

²⁰ HÁJEK M., Vedení, budování a rozvoj týmů [Leadership, building and development of teams] - online

frustrates them. Poor atmosphere arises when the rules are so strict that employees feel uncomfortable. It includes setting realistic goals as a support to fulfilling standards of a company. Expectations of what the standards are hence must be explained. Support of communication, meetings of a team and promoting a better goals setting through personal development is crucial.

There is no right formula to create a perfect employee, but here are methods that can be implemented to reduce the weaknesses of a team. Each person is individuality and each can be motivated different way. Absolutely vital element that will help is communication within the team and listening to what individuals need.

2. 4. 6 Working hours

In Europe the length of full-time working hours is ranging from 35 to 40 hours per week. Basic length of full-time job in the Czech Republic is by law up to 40 hour per week. Time for lunch and rest time is not included in working hours. Working hours can be regular (set number of hours in a week), irregular (different number of hours in a week) or flexible (consisting of basic hours determined by the employer, in that time employee must be working and optional hours determined by employee who usually has to work determined number of hours a week).

Shorter working hours can be arranged under contract between employer and employee. In the case of shorter working hours employee's wage is corresponding to that length of working time. There is further defined acceptable maximum range of weekly working time for certain categories of workers which have specific conditions of work in certain workplaces and working practices.²¹

In Germany the workers' daily hours of work may not exceed eight hours. Such hours can be extended to ten hours only if within six calendar months or within 24 weeks an average of 8 hours per day is not exceeded. Hours of work shall be interrupted by rest periods, fixed in advance, of at least 30 minutes. The maximum limit for working hours per week of 48 hours must be complied with for the average over 6 months

After 6 hours of working at the latest, there must be a resting break granted. For work of 6 to 9 hours, that break is 30 minutes, for longer working 45 minutes. The working hours can be designed as flexible working hours. Here, it must be assured that within 6 months, the balance is an average of 8 hours per day.²²

Generally there is not much an employee can do with determined length of working hours per week, but working hours are tightly connected to a work load and that goes hand in hand with contentment. So it is important that the manager is aware of a work load for each employee. If there is an amount of work too large to handle by employees during by law given working time new employee should be hired, otherwise the quality or work done is declining.

2. 4. 7 Social activities

Non-working meetings at workplace, celebrations, indoor and outdoor team-buildings and such activities will make the employees know each other better. They will gain experience and for example train knowledge and organizational, communication and leadership skills.

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²¹ Ministerstvo práce a sociálních věcí [Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs] - online

²² International Labor Organization - online

These activities might improve employees' interpersonal relationships and skills and therefore productivity in the organization. A problem may arise if, for example managers will schedule abstract motivational course without considering what is actually appropriate for the staff. Before introducing rock or indoor climbing, courses in nature or physical endurance tests into incentive plan the management needs to be sure that it will not have opposite than planned effect.

2. 4. 8 Relationships

Positive relationships among employees, and between employees and employer and/or leadership plays an important part in the productivity of employees.

Every team, every working group is based on the relationships between people. These relationships are developed individually, each person is a different personality, and it would seem that it is not possible to influence and ensure that all relationships are optimal. The functioning of each team is based on a few simple principles, and if these principles are clear to everyone, understood and respected, then the team is working as one functional organism, and relationships between people are becoming optimal gradually.

These principals are: meaningful goals, respect for hierarchy, use of the skills, respecting the uniqueness and functioning of each person, willingness to cooperate, communication and responsibility.

The organization must work together not against each other (management against employees, employees against management or departments against each other, etc.) and every member of the team must cooperate for it to work well.

It is not technological advances that lead to the permanent synergy (cooperation) in an organization it depends on specific, open-minded and active employees adequately following the above mentioned principles.²³

2. 4. 9 Cafeteria system

Approximately one fourth of European organizations are using some version of cafeteria system as an incentive program and the number increases. The highest level of flexible benefits is to let the employee choose how he/she would like to divide the amount of remuneration. Cafeteria system easily and effectively implements such rewarding of employees.

Since the cafeteria system encompasses larger number of employees' choices, the result of using it is increased loyalty and satisfaction of employees and has positive impact on the company culture and of course on motivation of employees. Such benefits support and improve the balance between work and private life of an individual.

How the cafeteria system works? It is basically a "loyalty program" for employees. They are granted or they earn an amount of money or in some cases points or credits that they can spend on reward they choose from predefined list of rewards.

