The concepts of post-heroic leadership: demands on future managers. A qualitative study to investigate the influence of leadership behaviour on employee motivation

Fabian Emig

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment for the award of

Master of Science (MSc.) International Business

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<u>Abstract</u>

In today's changing world of work, post-heroic leadership is critical due to global trends such as digitalisation and the impact of the COVID pandemic. Organisations are shifting to remote and flexible working, highlighting the need for adaptable managers with new skills. Only those who motivate, value and lead their employees in the best possible way will have the employees they want in the long term and thus increase not only employee satisfaction but also productivity and competitiveness.

This study analyses how future managers influence the motivation of their employees through their management style. The results show that empathy-orientated leadership can have a positive effect on employee motivation. By understanding different motivational and leadership theories, the study aims to provide insights for the development of effective leaders who meet the demands of the future workplace. The empirical research includes interviews with employees to assess the practical application of the theoretical concepts, focussing on the impact of leadership on employee performance and motivation. The aim is to improve understanding of the role of leaders in promoting employee satisfaction and performance in today's dynamic work environment.

The findings will ultimately contribute to a better understanding of the role of leaders in today's workplace and identify ways in which leaders can act motivationally and effectively to increase employee performance levels and satisfaction.

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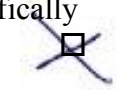
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Acknowledgments

At the beginning of this dissertation, I would like to express my deep gratitude to all the people who have supported me in the development of this research.

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List of Abbreviations

Art.	Article
CMI	Institute for Change Management and Innovation
Dr.	Doctor
doi	Digital Object Identifier
DSM	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (of Mental Disorders)
ed.	Editor
edn.	Edition
e.g.	exempli gratia
ERG theory	Existence, Relatedness, Growth theory
et al.	et alia
etc.	et cetera
et seq.	et sequens
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
Gen Z	Generation Z
ICD	International Statistical Classification (of Diseases & Related Health Problems)
ID	Identity
i.e.	id est
Inc.	Incorporated
IT	Information Technology
LBDQ	Leader Behaviour Description Questionnaire
LPC-Score	Least-Preferred Co-worker (Score)
min.	minute
OCEAN	Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism
p.	page
p.m.	post meridiem
pp.	pages
Ref.	Reference
VIE theory	Valence-instrumentality-expectancy theory

1. **Introduction**

1.1   Problem definition and introduction to the topic

Even before the outbreak of the COVID pandemic, Schlosser and Kahabka (2019) pointed out the advantages of a more open attitude towards self-organised and autonomous work. Especially at the beginning of 2020, this change was further driven by the social and economic changes during the pandemic. A digitalised and democratised world of work can be described as the new normal (Gutmann, 2021). A post-heroic understanding of leadership can be understood as mutual complementarity and cooperation between team members (Baecker, 2015), whereby the manager's task is no longer just to control or distribute work tasks. Instead, they support their employees with empathy in solving challenges. Managed individuals can act independently of their manager and are also integrated into the management process (Crevani et al., 2007). The positive aspects of a post-heroic understanding of leadership have therefore become particularly clear in the course of the COVID pandemic, for example in the transition to a mobile and hybrid way of working (Eisele and Lieske, 2021). With demographic change and changes in technological, economic and social adjustments, we are currently dealing with trends that have a particular impact on leadership and leadership styles in companies. Demographic change describes the changes with regard to the increasing ageing of the overall population and therefore also of a company's workforce, as this process has also been observed here for years. Technological and economic trends include internationalisation, knowledge management, globalisation, new innovations, change management and growing pressure on the markets. Social trends include changing forms of work such as new work, corporate sustainability, urbanisation, work-life balance and the individualisation of the individual (Helmold, 2022). In order to maintain an overview of the changing, daily decision-making options in these changes in companies, it is necessary to break down encrusted hierarchies and structures in this increasingly complex, fast-moving and globalised world. It is the task of companies to establish a suitable management style in their executive suites with which the current challenges can be mastered and the potential of each individual employee can be meaningfully deployed and utilised (Buhr et al., 2018). "To lead the people, walk behind them" (Townsend and Bennis, 2011, p. 63) was already emphasised by the Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu. In

today's world, this wisdom applies to leaders more than ever, because the days when they could make decisions and find solutions to problems in isolation are over. True leadership must be for the benefit of followers, not for the enrichment of leaders (Townsend and Bennis, 2011). In order to meet the demands of the constantly changing market, synergy effects must be created between all those involved, which increasingly removes the breeding ground for authoritarian and heroic leadership styles. In the spirit of Lao Tzu, managers are called upon to put their employees at the center and to take a step back (Huber and Metzger, 2017). According to the Gallup Engagement Index, the economic costs in Germany due to internal dismissal will amount to 132.6 billion to 167.2 billion euros in 2023 (Gallup Inc., 2023).

"To lead the people, walk behind them."

\- Lao Tzu -

1.2   Gaps in the literature

There are various studies in the literature that explore the impact of leadership behaviour on employee motivation, but there are gaps that warrant further investigation. For instance, examining how leadership styles and practices affect different industries, organizational structures, and cultures could be beneficial. Additionally, exploring the influence of leadership behaviour on different generations of employees, such as Millennials, baby boomers, and Gen Z, could provide valuable insights. Furthermore, studying how leadership behaviour interacts with factors like corporate culture, working conditions, and reward systems to affect employee motivation can enhance our understanding. These areas, although outside the primary research focus of this thesis, offer opportunities to improve leadership strategies for enhancing employee motivation, performance, and retention over the long term.

1.3   Structure of work

In addition to Maslow's needs theory approach, which is described in this master's thesis for a basic understanding, there are many other approaches that are not covered in detail in this thesis. Motivation and the associated motivation theories can be described as a

comprehensively illuminated field of research. In addition to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the most important theories include the two-factor theory of Herzberg (1959), the ERG theory of C. Alderfer (1972), the need factor theory of D. C. McClelland (1961) and the profile of basic motivation according to S. Reiss (2000). (cf. Franken 2007: 86-96) With regard to motivation theory, we will take a closer look at Maslow's needs pyramid, Herzberg's two-factor theory, Csikszentmihalyi's flow model and McGregor's X-Y theory. Process theories include names such as Vroom (1964), Atkinson (1964), Adams (1965) and Weiner (2011) (Schreyögg and Koch, 2020). Victor H. Vroom's VIE theory will be discussed in more detail later. In this master's thesis, the one-dimensional theory according to Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958) is explained as a basis in relation to leadership styles, although two- or multidimensional approaches have also been developed in the meantime, some of which are also presented, such as the concentration theory by Fred E. Fiedler (1967), the Ohio State studies by Lewin, Lippitt and White (1937) or the maturity model by Hersey and Blanchard (1969).

The second chapter of the thesis presents the theoretical foundations of motivation and leadership. Subsection 2.1 deals with internal and external motivation, motivation theories, motivation through leadership and finally employee engagement based on the Gallup Engagement Index of 2023. Point 2.2 looks at the basics of leadership with leadership characteristics, leadership behaviour, the leadership environment and the leadership situation. In addition, passage 2.3 introduces the various leadership styles and some underlying theoretical models. At the end of the theoretical part of this master's thesis, heroic and post-heroic leadership are explained and charismatic, toxic leadership and health effects are described. The following third chapter presents the basic framework of the study, such as the title, research questions and the research objectives of the study. The fourth chapter covers the empirical investigation and presents the research method and research design, which includes the analysis of ten interviews according to the qualitative content analysis of Philipp A. E. Mayring's qualitative content analysis. The results of the interviews are described, analysed and presented to the reader in chapter five. These results are then discussed and interpreted in chapter six and what conclusions can be drawn from them. The final seventh chapter concludes this work with an explanation of the results from theory and empirical research, summarises all the findings

with an outlook for the future, provides recommendations for action for future managers and points to possible future research approaches.

2. **Literature Review**

This chapter presents the literary knowledge of the theory of motivation as well as the theory of leadership and some of the most important theories in both areas. The chapter goes on to discuss the various leadership styles. Finally, the literature review is summarised and an attempt is made to establish causal links between the literature and the results of empirical research.

2.1 Motivation

From today's perspective, motivation is one of the most important factors for the success or failure of companies. This has not always been the case, because just a few years ago, employees were only seen as vicarious agents. They were expected to comply with company rules and follow instructions in order to carry out their work as quickly and smoothly as possible. It was assumed that personal responsibility, own ideas and self-coordination would disrupt the regular workflow. Work was therefore seen as an impairment of the satisfaction of needs, which was compensated for by the wages paid. This view has changed fundamentally with the new management theory. It is now known that people also seek satisfaction of their needs through work (Schreyögg and Koch, 2020). There are numerous sources from which people can draw their motivation, as Figure 1 shows. In addition to leadership, the individual, society, the organisation and the group are also mentioned. Furthermore, the work tasks also have an influence on how strongly someone is motivated (Comelli et al., 2014).
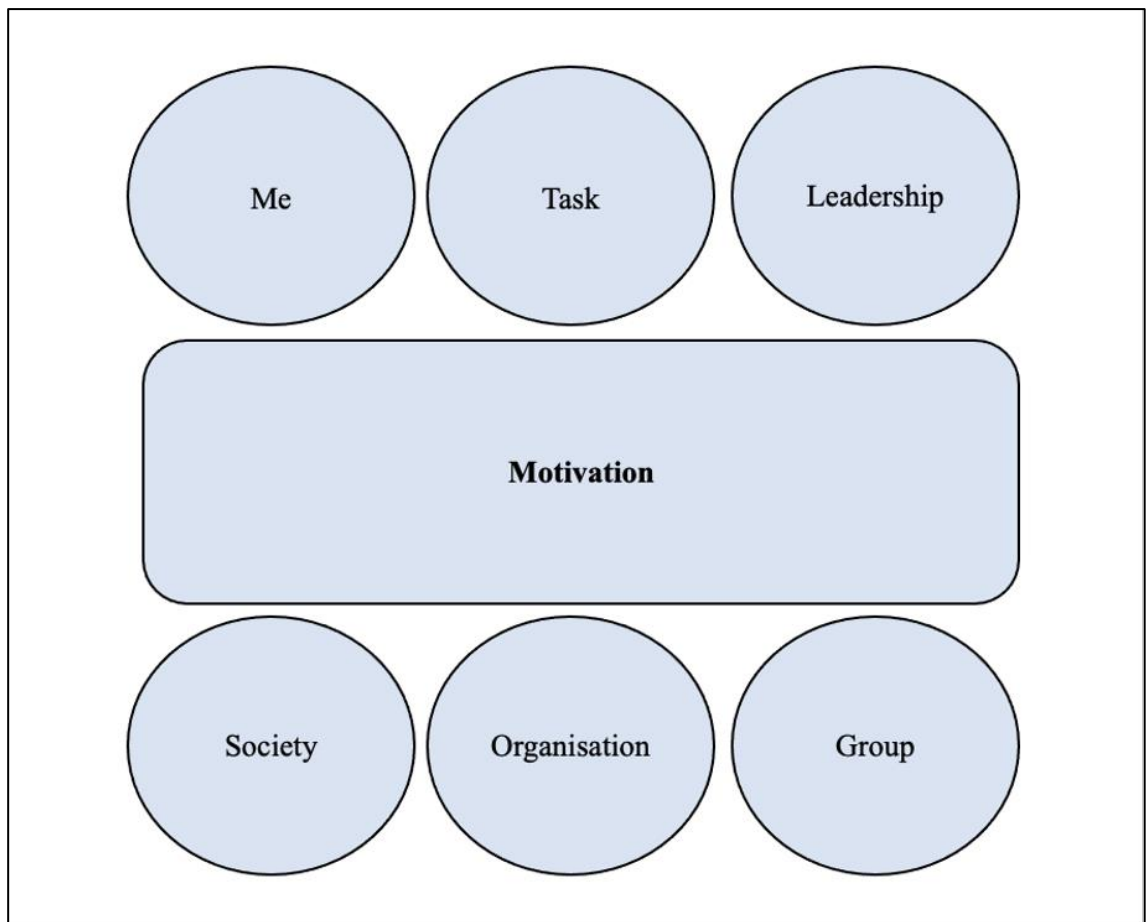
Figure 1: Sources of motivation
(Comelli et al., 2014, p. 1)

The direction, duration and intensity of our behaviour are strongly influenced by our motivation (Thomae, 1965). However, behaviour is not determined by motivation alone, but also by our abilities and skills, norms and rules as well as external influences. Motivation can be understood as a force that moves us to act and that brings us pleasure, joy and satisfaction. Motivation can also be generated in the short term by choosing the right incentives. Managers can find the right incentives for their employees in personal discussions by asking specific questions and making observations. In order to increase job satisfaction and work performance, employees need a sense of achievement, recognition of their performance, experienced independence in completing their tasks, a varied job, contact with other people and development prospects (Comelli et al., 2014). In order to remain competitive, motivated, satisfied and productive employees are the key to long-term success for companies to achieve their corporate goals.