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²³ J.I.P. pro firmy s.r.o. - online

Analytical part

3. The Research

3. 1 Subject of the Research

Two companies, that has very similar field of interest, were involved in the research.

A Czech company that did not want to be named was founded in 2001 by merging three separate companies. This company is based in Prague, Czech Republic and has one affiliated company in České Budějovice.

The company deals with kitchen and bathroom and housing constructions and reconstructions and everything connected to that, from heating systems, flooring, electrical installations to doors, built-in wardrobes, furnishing, and other interior products and accessories.

The Czech company has approximately 90 permanent employees.

F. X. Ruch (German company hereafter) is Ruch's family business with over 100 years of tradition based in southern Germany in Singen with three affiliated companies in Tengen, Radolfzell and Messkirch.

The company is offering goods and services related to the issues of housing, from constructions and reconstructions of bathrooms, kitchens and other parts of the house, offering wide range of bathroom accessories, interior and outdoor tiles, to building materials and heating systems.

The company nowadays has approximately 130 employees.

3. 2 Description of the Data Collection Techniques

The questionnaire of own design (see appendix 1 – page 54) is based on previously mentioned information taking into an account various components of motivation of employees listed in chapter '2. 4 Motivators and Incentives'.

The questionnaire consists of three parts. **Personal information** part is asking basic questions – age, gender, level of education and length of employment. **Satisfaction** part of the questionnaire is asking about how satisfied employees are with working conditions and basic evaluation (salary, workplace equipment, awareness of management decisions and goals, and so on), and also the benefits possible to acquire are identified in this part. The last part of the questionnaire discovers the **importance** of different work attributes for employees. Attributes such as financial rewards, job requirements, relationships between coworkers, praise and other non-financial rewards.

Questions in the questionnaire are answered by choosing one of given choices. The aim of not including 'I don't know/care' choices or choices offering moderate answers is to gain answers indicating trend of each respondent. Open-ended questions are also included in the questionnaire to give respondents a chance to note something that they would feel they want to mention.

The questionnaires were designed using online survey application SurveyCrest.com, distributed via email and collected anonymously also on the online survey server. The answers to the questionnaires are processed in the application used for collecting the questionnaires, but Microsoft Excel is used for presenting the results, tables and graphs so the appearance is uniform.

Conducting the interview the basic knowledge of working environment in each of the companies was established and that led to a better understanding of the answers obtained from the questionnaire.

3. 3 Introduction to the Research

Note that all graphs and tables in this chapter are of own production of the author of this thesis if not stated differently below certain graph or table.

Because some employees are external to the companies, some are not always present at the company and some departments refused to cooperate on the survey, the questionnaire was distributed to 54 employees from the Czech company and to 65 employees from the German company.

As it can be seen in the table below (figure 04), out of total number of employees the successful rate of returned questionnaires is 37% in the Czech company and 39% in German company (rounded).

FIGURE 04: Rate of Returning Questionnaires

	TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	-	STIONNAIRE RIBUTED TO		ZERED DNNAIRES	RATE OF RETURN
COMPAN Y	QUANTITY (rounded)	out of total	QUANTITY	out of distribute d	QUANTITY	out of total
CZECH	90	60%	54	79%	33	37%
GERMAN	130	50%	65	61%	51	39%

The remark here is that employees from the German company were more open to participate in the survey. From the 65 distributed questionnaires the return was 79%, whereas the return in the Czech company was 61%.

3. 4 Evaluation of the Results

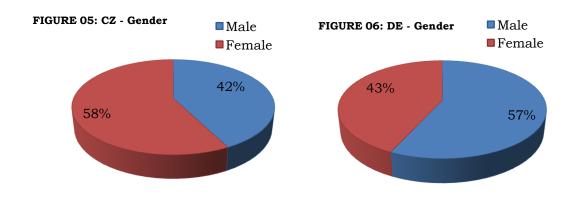
This chapter is evaluating the results of the survey that used the questionnaire in appendix 1 (page 54) and comparing the results from the Czech and German company.

The chapter is divided into three subchapters according to the description of the questionnaire in the chapter '3. 2 Description of the Data Collection Techniques' – personal information, satisfaction and importance.