Figure 2 below shows that motivated employees have less absenteeism, turnover remains low, misconduct and accidents decrease, they work more innovatively and their work performance increases, and the motivation of the workforce has a positive effect on productivity and profitability, growth and competitiveness as well as customer satisfaction (Becker, 2019).
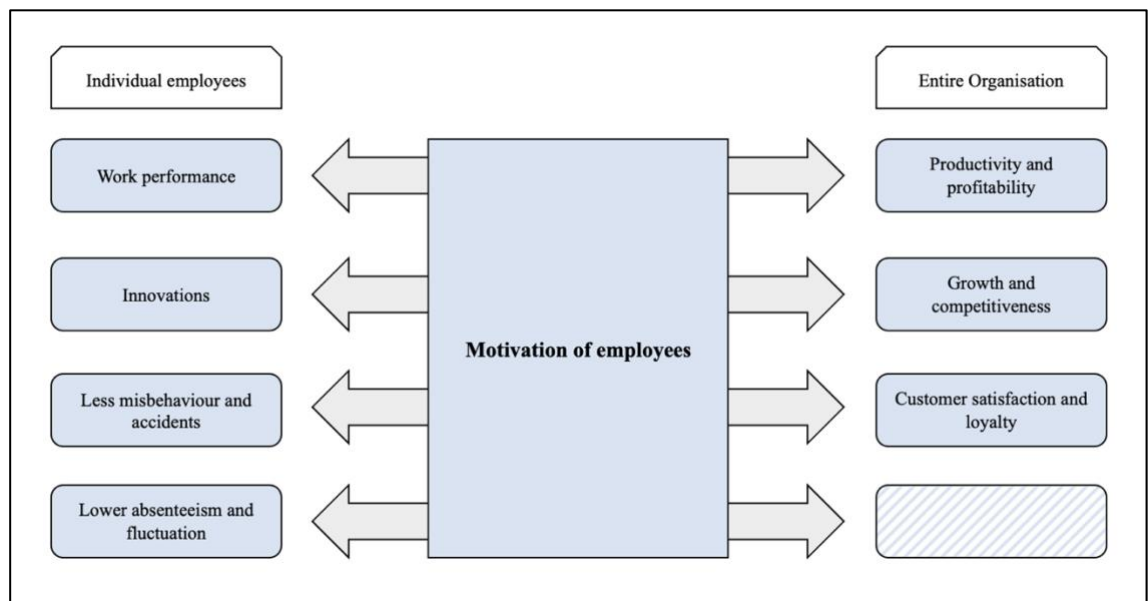
Figure 2: Positive effect of employee motivation
(Becker, 2019, p. 2)

2.1.1 Internal and external motivation

A basic distinction must be made between internal motivation, also known as intrinsic motivation, and external motivation, also known as extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is based on personal principles, enthusiasm, joy and a sense of purpose. Extrinsic motivation causes people to act in order to receive a reward or payment. The same applies when people act strictly according to instructions out of respect or fear of their superiors. If a manager succeeds in driving their own team through internal motivation, they have achieved something valuable. The team members see a purpose in what they are doing. They know their tasks and the reasons for their work. Pointless or seemingly pointless work can quickly have a demotivating effect. Those who do not recognize the meaning of a task cannot complete it with the help of intrinsic motivation.

In summary, conveying meaningfulness should be seen as a central task of the supervisor (Beck, 2021).

2.1.2   Motivation theories

The so-called motivation theories attempt to explain human behaviour and, in this context, performance. They can be divided into two different groups - content and process theories. Content theories are concerned with what motivates people, but not how this happens. They are therefore highly simplified. Process theories are more differentiated. They explain how the interplay of different motives and variables causes a certain behaviour and thus explain the general motivational process (Jung, 2017).

Another theory that examines inner motivation in more detail is flow theory. A person is in a state of flow when there is an optimal balance between the demands of a situation and the person's available abilities, as can be seen in Figure 3. Csikszentmihalyi and Jackson (2000) described this relationship in their model back in 1975 and described it as a particularly intense state in which you are completely focused and forget everything around you. High demands and inadequate skills lead to anxiety. Too few demands lead to a feeling of boredom among qualified employees.
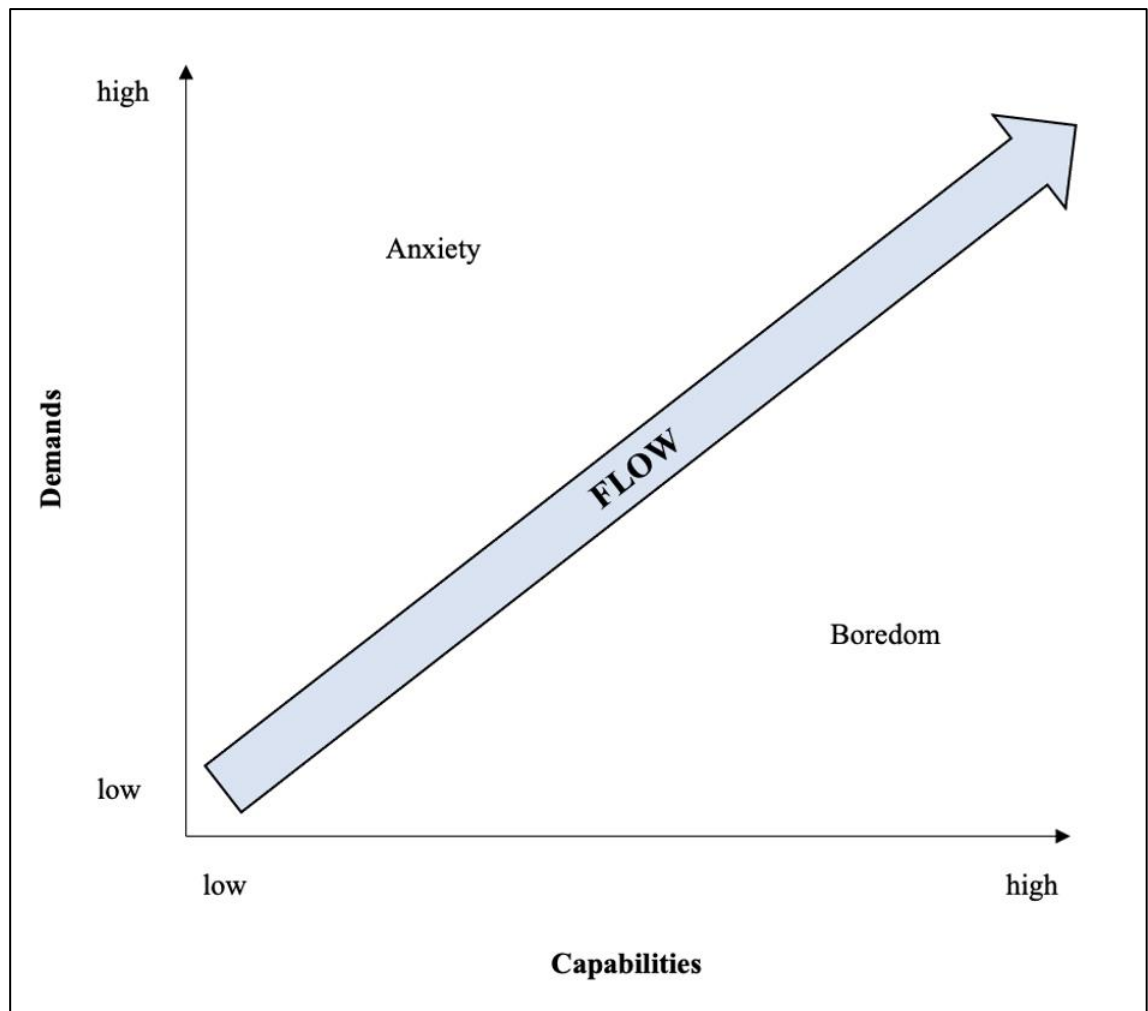
Figure 3: Flow model

(Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 74)

A triggering activity in flow theory requires increasing complexity, as the flow experience occurs when both the skills and the demands are correspondingly high. An activity usually begins with low demands and low skills. The more persistently the activity is continued, the better the skills and demands become, so that one remains in flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2012).

Inner motivation serves as a prerequisite for exceptional performance. Figure 4 below clearly shows that, in addition to self-motivation, there are also design elements such as challenge, variety, importance of the task, autonomy, feedback and the possibility of active participation. Critical points with regard to intrinsic motivation are extrinsic

motivators, exclusive career orientation, working only for money and activities that are over- or underchallenging (Sass, 2019).
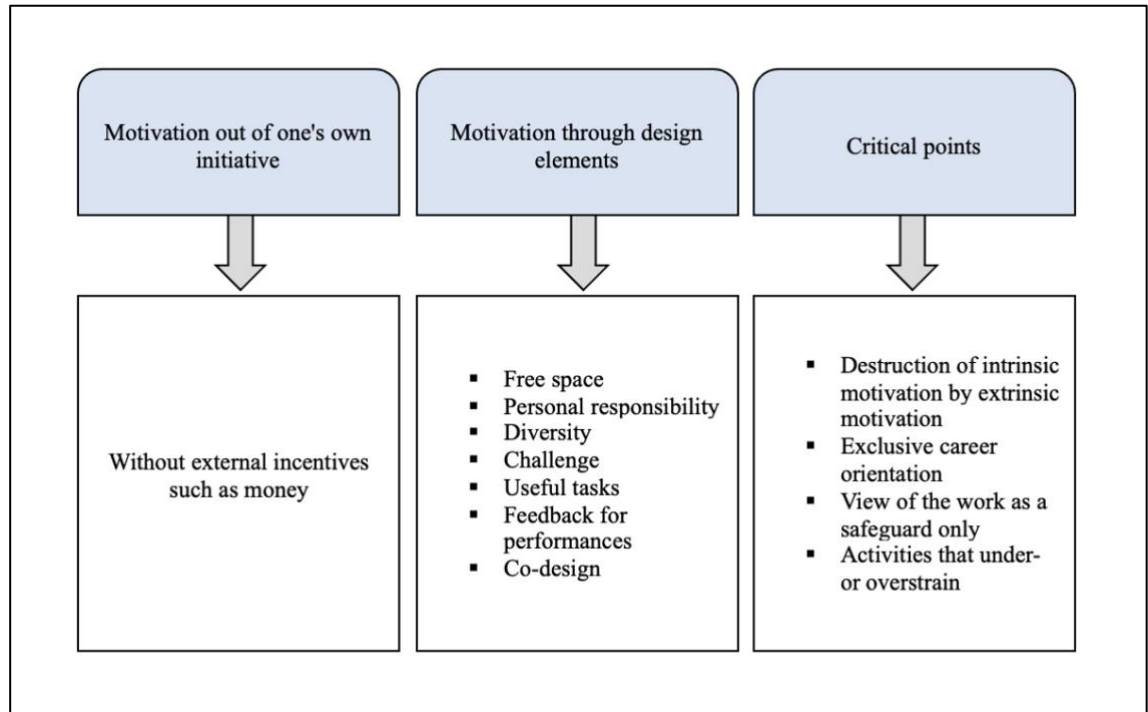
Figure 4: Intrinsic factors of motivation

(Sass, 2019)

2.1.2.1 Maslow's need hierarchy theory (1954)

Maslow's pyramid of needs from 1954 is one of the content theories and one of the best-known motivation theories. Maslow describes the classes of needs in ascending order, starting with basic physiological needs such as hunger, thirst and sleep, which he describes as the strongest of all needs. These are followed by the so-called safety needs such as stability, security, safety, protection, freedom from fear, structure, order and law. The need for belonging and love comes third in the model. The penultimate human drive is respect and esteem, which pursues the desire for a high degree of general recognition of oneself. The last need involves individual self-actualization (Maslow, 2018). However, even simple observations in everyday life cast doubt on Maslow's theory. Examples can be found in which the hierarchy of needs is dominated by people in a different order.