3. 4. 1 Personal Information

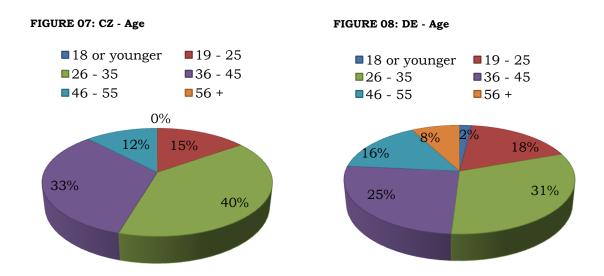
3. 4. 1. 1 Gender

The gender partition of returned questionnaires is 58% of women to 42% of men in the Czech company and 43% of women to 57% of men in the German company, see the graphs below (figure 05 and 06).



3. 4. 1. 2 Age

The average age of the survey respondents is very similar in both companies. It is 36 in Czech company and 37 in German one.



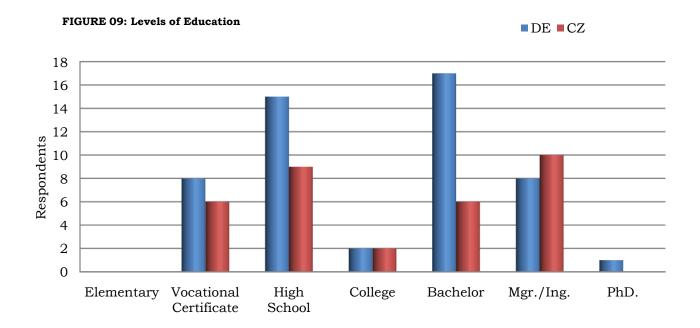
The fact that the average age is very similar in both companies is that, as the graphs (figure 07) show, in the Czech company none of the respondents is less than 19 years old or older than 56 years of age, while in the figure 08 the reader can see that there is 10% of respondents in the mentioned age range. In the German company there is 21% of the respondents older than 46 years of age and 20% 25 or younger while 12% of the Czech respondents is older than 46 and 15% is 25 or younger.

3. 4. 1. 3 Level of Education

Based on the fact that the younger the employee the higher chance of lower educational level and as the difference in the graphs above (figure 07 and 08) suggests, the German company is more likely to hire employees without higher education (see the figure in the appendix 2 – page 57). The benefit of that is that such employees are easier to train for

the company's specific purpose and it is economically advantageous. Also according to the interviewed participants German company is more helpful to employees working and studying simultaneously.

Comparison of education levels in both companies is shown in the figure 09 below.

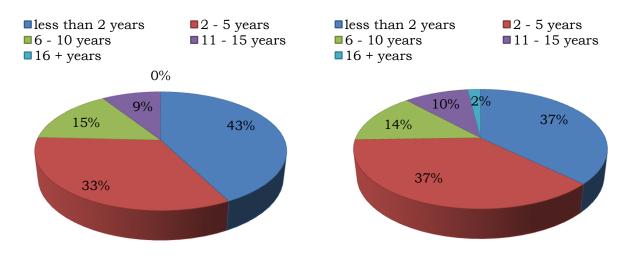


3. 4. 1. 4 Length of Employment

Length of employment of employees in each company is according to the survey roughly similar (see figure 10 and figure 11). The only difference here is that in the German company 2% of the respondents are employed in the company 16 years or more. This is not possible in the Czech company because it has been in business for 12 years.

FIGURE 10: CZ - Length of Employment

FIGURE 11: DE - Length of Employment



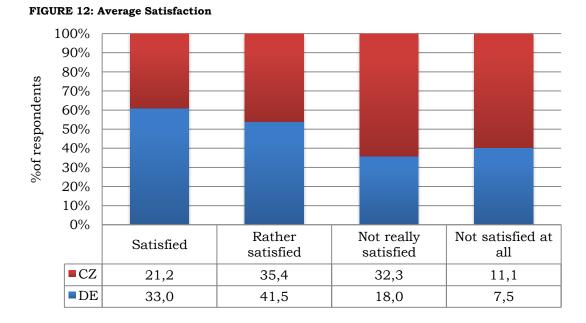
3. 4. 2 Satisfaction

First part of this section of the questionnaire identifies how satisfied employees are with overall working conditions and basic aspects of their work.

3. 4. 2. 1 Satisfaction With the Basic Work Aspects

Reading the graph (see the graphs in the appendix 3 – page 58), we can say that satisfaction with salary, length of working hours, self realization and workplace equipment is higher in the German company. Answers 'Satisfied' were chosen in the German company by on average of 11% and 'Rather Satisfied' by 13% more employees. High distinction can be seen in the satisfaction with workplace equipment, where in the German company there are only rather insignificant 2% of not satisfied employees.

Higher satisfaction with awareness of what is going on in the company and how the employees are informed about decision and goals of the company or the department they work in is in the Czech company. Over 60% of Czech respondents answered that they are 'satisfied' or 'rather satisfied' while more than half of German respondents answered with 'not really satisfied' or 'not satisfied at all'.



Average satisfaction of the employees from both companies with the general aspects of their job is higher in the German company (see figure 12) where the answers were 74.5% to 56.6% of the Czech respondents answering 'satisfied' or 'rather satisfied'. 25.5% of the German and 43.4% of the Czech respondents answered 'not really satisfied' or 'not satisfied at all'.

3. 4. 2. 1 Satisfaction With Benefits Offered

Other part of the satisfaction section of the questionnaire identifies how are the employees satisfied with the benefits offered to them by the employer.

According to the answers displayed in the graph (see appendix 4 – page 59) and to the interviews done, both of the companies are offering some

sort of further education to their employees and they are quite satisfied with it, though in the Czech company 9% percent of the respondents answered that they are 'not offered' any further education. In the interview it was discovered that it is mostly because they were not aware of such possibility due to poor information from management or they claimed that there is no further education program that they are interested in.

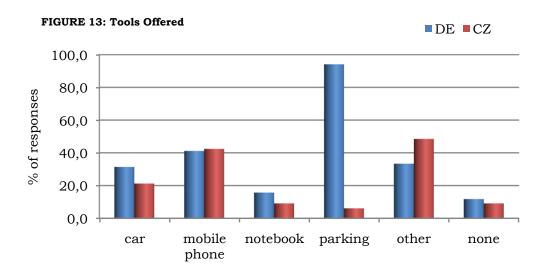
Nonworking social activities are more successful in the German company. Although Czech employees have social events twice a year, one on Christmas and one in summer, most of them are satisfied with that amount. In the German company nonworking social events are more frequent. There is a possibility for employees to attend at least 8 such events in a year.

We can also see that a big difference is that in the German company the employer does not offer a canteen or other facility to buy discounted food. According to the interviews done employees buy lunch at the nearest restaurants from the lunch menus or bring their own lunch from home and eat it in a staff room. On the contrary, for the Czech employees there is a near canteen offering discounted price for lunch to surrounding companies based on an agreement between the canteen and management of the company. Some of the employees sometimes bring their own lunch and eat it in their office but everyone interviewed is mainly using the services of the canteen.

Financial rewards and bonuses are more common in the German company and almost 79% of the employees answered 'satisfied' or 'rather satisfied'. The Czech employees are either receiving any such rewards (24.3% 'not offered' and 'I would like such benefit') or majority answered 'not really satisfied' (30.3%). Only 9% of Czech employees answered that they are 'satisfied' with financial rewards, compared to the German employees where the same answer chose 41.2% of them.

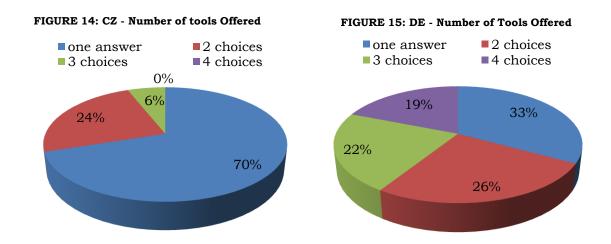
Interesting fact seen in the career advancement possibility graph (also appendix 4 – page 59) is that in the Czech company 42.5% of respondents do not have a possibility for career advancement. Other Czech respondents are rather not satisfied with the possibilities they do have (33.4%). In the German part of the career advancement graph we can read that almost three fourths (74.5%) of respondents are 'satisfied' or 'rather satisfied'.

9% of Czech respondents and almost 12% of German respondents are not offered a benefit of tools for their job. All of them claimed that they don't necessarily need any such tools for their job.



To the multiple choice question 'what tools for the job are you offered?' 70% of Czech employees answered with one answer. 24% chose two answers and only two respondents (6%) checked three answers. Therefore the percentage in the figure 13 is made out of 45 responses.