People who put their safety at risk for their self-esteem or status, as is the case with tests of courage. Or someone who risks their own health for self-realisation, for example to conform to a certain ideal of beauty through cosmetic surgery. People who long for social affiliation are also often more receptive to status-related offers because they hope to gain social acceptance. According to this theory, employees are not given the freedom at work that would support their self-realisation as long as their need for social contact has not yet been satisfied. According to this theory, all people have the same motives. Motives such as the desire to separate oneself from something or to maintain power are completely disregarded. However, the hierarchy of needs can be used in practice to develop ideas for motivational incentives so that managers can consider what they want to offer their employees (Becker, 2019).
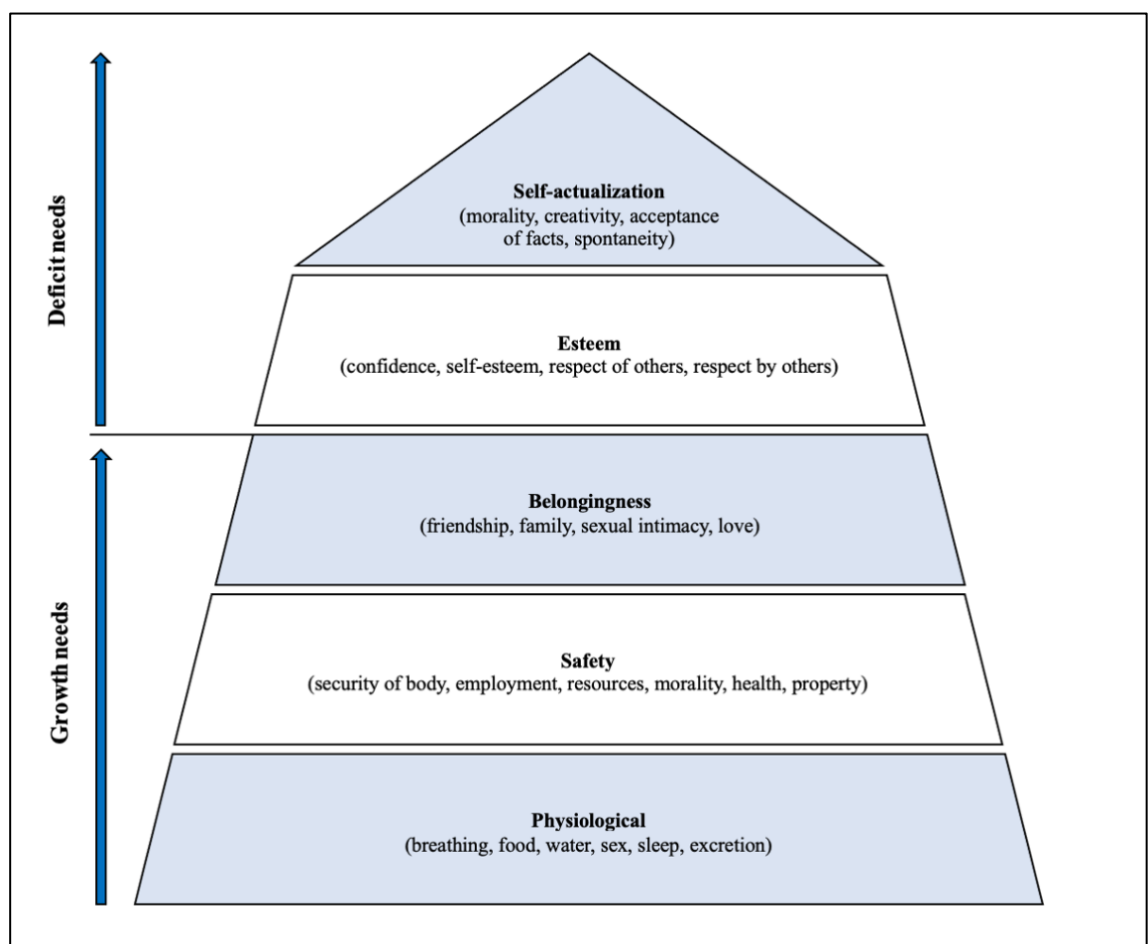
Figure 5: Maslow's need hierarchy theory

(Harrigan and Commons, 2015)

2.1.2.2 Herzberg's two-factor theory (1959)

What destroys motivation and what promotes motivation? This is the core question of one of the best-known motivation theories, Frederick Herzberg's two-factor theory. In 1959, Herzberg focussed on the factors that can trigger job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. This theory is based on the results of a study. Herzberg and his team interviewed numerous employees about various situations in their working lives. The participants came from very different industries and hierarchical levels and were asked to describe situations in which they were particularly satisfied or particularly dissatisfied.

According to Herzberg, two factors are responsible for work motivation. The "motivators" are responsible for triggering job satisfaction, while the so-called "hygiene factors" contribute to eliminating job dissatisfaction.

The hygiene factors, which mainly satisfy extrinsic work motives, describe the working environment (e.g. salary, administration, leadership or quality of interpersonal relationships). This factor determines whether there is dissatisfaction. If the hygiene factors are fulfilled, there is no dissatisfaction. However, this does not mean with absolute certainty that employees are motivated or satisfied.

The motivators primarily satisfy intrinsic work motives and focus on the work itself, such as responsibility, performance, recognition). These aspects can create satisfaction and motivation, but only when the hygiene factors are optimised.

Ultimately, Herzberg's theory states that an employee's satisfaction stems from their work, while their dissatisfaction stems from their working conditions. Fulfilled hygiene factors are the basic prerequisite for good motivation, which stems from the motivators.

"True motivation comes from achievement, personal development, job satisfaction and recognition."

- Frederick Herzberg -
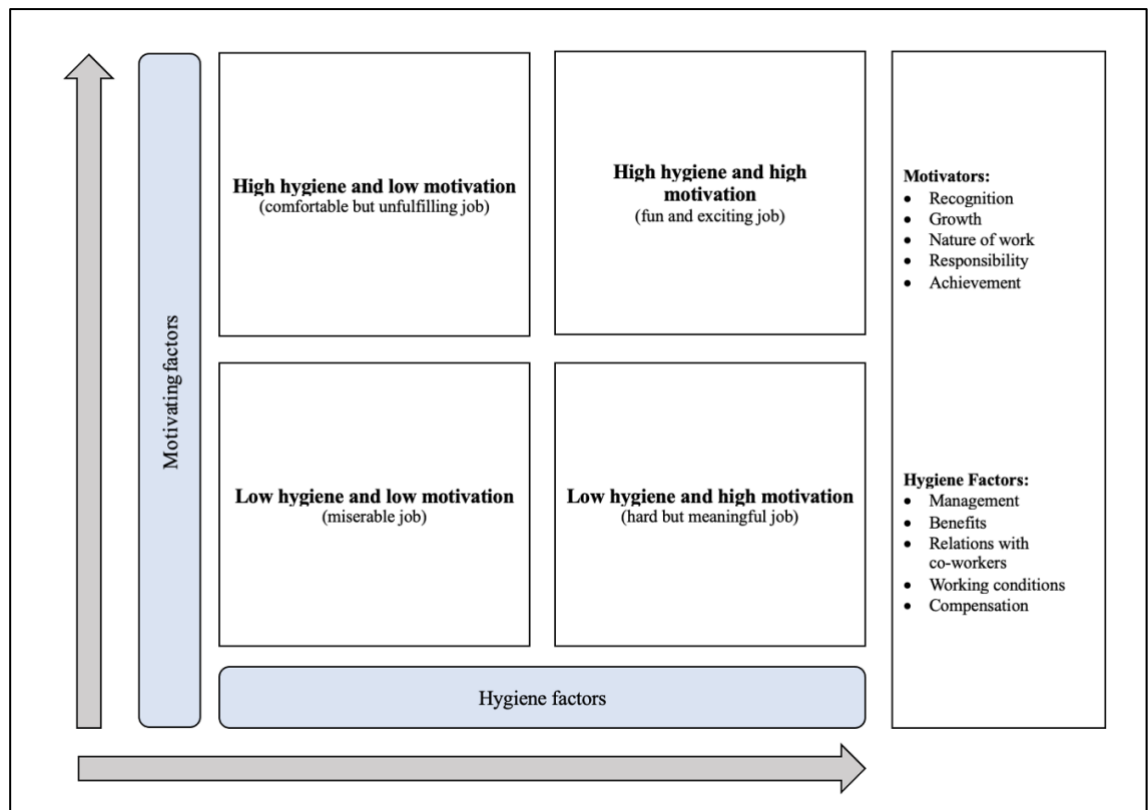
Figure 6: Herzberg's two-factor theory

(Nickerson, 2023)

2.1.2.3 McGregor's X and Y theory (1960)

Douglas McGregor's theory of motivation is divided into two main areas. Theory X and Theory Y.

Theory X represents the basic attitude that the average person is only willing to work out of fear of sanctions or because of a reward system. The average person is reluctant to take on responsibility and needs the guidance of a superior (Kirchler, 2008). According to this theory, an employee can only be motivated by extrinsic measures. McGregor concludes from Theory X that managers who are of the opinion that people function according to Theory X also lead these employees accordingly. The focus of their tasks is therefore on leadership, motivation and control. In this situation, the manager sees the precise definition of work instructions and the monitoring of their execution as their specific task. It is also important that employees are praised, punished and monitored (Haberkorn, 2002).

Douglas McGregor formulated Theory Y as the antithesis of Theory X. In his view, the average person is not passive and unmotivated. Rather, motivation and a willingness to take responsibility are necessary in order to achieve goals. The employee does not have to be led by the line manager, but sets his own goals. The line manager merely takes on the role of guiding and motivating the employee (Kirchler, 2008).

It is difficult to make a general recommendation for the application of one of the two motivational styles, as they should always be considered depending on the situation. However, it should be noted that Theory X in the sense of Frederick Herzberg represents a negative work hygiene, so that a positive and motivated work attitude cannot take place. If the management of Theory Y succeeds in creating a match between the personal goals of the employees and the company goals, McGregor's theory is quite promising, as it can have a productivity-enhancing effect.

2.1.2.4 Vroom's VIE theory (1964)

Victor H. Vroom's valence-instrumentality-expectancy theory (VIE theory) assumes that people generally choose the alternative that maximises subjective utility. This leads to the insight that an individual only makes an effort if a certain goal can be achieved at all or at least the subjective benefit can be maximised. This is also known as the path-goal approach (Holtbrügge, 2005).

"The goal of employees is the satisfaction of personal wishes and needs (e.g. travelling or shopping wishes). The personal goals determine the way in which they fulfil their tasks (performance)." (Bühner, 2004, p. 98).

Vroom's theory is made up of three essential concepts: Instrumentality, Valence and Expectations.

Vroom understands instrumentality as the relationship between means and ends. The performance of an individual is therefore dependent on the benefit, i.e. a personal goal that the individual associates with the fulfilment of the task (Bühner, 2004). An action is therefore only undertaken or intensified if a specific purpose can be achieved with it.

"Vroom defines valence as the subjectively perceived value of a sequence of actions, e.g. job security may have a high subjective value for which an employee would be willing to do more." (Ridder, 2009, p. 268).

Vroom understands expectations as the probability with which the individual expects a certain event to occur that contributes to the achievement of personal goals (Bühner, 2004).

Victor Vroom's valence-instrumentality-expectancy theory assumes that it is not a specific result of an action that motivates performance, but rather the consequences of the action.
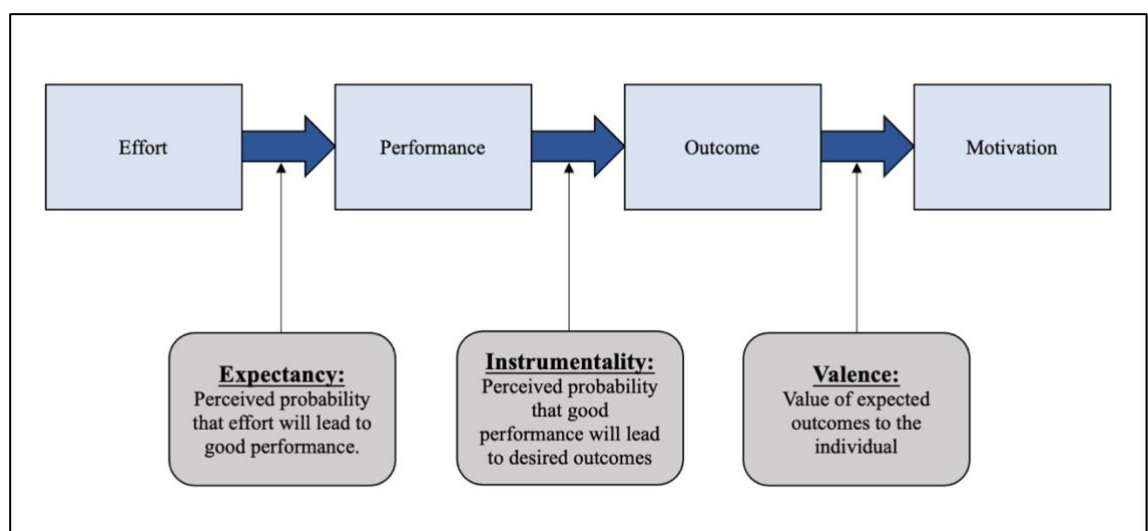
Figure 7: Phases of motivation according to Victor H. Vroom

(Harris et al., 2017, p. 56)

2.1.3   Motivation through leadership

The quality of leadership has a direct influence on employee motivation. Managers have the opportunity to create incentives for their employees in order to motivate them. The best example of this is creating a sense of belonging and well-being. It is also important to find the optimum level of challenge, responsibility and room for manoeuvre for each employee so that they can do their job successfully. If necessary, however, the manager can adjust the level at any time. Target agreements and personnel development also play

a role and harbour great potential for loyalty. Managers create motivation by perceiving their employees as holistic individuals and recognising that they are also looking for fulfilment in other areas in addition to their professional interests. Motivational factors include performance-related pay, personal commitment through the assignment of interdisciplinary tasks and project work, career prospects, self-determination through flexible working time models and empowerment, varied tasks, security through performance appraisal transparency, target agreement systems and a good atmosphere in the team (Niermeyer, 2007). Performance incentives can be divided into short-term and long-term incentives in terms of their duration of effect, as can be seen in Table 1. Most material incentives only have a short-term effect. They are therefore particularly worthwhile when short-term goals have to be achieved. Accordingly, managers should not hope for long-term commitment if they act with short-term incentives, as a familiarisation effect can quickly occur and higher expectations can arise among employees. Leadership, target agreements, responsibility, career opportunities and the team, on the other hand, are intangible incentives that can motivate employees in the long term and keep them performing consistently. They give employees the feeling that they are valued and recognised, that they can make their contribution and realise their potential (Albs, 2005).