Big difference here is that German company is offering more tools to each of the employees. 51 German respondents gave 116 responses, that means that 33% of German employees have answered with only one of the choices. 26% answered with two choices and 19% answered with four of



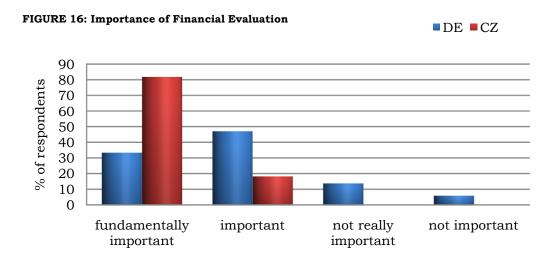
the choices (mostly car, mobile phone, parking and other). Comparison of number of tools offered to each respondent is shown in figure 14 and 15.

3. 4. 3 Importance

The next part of the questionnaire was focused on how important to employees are some aspects of their job.

Graphs in appendix 5 (page 60) show those aspects for which the highest percentage of answers was 'fundamentally important' in both companies. For instance the percentage of answers to how important are aspects like stable job and its description and requirements, good work environment and relationships among co-workers, and recognition from the leadership was in average above 51% for 'fundamentally important'. These aspects mentioned above have the answer 'not important at all' chosen only for job stability (4%).

From the graph below (figure 16) financial evaluation was chosen as 'fundamentally important' by 82% of Czech employees, the rest (18%) answered 'important'. In the German company interestingly financial evaluation was described by 47% of employees as 'important'. 'Fundamentally important' in this case answered 33% of German



respondents. 14% of German employees also answered 'not important' and 6% answered 'not important at all'.

The graphs (figure 17 and 18) show that for German respondents is more important participation on decision-making (31% answered 'important') and non-working social events organized by their employer (37% also answered 'important') than for Czech employees. 43% of Czech respondents answered 'not really important' to participation on decision-making and 49% to non-working social events

On the other hand figure 19 shows that for Czech respondents further education is more important than for German respondents.

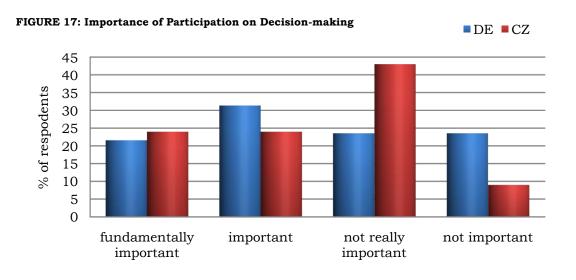
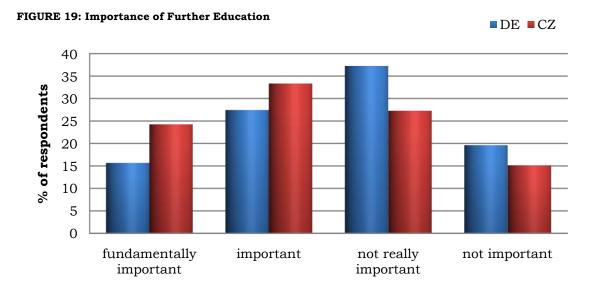


FIGURE 18: Importance of Non-working Social Events ■DE ■CZ 50 45 % of respondents 40 35 30 25 20 15 10 5 0 important fundamentally not really not important important important

34% of Czech respondents answered that further education is 'important' for them and 24% answered 'fundamentally important'. That makes it over 50% of Czech employees while more than 50% of German employees answered that further education is 'not really important' or 'not important at all'.

Interviews discovered that the reason why further education is not so important for German respondents is that young employees are still mostly students so it is not important for them if their employer provides other kinds of education.



Conclusion and Propositions

To improve employees' satisfaction and therefore their effectiveness at work the recommendation for the Czech company would be:

To give more attention to what workplace equipment is needed by employees to do their work effectively or what equipment is needed to be improved. It might also be beneficial to hire more students for example for internships. The cost to the company for these people is lower for fulltime employees and if there would be prospective reward program and career advancement, which is also often not offered, these students might become experienced fulltime employees of the company. Furth education is offered in the Czech company, but the interview proved that employees need to be informed about it better. Even though the satisfaction with given information was positive this needs to be improved.

Overall satisfaction of Czech employees might be influenced by the nature of Czech people. According to the research financial rewards should be specified and connected to the performance more so the employees are rewarded for actual work done. There is also rarely a possibility of career advancement in the Czech company. Starting at a lower salary with certainty of advancement is a great motivator and satisfaction it is high.

According to the results of the survey the employees from the German company are not satisfied with how they are informed about decisions and goals. The German company should be focusing on keeping the employees updated and also in some cases make the employees a bigger part of the decision-making process of the management. Also the absence of a canteen is not necessarily de-motivating, but on the other hand it can be beneficial and more work-effective if the employees did not have to spend time and money on travelling to get their lunch.

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APPENDIX 1: The Questionnaire



Q: Does your employer offer following to you? If yes - how satisfied are you? If no - check "Not offered" or "Would like such benefit"

	Satisfied	Rather satisfied	Not really satisfied	Not satisfied at all	Not offered	Would like such benefit
Further education (courses, trainings, workshops,)	0	•	•	•	•	0
Non-working activities (celebrations, gatherings, teambuildings,)	0	0	•	0	0	•
Facility to eat (canteen or discounted price)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Financial rewards / Bonuses	0	0	0	0	0	0
Possibility for career advancement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tools for your job (car, mobile phone, parking,)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Financial contribution (for transport, culture, vacation,)	0	•	•	0	•	•

Satisfaction

Q: Please check the box that best describes your satisfaction with following

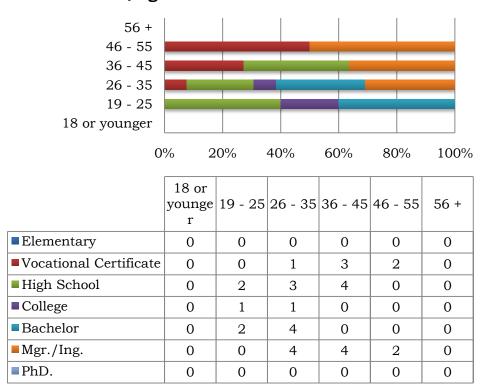
	Satisfied	Rather satisfied	Not really satisfied	Not satisfied at all
Overall satisfaction with your job	0	0	0	•
Salary	0	0	0	0
Length of working hours	0	0	0	0
Information / Awareness (about decisions and goals)	0	•	0	•
Fulfillment / Accomplishment (self- ralization)	0	•	0	10
Workplace equipment (Do you have everything you need for your job?)	0	0	0	0

Q: What tools for your job does your employer offer to you?
□ Car
Mobile phone
Laptop
Parking
other other
none

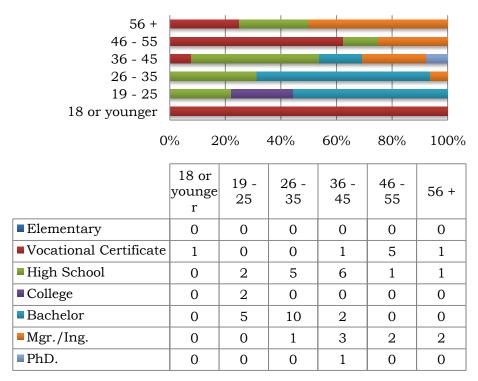
Q: What kind of fina Transport				
□ Transport □ Culture (theaters, mus □ Clothing	eums, shows,)			
Sport / Wellness				
Insurance				
Vacation				
other				
none				
Q: What other adva	ntages does your job	offers?		
		A		
2: What benefits the	at you are not offered	would you like	to have?	
mnortanco				
mportance ⊇: How important a	re the following for yo	ou?		
	re the following for yo	ou?	Not really important	Not important at all
2: How important a			Not really important	Not important at all
2: How important a Job description and requirements	Fundamentally important	Important		
2: How important a Job description and requirements Job stability	Fundamentally important	Important	0	0
	Fundamentally important	Important	•	0
Job description and requirements Job stability Work environment Relationships at work Recognition (from leadership)	Fundamentally important	Important	0 0	0
Job description and requirements Job stability Work environment Relationships at work Recognition (from leadership)	Fundamentally important	Important	0 0	0 0 0
Job description and requirements Job stability Work environment Relationships at work Recognition (from leadership) Financial evaluation Participation on	Fundamentally important	Important	0 0 0	0 0 0
Job description and requirements Job stability Work environment Relationships at work Recognition (from leadership) Financial evaluation Participation on decision-making Non-working social events (teambuildings,	Fundamentally important	Important O O O O O	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0 0 0 0
Job description and requirements Job stability Work environment	Fundamentally important	Important		0 0 0 0 0 0
Job description and requirements Job stability Work environment Relationships at work Recognition (from leadership) Financial evaluation Participation on decision-making Non-working social events (teambuildings, celebrations,) Further education	Fundamentally important	Important O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O		
Job description and requirements Job stability Work environment Relationships at work Recognition (from leadership) Financial evaluation Participation on decision-making Non-working social events (teambuildings, celebrations,) Further education (courses, trainings,)	Fundamentally important	Important O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O		
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Job description and requirements Job stability Work environment Relationships at work Recognition (from leadership) Financial evaluation Participation on decision-making Non-working social events (teambuildings, celebrations,) Further education (courses, trainings,)	Fundamentally important	Important O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O		
Job description and requirements Job stability Work environment Relationships at work Recognition (from leadership) Financial evaluation Participation on decision-making Non-working social events (teambuildings, celebrations,) Further education (courses, trainings,)	Fundamentally important	Important O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O O		