	Intangible incentives	Material incentives
Short term effect	Status and award	Salary increase, bonuses, company car, mobile phone, workplace, special leave
Long term effect	Leadership, target agreements, responsibility, career opportunities, team	Performance-related remuneration, equity participation

Table 1: Duration of effect of incentives

(Albs, 2005)

Another way to achieve motivation is through control. This instrument is usually based on a performance-motivating foundation, but its effect depends on the way it is implemented. Not every type of control achieves its motivational goal. Managers should familiarise themselves with the general mechanisms of control, how they are applied in practice and how they can be further developed through continuous learning processes. Result-oriented controls tend to be better than behaviour-oriented controls. It does not make sense to control employees in terms of whether they are constantly at their workplace. Rather, it is important whether and with what results the work is ultimately completed. These results can be tracked in target agreement and feedback meetings, for example (Franken, 2007).

The German legal scholar Dr. Florian Becker (2019) describes four development stages of employee motivation. At level 0, management is not concerned with the issue of motivation; it is assumed that the remuneration for the work is sufficient. At level 1, attempts are made to achieve motivation on the basis of prefabricated images of people with checklists based on Maslow's pyramid of needs. Level 2 enables an individualised approach, with managers focusing on the motives of each individual team member. At level 3, context-orientated motivation takes place, which deals with which aspects of the work and the work itself could be motivating. The fourth and final level attempts to achieve holistic motivation. It involves shaping the influences that increase work motivation both externally and internally, such as optimism, emotions and self-efficacy. This is achieved by systematically building or breaking habits (Becker, 2019).

2.1.4   Employee engagement

Employee engagement provides information about the emotional attachment of employees to their company and thus about their passion and motivation to work for the company. In recent years, employee engagement has evolved from a purely personnel issue to a management issue. Employee engagement is crucial to the success of a company. As a result, more and more companies are looking at how they can maintain and ideally even increase employee engagement. By surveying their workforce, companies can gain an impression of the level of employee engagement. Since 2001, the Gallup Engagement Index has published a comprehensive study on the development of

workplace quality in Germany (Weinert, 2018). The last data collection from 2023, in which 1,500 employees were surveyed, came to the conclusion that the proportion of highly engaged employees is 14%. The proportion of those who have already resigned emotionally is 19%. This is the highest figure measured since 2012 and, especially in times of labour shortages, the willingness of employees to change jobs poses a major challenge. A key factor in the lack of motivation is poor management by line managers. This leads to low emotional loyalty to the employer. The majority of respondents (67%) stated that they have a low emotional attachment to their company. This has a negative impact on absenteeism, performance, profitability, customer loyalty and, above all, the willingness to resign. In 2023, the economic costs triggered by internal dismissals amounted to 132.6 billion to 167.2 billion euros. It is also problematic that 15% of respondents are actively looking for a job, more than ever before. However, companies can do something about this trend, as the willingness to change jobs decreases significantly with a high level of loyalty, as can be seen in Figure 8. Only 15% of respondents with a high level of loyalty are looking for a job. Of the respondents without loyalty, 33 % are already actively looking for a job (Gallup Inc., 2023).

Question: "To what extent are you currently looking for a new job?"

*   I am actively looking for a new job;
**   I am looking around, but I am not actively looking for a new job;
***   I am not looking for a new job
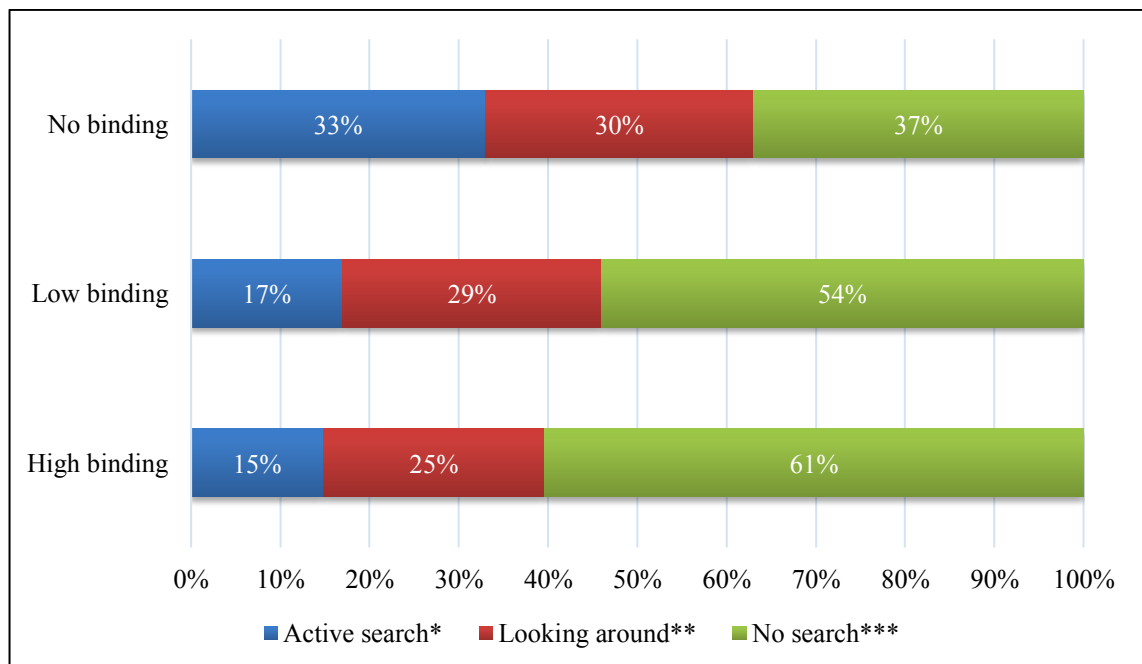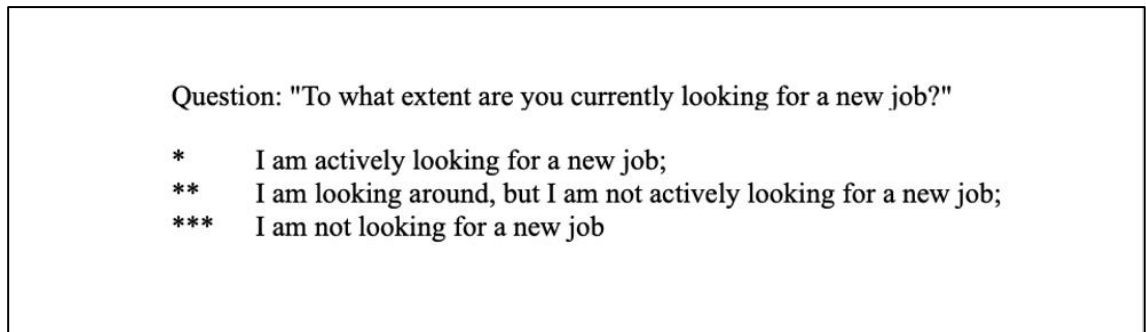
Figure 8: Willingness to switch with high commitment

(Gallup Inc., 2023)

Good leadership in particular can be an important instrument in counteracting these phenomena. It is therefore important for companies to employ good managers in order to create a high level of emotionality in the workforce. "Good leadership builds employees up, motivates them for their work and inspires them for the company." (Gallup Inc., 2023, p. 25).

2.2   *Leadership*

The need for leadership arises from the requirement to coordinate the actions of a company's employees with regard to the objectives set. In the case of personnel management, the focus is on the direct relationship between superiors and their employees and thus on the question of management style and management behaviour. Corporate management is concerned with the organisation and control of the overall system. Personnel management can therefore be seen as a sub-aspect of corporate management. The decisions of corporate management limit the scope for action, have a high binding effect, have a decisive financial impact and therefore affect the entire company (Vahs, 2019). When considering the development of leadership, there were captains of industry in the early days of industrialisation who still acted autocratically. Some time later, managers were supposed to be a kind of social engineer. In the age of ever-increasing consumerism, problems were broken down into individual parts using operations research methods. Later again, leadership was defined by charismatic visionaries. During the age of change, managers acted as coaches for their employees. At present, we are dealing with a demystification of management (Krizantis et al., 2017).

2.2.1 Leadership theories

There are various leadership theories within the field of leadership. They are research-based attempts to scientifically explain the success of leadership. The approaches of these theories have constantly evolved, characterised by the current state of science and social influences. The following points present the most important leadership theories and explain them in more detail.

2.2.1.1 Property-based approaches

These approaches date back to the mid-19th century and focus exclusively on the manager and his or her characteristics as a key success factor.

2.2.1.2 Behavioural approaches

Behavioural approaches assume that leadership success results solely from the character traits of the manager (Kauffeld et al., 2018). Accordingly, the leadership style is merely a "behavioural pattern that the manager displays in interaction with their employees regardless of the situation." (Kauffeld et al., 2018, p. 75). This pattern influences and directs employees without them being able to actively participate. Nevertheless, it can often be observed that even highly qualified employees who are promoted to management positions fail early on, while others with lower qualifications achieve success. This phenomenon illustrates the difficulty of recognising the really important character traits and places the behaviour-oriented approaches more in the artistic than in the scientific field. The different leadership styles will be discussed later in this paper.

2.2.1.3 Situational approaches

The so-called situational approach to leadership means that not only the behaviour of the manager is responsible for the result of leadership, but also the situation in which the manager finds themselves. The Austrian-American industrial and organisational psychologist Fred Edward Fiedler developed the contingency model of leadership theory in 1967, which takes into account the situational circumstances in which the manager finds himself. The basic thesis is that the right leadership style in the right situation can lead to sustainable success, which includes the mastery of all leadership styles and their correct application by the manager. Ideally, the situation should be adapted in such a way

that the manager can cope with it. In the following section 2.3.1.3, Fiedler's contingency theory is analysed in more detail.

2.2.2 Leadership skills

Initially, good technical knowledge was the only criterion that a manager had to fulfil in order to perform their role satisfactorily. Today, other requirements such as management skills, social skills and self-direction skills have been added (Comelli et al., 2014). Figure 9 illustrates how leadership has developed over the decades.
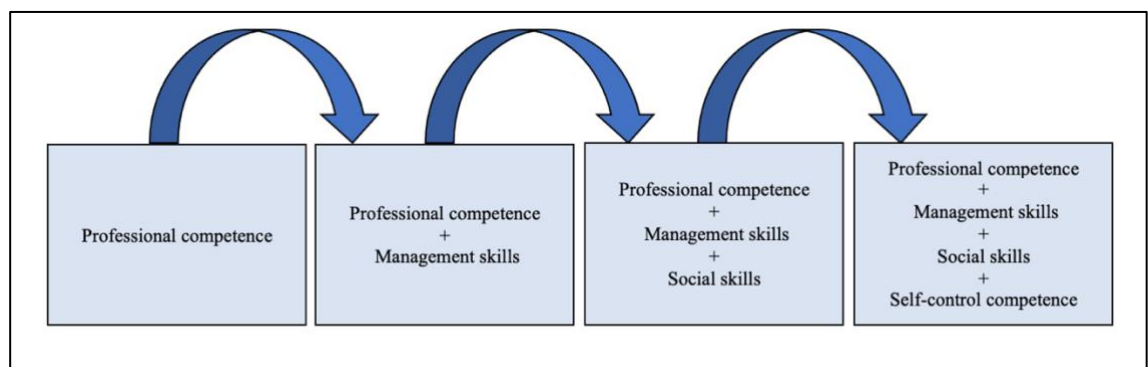
Figure 9: Development of leadership requirements
(Comelli et al., 2014, p. 112)

The self-control skills mentioned above mean that managers today have to find their way in an increasingly complex and constantly changing world. This includes planning, organising and prioritising, both for potential managers themselves and equally in all areas of their lives. It is assumed that they can cope with themselves, take responsibility for themselves and their own actions, stand up for themselves and manage themselves. In concrete terms, this means that companies want to fill their management positions with people who are at peace with themselves, their families, friends and colleagues (Comelli et al., 2014).

It is precisely the so-called soft facts that are the required characteristics of managers of the future, which companies regard as an essential prerequisite for their competitiveness and success. Leadership of the future means coordinating specialists with expertise that the line manager may lack. The ability to work in a team, to motivate employees and to engage with them sensitively and flexibly are ultimately the keys to success for future managers. Due to today's demands, companies must recognise where there is a need for

action and, building on this, improve the behavioural skills of their managers (Rosenstiel et al., 2020). Pioneering personality traits for leadership success are aptitude, performance, responsibility, participation and status. Aptitude includes intelligence, attentiveness, rhetorical skills and judgement. The term performance describes knowledge and performance in sport and school. Responsibility includes qualities such as reliability, determination, patience, assertiveness and self-confidence. Participation includes joint activities, sociability, willingness to cooperate, adaptability and humour. Status is the position within society and the popularity of the manager in his working environment (Rosenstiel et al., 2020). The success of a company is significantly characterised by the leadership skills of its managers. If you want to lead your employees competently, you need certain leadership skills. Some of these leadership skills can be learnt and trained, while others are character traits that are genetically transmitted to us. A prerequisite for managers is that they have a natural authority and feel comfortable in their role as a superior. This creates trust so that employees can also be led. The task of managers is to motivate employees in the best possible way in order to achieve the company's goals as a team. Managers therefore need a wide range of skills and competences, which can be divided into personal, social, professional and methodological competences. Figure 10 shows this differentiation of competences in detail.

More competencies
- Visionary and role model
- Inspirational motivation
- Result orientation
- Creativity
- Perseverance
- Intercultural skills
- Enthusiasm
- Flexibility
- Agility

Methodological competencies
- Solution orientation
- Lean methods
- Analysis methods
- Information procurement
- IT systems & platforms
- Languages

Professional competencies
- Logistics key figures
- Sustainability
- Contracts
- Financial ratios
- Cost analysis
- Quality

Social skills
- Empathy
- Communication
- Conflict resolution
- Coaching
- Leadership
- Dialogue skills
- Motivation

Personal skills
- Courage
- Willingness to learn
- Control
- Motivation
- Security
- Willingness to perform

Figure 10: Competencies for managers

(Helmold, 2023)

Personal skills include motivation, willingness to learn, self-confidence, security and control. Social skills include empathy, motivation and the ability to resolve conflicts. Above all, communication is an important management task. Communication is the medium through which people connect with the organisation and its goals (Seliger, 2014).

2.2.3 Leadership behaviour and personality

Leadership is an important career driver and is named in second place after personality, as Figure 11 shows. This statistic from 2015 shows the results of a survey on the most important career drivers of Generation Y in Germany. In the survey, 60% stated that their line manager had a significant influence on whether or not they progressed in their career (Absolventa Statista Research, 2015).
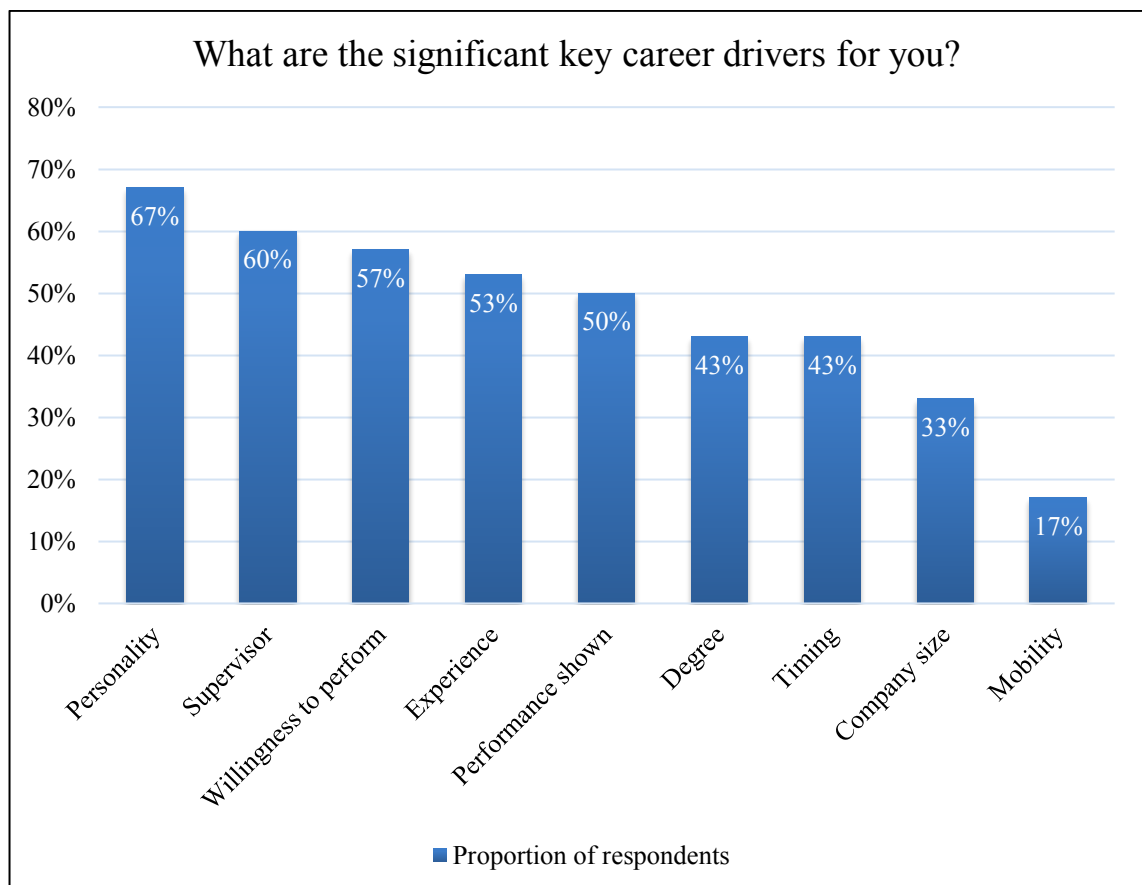
Figure 11: Career Drivers

(Absolventa Statista Research, 2015)

Employees and managers should have a clear picture of themselves and their own personality structure. Tests specially developed for this purpose provide a differentiated picture of how a person will behave in certain situations. Especially in challenging situations, it is particularly important for managers to be aware of their own reactions in order to be able to control them better. Personality disorders can also be identified using international classifications such as ICD-10 or DSM-5. Narcissistic personality disorder, for example, is characterised by a feeling of greatness in relation to oneself, one's own achievements and one's own talent. Those affected are preoccupied with fantasies of great success, power and prestige. They are convinced that they are unique and special and have little empathy. The feelings and needs of others are not recognised (Albrecht, 2021). "Over the years, various studies have shown that there are five basic factors that contribute to personality. These factors are commonly referred to as the Big Five. They include neuroticism, extraversion (surgency), openness (intellect), conscientiousness (dependability) and agreeableness." (Northouse, 2021, p. 26). This five-factor model offers another way to improve self-perception, revealing a person's openness to new experiences. It shows how conscientious a person is or whether they are less conscientious (Dattner and Hogan, 2013). Extraversion, emotional stability and agreeableness are further points that can be uncovered. Answering specific questions, such as how you react to your own and others' failures, provides a revealing result (Dattner and Hogan, 2013). This model is also known as the OCEAN model and has been analysed and documented by a large number of researchers. The American Lewis R. Goldberg had a significant influence on research into the five-factor model. O stands for openness, originality and open-mindedness. C stands for conscientiousness, control and compulsiveness. E stands for extraversion, energy and enthusiasm. The letter A stands for impartiality, altruism and affection. Finally, the letter N stands for neuroticism, negative affectivity and nervousness. These five factors change only slightly over the course of a person's life (Antoncic et al., 2018). In addition to self-reflection, another requirement for managers is to be able to lead themselves.

This requires focussing attention and concentration on oneself. This can be supported by training opportunities for mental strength, intelligent defence against unimportant information, targeted absorption of the essentials and a friendly approach to oneself and

one's surroundings (Krizantis et al., 2017). Figure 12 shows the five factors according to Lewis R. Goldberg (1990).

Neuroticism	Extraversion	Openness	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness
The tendency to be depressed, anxious, insecure, vulnerable, and hostile	The tendency to be sociable and assertive and to have positive energy	The tendency to be informed, creative, insightful, and curious	The tendency to be accepting, confirming, trusting, and nurturing	The tendency to be thorough, organized, controlled, dependable, and decisive

Figure 12: Big Five Personality Factors
(Goldberg, 1990, pp. 1216-1229)

2.2.4 Leadership environment

Since industrialisation, the nature and scope of work tasks, the resources of employees and the content of interaction between managers and employees have changed fundamentally. Due to the megatrends of individualisation and flexibilisation, management will in future focus on the different wishes, needs and expectations of the individual and attempt to harmonise these with the needs of the organisation. Today's employees are used to being informed in a variety of ways and being able to make their own decisions. They have a high level of social intelligence as they act in various roles as partners, parents, colleagues and competitors. However, these relationships are now more unstable and superficial, as working in changing teams is now widespread. Leadership can provide orientation and reliability at this point. With the merging of private and professional life and the blurring of boundaries in the workplace, it is up to managers to support a good work-life balance (Krizantis et al., 2017). Flexibilisation that is independent of time and space also means restlessness and distraction due to the need for self-organisation. People have a need for social interaction. Appreciation is perceived through gestures, facial expressions and eye contact. Personal praise through words and facial expressions has a pleasant stimulating effect and leads to a release of hormones (serotonin) in the human body. Managers should consider each employee individually

and take into account the different characters and pay attention to who needs support with self-organisation in terms of working hours and work commitment. It is important to ensure a good balance in order to maintain a good work-life balance (Britz-Averkamp and Eich-Fangmeier, 2020). The spatial and temporal distance between managers and employees as well as the possibilities of networked self-organisation are currently calling presence-oriented and controlling management concepts into question (Gebhardt et al., 2015).

The flexibilisation of the world of work requires managers to provide sufficient support, guidance and freedom to increasingly self-sufficient employees so that they can fully develop their potential and are plausibly supported in their self-image as an important resource. The increasing blurring of the boundaries between work and private life brings with it new pressures that management should be able to deal with in a preventative and employee-orientated manner. Another issue is the foreseeable increase in the diversity of employee groups, which requires integration efforts. With the end of the heroes at management level who, as micromanagers, were superior to their employees at their own discretion, we now find independent employees with their own solution strategies who are empowered and supported by their managers (Gebhardt et al., 2015).

2.2.5 Leadership situation

The perception of the leadership role depends on the situation in which the manager finds themselves. Depending on the situation, managers exhibit different behaviours that can lead to leadership success or failure (Bröckermann, 2016). The leadership situation includes the culture and the corresponding political system of a country, the industry, the constitution of the company and the legal framework, the structure and organisational culture, the respective function (e.g. finance, marketing, research and development, production and personnel), the size of the company, personality traits and the working atmosphere as well as the power and recognition of the manager (Rosenstiel et al., 2020).
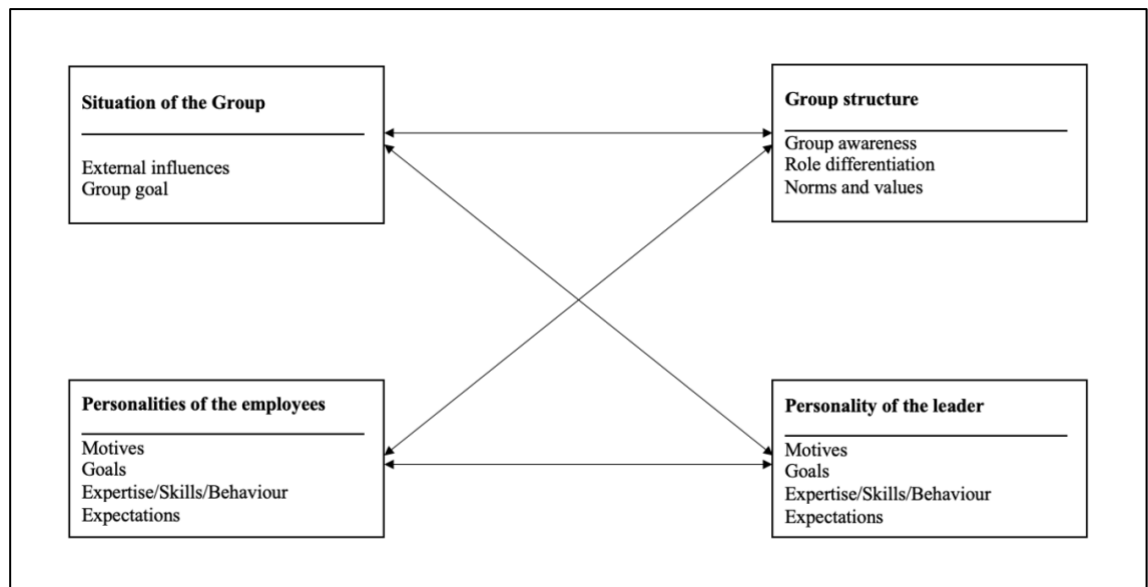
Figure 13: Interaction theory according to Hans Rudolph Peters (1970)

(Bröckermann, 2011, p. 111)

Looking at a group, there are four factors (see Figure 13) that can influence the situation. It is shaped by the team members and their motives, their goals, knowledge, skills and behaviour as well as their expectations. Ideally, these should largely coincide within the group and also between the manager and the group members. Managers should exemplify the formal and informal values and norms, as these are regarded as guiding principles. The group structure describes group awareness, role differentiation and cohesion. Goals are existential for groups and the manager plays a supporting role in achieving group goals. Finally, external influences are involved in the leadership situation (Bröckermann, 2007).