APPENDIX 02: Education of Employees According to Their Age

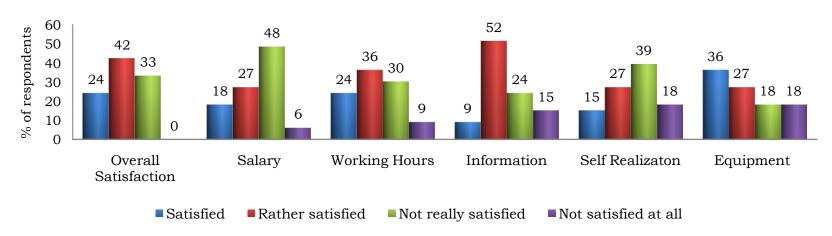
CZ - Education/Age



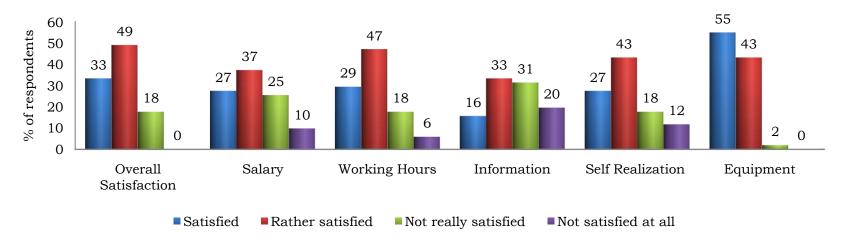
DE - Education/Age



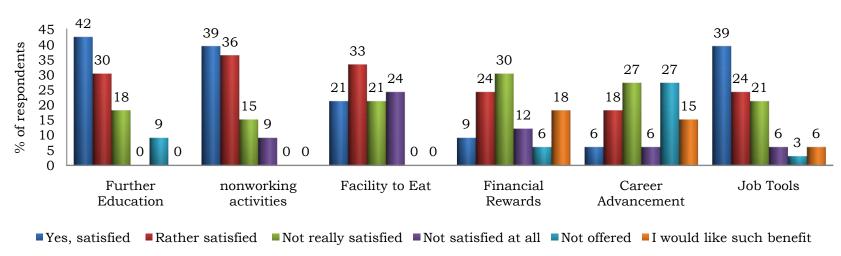
CZ - Satisfaction



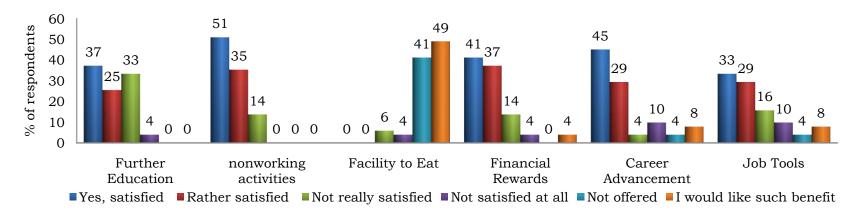
DE - Satisfaction



CZ - Satisfaction With Benefits



DE - Satisfaction With Benefits



APPENDIX 5: Importance