In the context of leadership, a situation arises in which the leader gains power over his or her subordinates through the control of relevant resources. A distinction is made between the following resources: Reward, punishment, role model, expertise, information and legitimation. With the resource of power through reward, the manager places the employee in a position that is perceived as positive, for example through a salary increase or promotion. It is based on the classic exchange of performance for reward (Kasper and Mayrhofer, 2009).

In the long term, this can lead to performance only being provided in return for rewards. Dismissal, demotion, transfer or the assignment of unpleasant tasks as punishment, on the other hand, can be perceived as an emotional rejection. They only generate short-term obedience because they are based on fear, frustration and alienation. The effect of these two described bases of power depends on the perceived strength and the probability that a reward or punishment could occur. An effect of power through role modelling is based on the presentation of the superior and his desirable character traits, which the employee would like to emulate in order to ultimately be accepted. Expertise and information of the superior are often due to his hierarchical superiority. Power through legitimacy is based on social norms within organisations. This creates long-term satisfaction and performance through internationalisation, as agreement is created between managers and employees regarding the applicable values (Kasper and Mayrhofer, 2009).

2.2.6 Leadership and health

Work intensification, information overload, rapid changes, complexity and pressure to make decisions are increasingly determining our lives. The ever-increasing number of sick days due to illness and mental illness is a growing challenge that companies, and managers in particular, must face. Employees who are satisfied with their manager have less absenteeism, are more satisfied with their work, have a better mood, are more emotionally resilient and work more efficiently. Leadership behaviour therefore has a major influence on the health and job satisfaction of employees, who have a need for orientation and control, for meaning and coherence, for self-esteem enhancement and self-esteem protection as well as for commitment. Managers also have an influence on work processes, the distribution of tasks and the amount of work, play a decisive role in shaping the team atmosphere and should be the point of contact for employees' concerns, including health issues (Mehlau, 2014).

2.2.7 Leadership success

In order to be successful and recognised as a manager, it is an advantage if your own intelligence is slightly above the average of those you lead. Social skills should be orientated towards the manager's ability to adapt to different people in different situations.

In addition, a high level of motivation and willpower should be present as well as the willingness to stand up to resistance in order to achieve goals. Successful managers are open to new experiences, can adapt flexibly to new situations, show a willingness to learn, are well organised and can easily discard outdated strategies (Rosenstiel et al., 2020). A 2002 study by the CMI, Institute for Change Management and Innovation, of 178 German companies from a wide range of industries shows the various measures taken to manage change over the last five years. The introduction of new organisational and management structures is essential in order to remain competitive and innovative.

1. Introduction of new organisational and management structures
2. Strategic realignment
3. Introduction of new IT structures and systems
4. Merging of companies
5. Introduction of process management
6. Miscellaneous (corporate culture, quality management etc.)
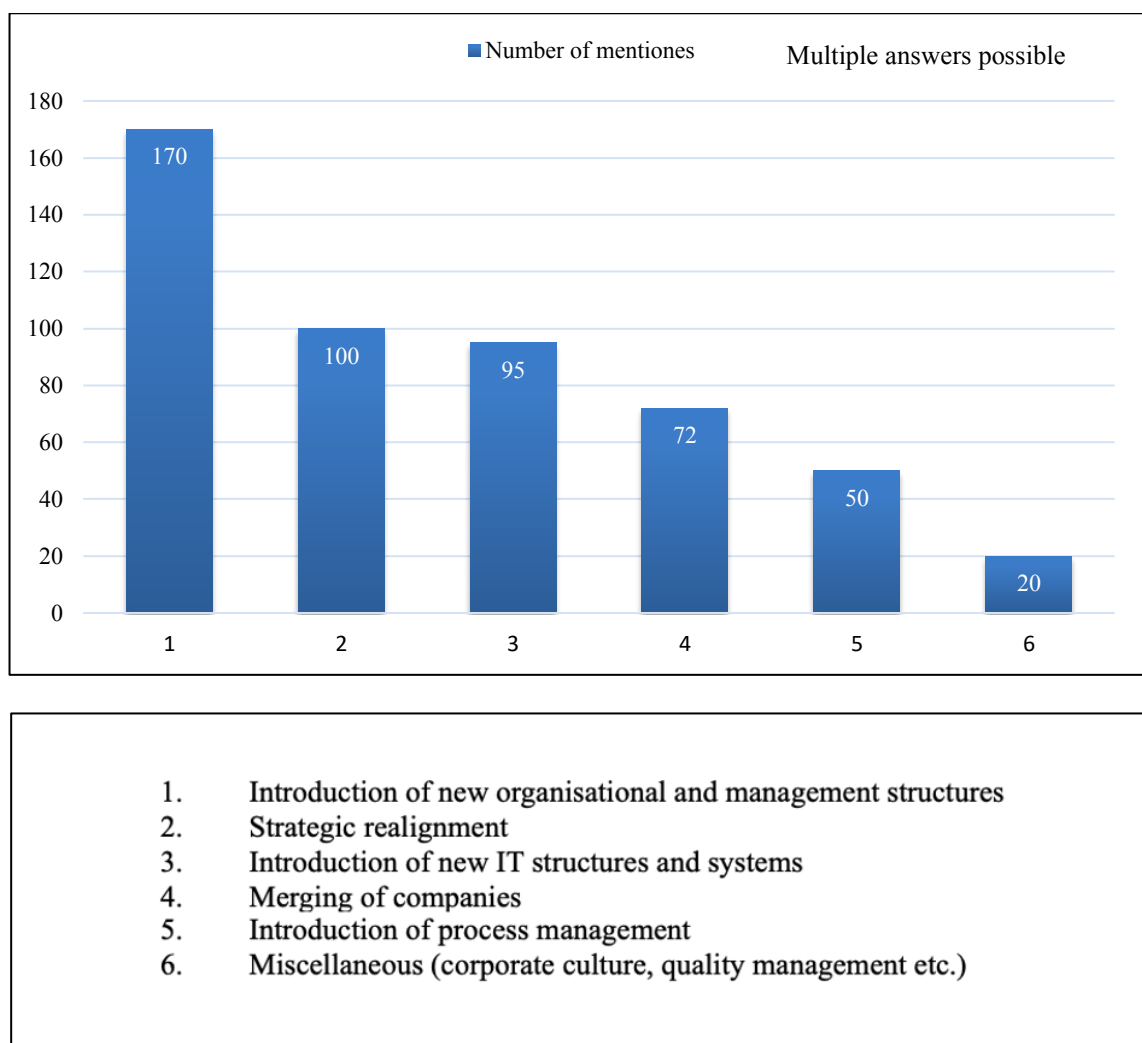
Figure 14: Types of change processes

(Vahs, 2019, p. 2)

Hierarchies will have to be rethought in the future, which means that leadership will no longer be characterised by roles and positions. Many managers will have to justify their claim to leadership to their employees and prove themselves. Shaping the future through change is another area that managers will have to address. One consideration for the future would be for teams to choose their managers freely and decide together which leadership qualities are required in terms of content and social skills and who is given which area of responsibility. A democratic organisation could be determined by majorities and decide on roles and positions through internal elections (Gebhardt et al., 2015).

2.3   Leadership style

Between 1937 and 1940, the German-American social psychologist Kurt Lewin, together with Ronald Lippitt and Ralph White at Ohio State University, was the first to investigate the effects of different leadership styles on people's behaviour. In their experiments, they attempted to differentiate between the effects of the individual leadership styles authoritarian, laissez-faire and democratic (cooperative) on the potentially hostile or aggressive behaviour of boys who met at a holiday camp to do handicrafts. The authoritarian group showed a high level of tension and hostile behaviour. They behaved submissively and obediently, and the intensity of the work was high (Scheer and Kasper, 2011). The laissez-faire group showed no interest in the task and low cohesion combined with dissatisfaction. The democratic group was relaxed and there was a friendly atmosphere with strong team cohesion. They had a greater interest in the work and showed the most original work results. The productivity of the democratic group was similar to that of the authoritarian group. The members of the authoritarian group worked slightly more, but were less motivated, which is why the quality and originality of the work was lower. The IOWA experiments can be seen as the starting signal for empirical leadership research. It is questionable whether the observation of children can be transferred to employees (Scheer and Kasper, 2011).

Tannenbaum and Schmidt's approach, which is based on the IOWA studies, takes a one-dimensional view of the degree of decision-making by line managers. Leadership behaviour is divided into seven ideal types, which are differentiated according to the intensity of employee involvement in decision-making. The authoritarian management style is characterised by the fact that the manager makes and orders decisions without

involving the employees. In the patriarchal leadership style, the manager tries to win over their employees in favour of their decisions before ordering them. The informative manager allows questions to be asked about the decisions made in order to achieve a certain level of acceptance. The consultative manager provides information about their intentions and gives employees the opportunity to express their opinions and make suggestions for improving their decisions in advance. In the co-operative leadership style, the manager presents the problem and allows their employees to develop possible solutions, from which they then select a suitable solution. Participative leaders point out existing problems and define the framework within which the team can decide on a solution. Democratic leadership means allowing the team itself to make responsible decisions. Tannenbaum and Schmidt point out that the appropriate leadership style should ideally be chosen depending on the situation. They criticise the fact that only participation in decision-making is used as a differentiating criterion and other aspects of the relationship between superiors and employees are ignored (Tannenbaum and Schmidt, 1958).

Laissez-faire leadership is characterised by the absence of managers. It describes a rather passive and ineffective management behaviour in which managers do not check whether employees are achieving their goals. They bypass their leadership and work responsibilities. There is little interaction between the manager and the team members and the performance of those led is low (Furtner and Baldegger, 2013). Bröckermann (2011) is of the opinion that a change in leadership style is inappropriate and impractical, as it confuses employees and does not appear authentic. A leadership style describes the similarities in the behaviour of certain people and character types. One option is to either adapt the management situation and, if this does not help, to replace the manager.

Leadership theories attempt to explain what the success of leadership depends on. The development of substantive leadership theories is moving away from transactional leadership, the pure exchange of performance for reward, and towards transformational leadership, the enthusiasm of employees through the charisma and demeanour of the manager (Schirmer and Woydt, 2016). This is intended to increase employee motivation and identification. Various approaches exist under the umbrella term of new leadership models, such as the full-range-of-leadership model, in which the transactional leadership relationship forms the basis for an exchange-based leadership relationship with

performance results via target agreements and delegation. With the addition of transformational leadership, charisma, inspiration, the ability to think and appreciation are conveyed in the full range of leadership. This raises the question of whether and to what extent an interference with the principles and values of employees can be excused. Different variants of transformational leadership can be found in business practice. The servant leadership approach is a transformational leadership approach that is frequently encountered in practice. The benefit of the manager is subordinate to the benefit of the employees. Shared leadership, shared, agile, democratic leadership or empowerment, developed from the increasing complexity and dynamism caused by globalisation and digitalisation. The demand for more democracy in company decisions and greater employee involvement has led to a shift away from leader-centred, vertical leadership towards a post-heroic superior who serves as a catalyst for shared leadership (Schirmer and Woydt, 2016). Figure 15 below shows the leadership theories described in chronological order.
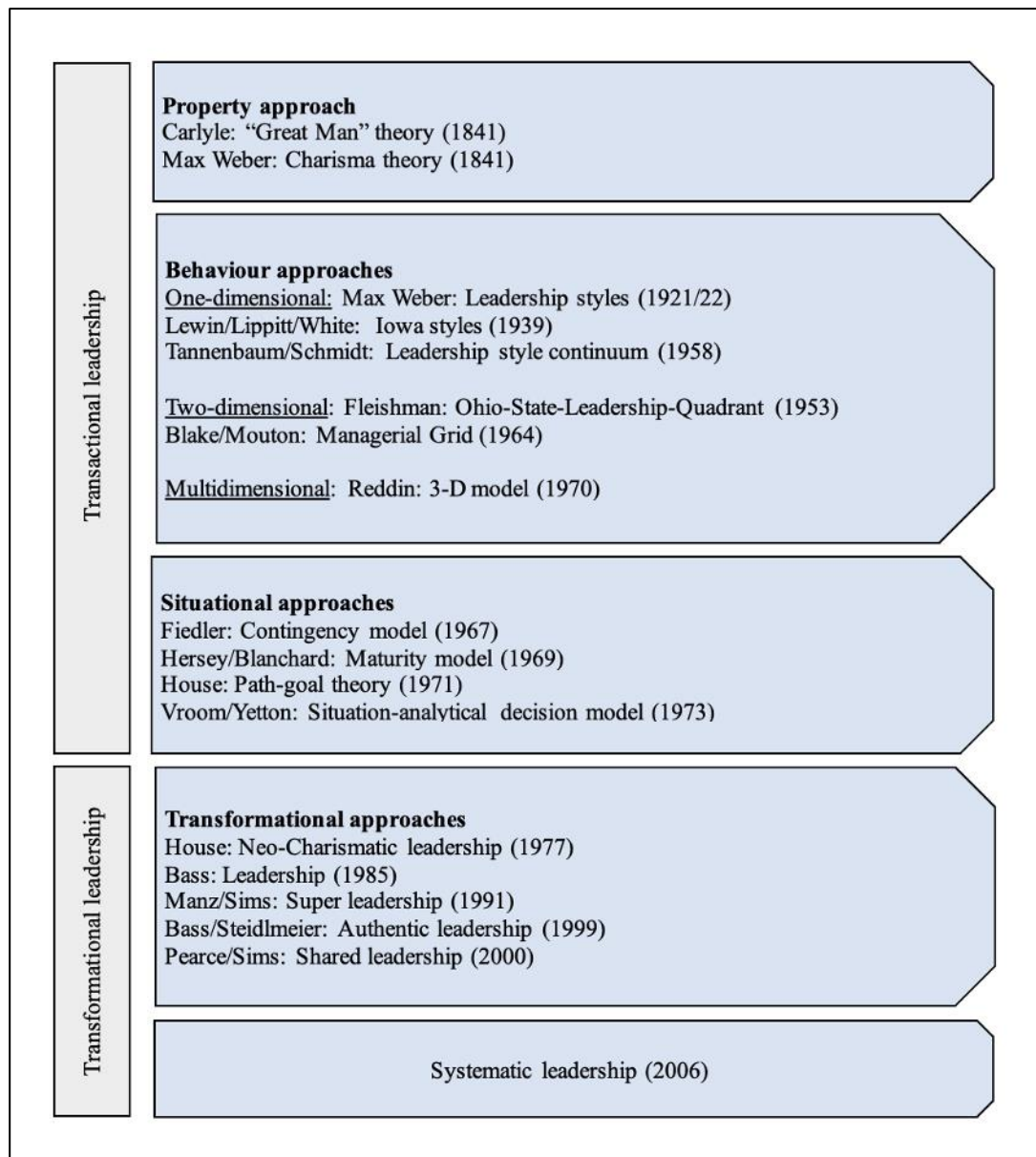
Figure 15: A chronological overview of selected leadership theories

(Schirmer and Woydt, 2016, p. 158)

2.3.1 Transactional leadership

The transactional management style is results-orientated and is based on rewarding or punishing the people being managed. A reward is granted if the behaviour leads to the achievement of the specified goal, a punishment is given if the set goals are not achieved. This exclusively task- and result-oriented leadership behaviour means that only the achievement of goals is important. Transactional leadership is based on the conditional reward method, which represents a kind of barter between the employee (work

performed) and the manager (fixed consideration such as salary). It should be noted that only a material consideration can be regarded as transactional. "Contingent reward is transactional when the reward is a material one, such as a bonus. Contingent reward can be transformational, however, when the reward is psychological, such as praise." (Bass and Riggio, 2005, p. 8) Secondly, transactional leadership is characterised by control mechanisms in which the manager does not intervene in what is happening and only intervenes and takes countermeasures in exceptional situations (e.g. when employees are overwhelmed or fail to solve problems). The third variable is the laissez-faire behaviour of the manager, who holds back after the task has been assigned and only becomes active to check the result or at the express request of the employee. A transactional management style leads to an expected effort for the employee, which is agreed and therefore calculable. This creates a reliable basis for planning, as it leads to an expected performance of the employee (Blessin and Wick, 2013). Transactional leadership is fundamentally based on a reinforcement principle, which means that the manager controls the path as well as the goals and rewards or punishments. Bernhard M. Bass' assumptions are based on the path-goal theory of leadership (Blessin and Wick, 2013).

2.3.1.1 Ohio State Leadership Studies (1937)
The leadership style research conducted at Ohio State University by Kurt Lewin, Ronald Lippitt and Ralph White had a major influence on the leadership approaches presented. These studies deal with the description of leadership behaviour and determine the two most important dimensions of leadership by evaluating a special questionnaire, the so-called Leader Behaviour Description Questionnaire (LBDQ for short). Relationship-orientation and task-orientation. Relationship-orientated behaviour refers to respect, consideration and building trust in the way managers interact with employees. Task-oriented behaviour is based on the definition of work processes, structures and rules as well as the assignment of responsibilities to employees. The studies of Ohio State University are regarded as "formative pioneers of empirically based leadership research" (Scholz, 2000, p. 938) and are the basis for the further developed models of transactional leadership (Blessin and Wick, 2013).

2.3.1.2 Leadership continuum (1958)

The leadership model by Robert Tannenbaum and Warren H. Schmidt, known as the leadership continuum, is a classification of leadership behaviour that uses employee participation as the main criterion. A leadership style is characterised by "the behavioural pattern of a superior towards employees who are bound by instructions" (Wöhe and Döring, 2013, p. 151). This one-dimensional approach is a simplified representation of alternative leadership styles, which are placed in a logical order depending on the decision-making involvement of those being led, thus providing an overview of the gradation. The continuum shows the possible leadership styles, starting with the authoritarian style, in which the decision-making power lies with the manager, through to the democratic style, in which the decision-making power lies with the employees. This model does not evaluate the leadership style in terms of suitability or situational categorisation (Scholz, 2000).
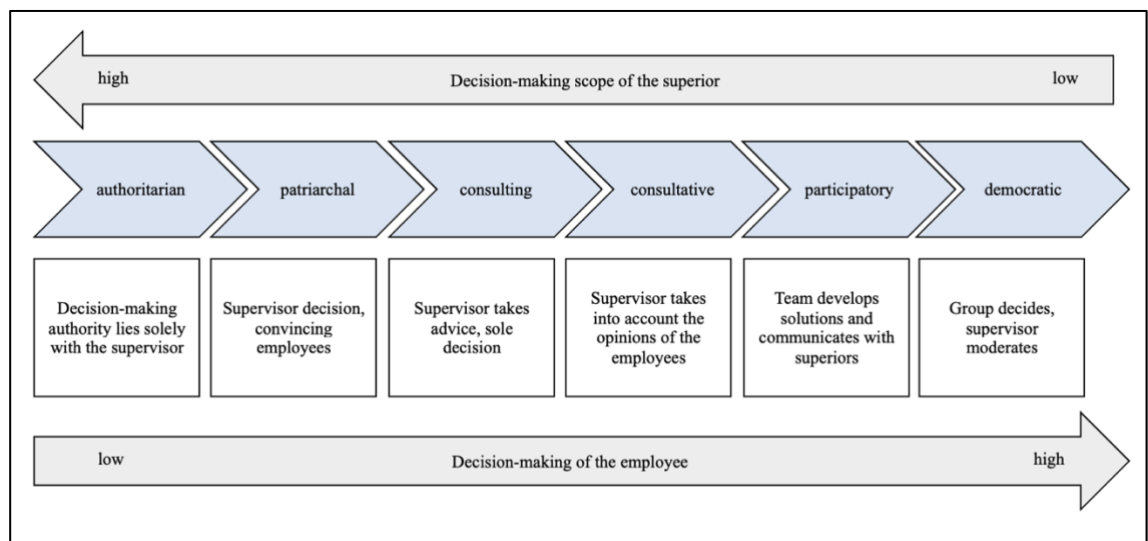
Figure 16: Leadership continuum according to Tannenbaum and Schmidt
(Wöhe and Döring, 2013)

2.3.1.3 Contingency theory (1967)

In the course of leadership research, the understanding of a leadership style that can be applied regardless of the respective situation was increasingly called into question and could ultimately no longer be upheld. As a result, the so-called contingency approaches developed, which are based on the assumption that a certain leadership style should be

applied depending on the situation. According to this approach, a certain leadership style should be favoured over others depending on the situation in order to sustainably increase leadership success. There is no final certainty that the chosen leadership approach will achieve the best result. Contingency arises to the extent that there is a strong correlation between the leadership style and leadership success in the given situation. Due to the consideration of the situation in the leadership style, contingency models are also referred to as situational approaches (Blessin and Wick, 2013).

However, the individual contingency theory models show that the proportion of situational elements in the respective leadership style approaches diverges significantly and in some cases even represents an insignificant component. With the contingency theory of leadership effectiveness, Fred E. Fiedler developed the first falsifiable and empirically verified leadership theory that includes the two components of employee and task orientation. The main merit lies "in the emphasis on the situational character of leadership and in the rejection of the fiction of an (always) optimal leadership style." (Scholz, 2000, p. 927).

On the basis of the LPC score (Scholz, 2000), which describes the type of leadership, relationship-oriented managers will be more effective in certain situations and task-oriented managers in others. This model is based on the assumption that it is not the leadership style but the situation that is the variable. Managers "must therefore be trained in their diagnostic skills so that they can determine the appropriate leadership situation for their leadership style." (Scholz, 2000, p. 926). Fred E. Fiedler assumes that the leadership orientation of managers cannot be trained and therefore no flexible reaction to the situation is possible. Rather, managers should be selected according to the situation or the situations should be designed in such a way that they suit the respective managers. This model has been heavily criticised in many respects, from the methodological approach to the correlations between the parameters. Regardless of this, the first simultaneous consideration of the employee and task dimensions remains a pioneering achievement that has significantly influenced the further development of situational leadership approaches (Rosenstiel et al., 2020). Figure 17 below shows Fred E. Fiedler's contingency model.
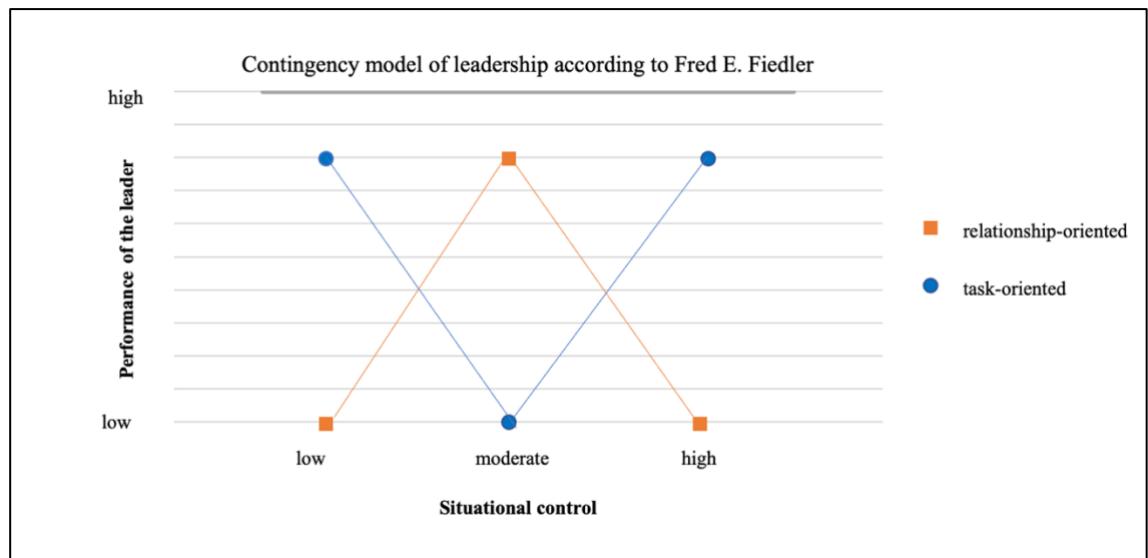
Figure 17: The contingency model according to F.E. Fiedler
(Bartscher and Nissen, 2017)

2.3.1.4 Leadership maturity model (1969)

With their maturity model of leadership, which is also based on the Ohio State Leadership Studies, the Americans Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard have created a synthesis of different leadership approaches and created their own leadership model by adding a third dimension to the existing two dimensions of relationship-oriented and task-oriented behaviour (Rosenstiel et al., 2020), which takes into account the maturity level of those being led.

This maturity level of the employee is characterised by work-related maturity such as skills, expertise or experience and by psychological maturity such as motivation, willingness to take responsibility or self-confidence. In their model, a distinction is made between four leadership styles, none of which Hersey and Blanchard consider to be superior, but recommend selecting and applying the respective style depending on the situation. The plotted course of the graph (see Figure 18) shows the development curve of the manager, which requires a change (Blessin and Wick, 2013) to a corresponding leadership style as the employee's level of maturity increases.
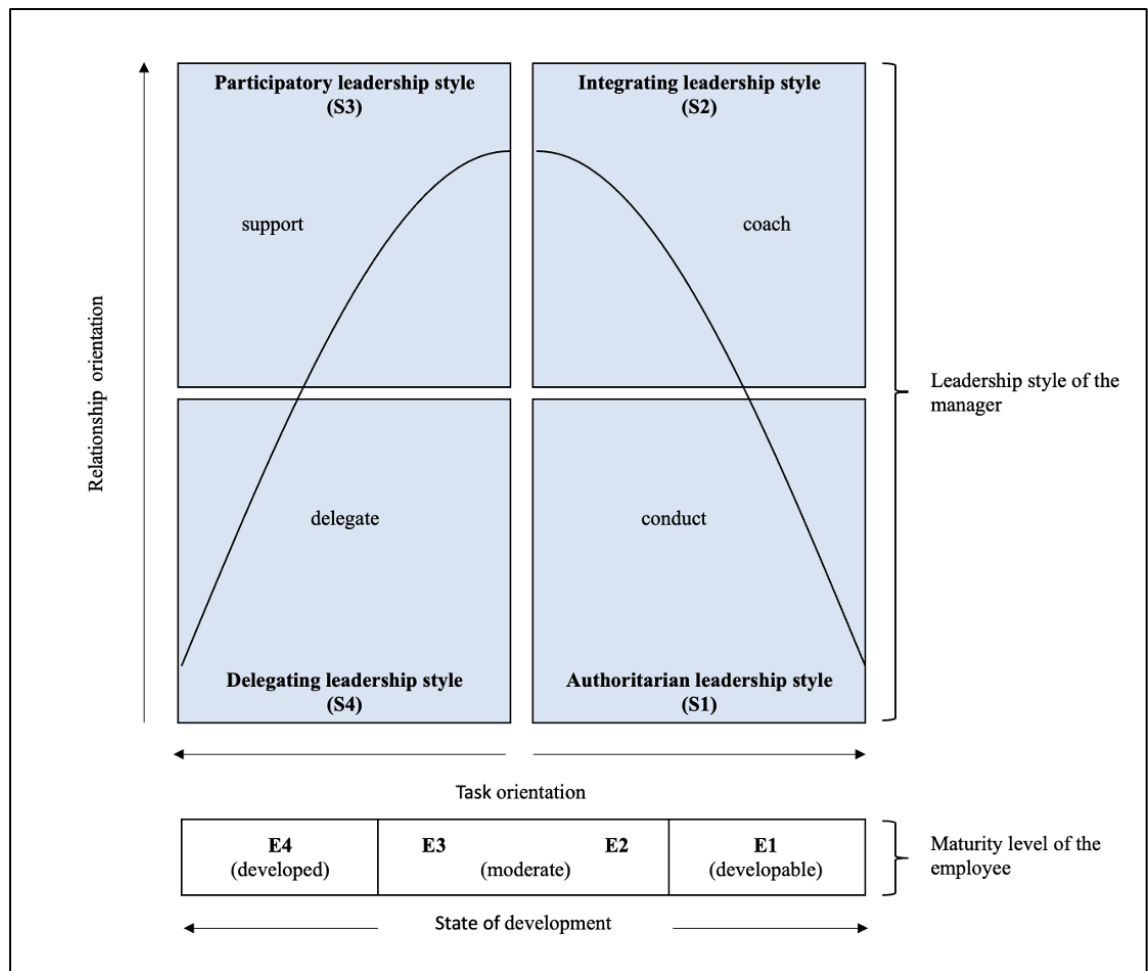
Figure 18: Maturity model according to Hersey and Blanchard
(Hersey and Blanchard, 1972, p. 165)

The *authoritarian leadership style* with low relationship orientation and high task-relatedness means for the manager a strongly directing, instructional behaviour, which includes clear control in addition to precise activity descriptions, instructions, information and time specifications. The low level of maturity of the employee in this phase implies a high capacity for development, as both work-related maturity and psychological maturity are low.

The *integrating leadership style* involves a degree of control over the way the work is done. Nevertheless, an attempt is made to include the opinion of the employees at this stage, but the decision-making power remains with the leader. Therefore, it is important to communicate the decisions made to the managed employees and to convince colleagues. The increasing maturity of the employee is a basic prerequisite for this.

In the application of the *participate leadership style*, employees are given a more active and significant role in decision-making and the execution of tasks. In this phase, part of the responsibility is transferred from the manager to the employee. Instructions and directions are given to a much lesser extent. The supervisor only gives support when needed. The employee's level of maturity has increased further, but he still needs support.

The *delegative style of leadership* occurs with employees who have a very high level of maturity and involves the complete transfer of responsibility to the employee. In its most extreme form, delegation leads to the employee being able to decide independently on the further course of action after an orienting briefing at the beginning, with little interaction on the part of the manager, resulting in a certain detachment from leadership behaviour and complete autonomy of the employee.

According to Hersey and Blanchard, the most ideal approach of the manager is a gradual development of the managed employee towards the delegation style. If the employee's maturity level is lowered by the situation, a reversion to an earlier leadership style is possible in exceptional cases.

The leadership maturity model has a pragmatic character, as it suggests suitable recommendations for action that can support managers in certain situations. "These prescriptions provide leaders with a valuable set of guidelines that can facilitate and enhance leadership." (Northouse, 2021, p. 99). Furthermore, this model emphasises the flexibility of managers, as they can only be effective if they can adapt their management style (Northouse, 2021). The focus on the employee and the fact that they and their individual situation are at the centre of management considerations is the great advantage of this theoretical model for employee management. Within the framework of the maturity model, employees can be managed individually and motivated appropriately at the same time.

2.3.2 *Transformational leadership*

In the last two decades, transformational leadership has taken an important place in leadership philosophy (Khan et al., 2020). A transformational leadership style involves the "elevation to a higher level of need or value" (Blessin and Wick, 2013, p. 116) through transformation, i.e. changing the behaviour of employees. Transformational leadership begins with the expected effort, which leads to "performance beyond expectation" (Blessin and Wick, 2013, p. 117) through the use of four defined techniques via "increased motivation to achieve planned results" (Blessin and Wick, 2013, p. 117). The four variables for increasing performance are defined by Bernard M. Bass and Bruce J. Avolio as follows: (Bass and Riggio, 2005)

- *Idealised influence* (also known as charisma) arises in a manager as soon as they act as a role model for their employees. By acting as a role model, they set high ethical and moral standards, as a result of which the people they lead identify with them and emulate them. "Managers are admired, respected and trusted" (Bass and Riggio, 2005, p. 6), provided their statements and actions are reliable. In their behaviour, they place "the overall interest (of their organisation) above their personal goals and benefits." (Pelz, 2016, p. 96).

- *Inspirational motivation* aims to broaden employees' perspectives and increase their understanding of common goals by making them challenging yet engaging and by communicating the importance of tasks and goals. "Transformational leaders behave in ways that motivate and inspire those around them by providing meaning and challenge to their followers‘ ideas." (Bass and Riggio, 2005, p. 6). Communicating a vision promotes employee engagement and an optimistic, team-oriented way of working.

- *Intellectual stimulation* takes place when leaders are supported and encouraged to question existing behaviours, routines, values and beliefs and to adopt new perspectives. This enables employees to develop new patterns of action to solve

problems. In doing so, the manager promotes both the existing skills and the potential of the employees. This leads to independence and creativity in the search for new solutions. The manager basically lives an open culture of mistakes and encourages the employees to try out new approaches. "Followers are encouraged to try new approaches, and their ideas are not criticized because they differ from the leaders' ideas." (Bass and Riggio, 2005, p. 7).

- *Individualised care* (also: appreciation) aims to take into account the needs of the supported employees while achieving the desired goals. The manager accepts the differences of the employees and supports each employee individually with regard to their expectations, strengths and weaknesses. The manager acts as a mentor or coach and aims to achieve a higher level of personal potential and professional perspective for each individual. "Individualised consideration is practiced when new learning opportunities are created along with a supportive climate." (Bass and Riggio, 2005, p. 7)

These four variables with the leader as role model, visionary, enabler and coach are clearly related to the leadership tasks necessary in change processes.

The transactional and transformational leadership styles are not mutually exclusive or contradictory. Rather, the use of both leadership styles depends on the personality of the manager and the situation in which they find themselves (Frey and Schmalzried, 2013).

Bernhard M. Bass and Bruce J. Avolio have expanded these two leadership styles to include the laissez-faire leadership style and combined them into a complex leadership approach, the *Full Range Model of Leadership* (see Figure 19). The combination and situational use of these styles allows for a range of different leadership options. This leadership continuum means that one leadership style alone is not sufficient to cover the range of leadership needs, but that a combination is required (Bass and Riggio, 2005; Northouse, 2021).
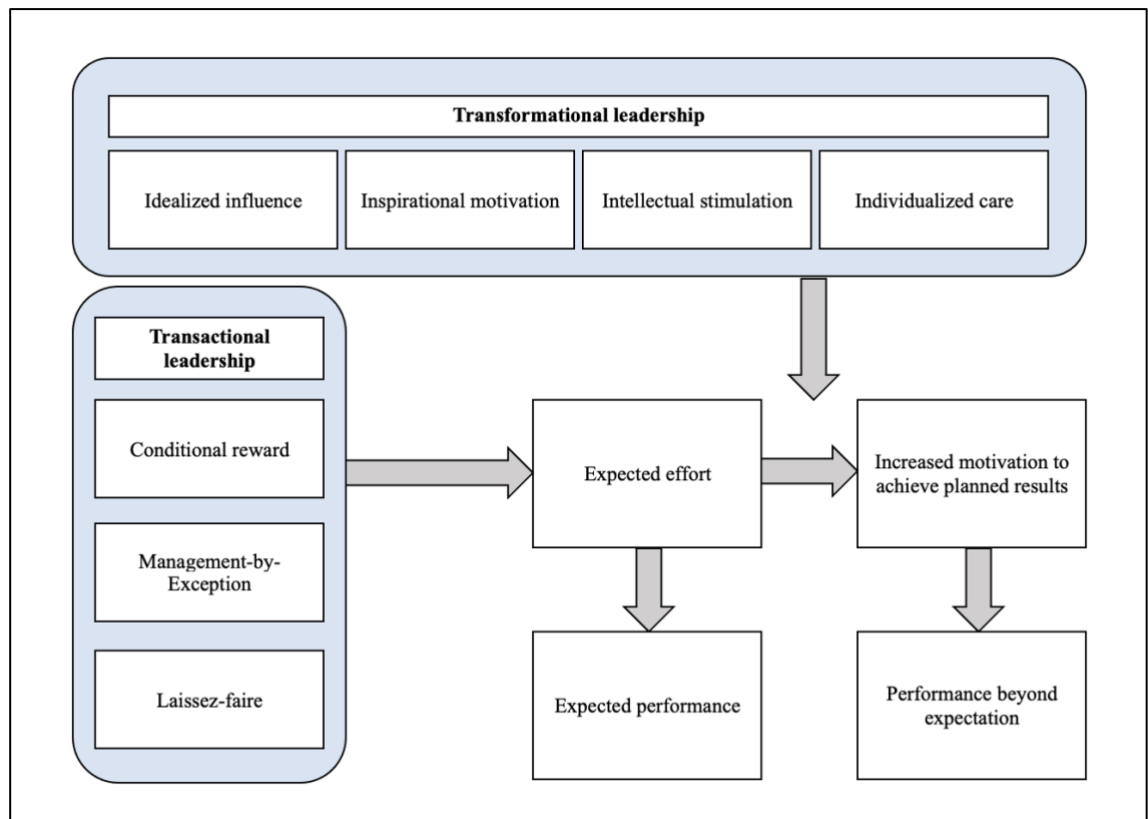
Figure 19: Full range of leadership model according to Bass and Avolio

(Blessin and Wick, 2017)

The following four management behaviours are derived from these variables:

- Idealised influence becomes charismatic leadership through the charismatic impact and role model function of the manager.
- Inspirational motivation means the development of enthusiastic visions by the manager and becomes visionary leadership.
- Intellectual stimulation by the manager encourages employees to find creative solutions to problems and innovations and stands for challenging leadership.
- Individualised support is based on appreciation and employee orientation and is expressed in supportive leadership (Scholz, 2000; Spisak and Della Picca, 2016).

2.3.2.1 Charismatic leadership

The charismatic leadership approach is essentially based on the work of Max Weber, who in his charismatic leadership ascribes the aspect of the person's ability to rule or the extraordinary qualities of the leader (Lang and Rybnikova, 2013). In leadership research, charisma can be understood as the "specific charisma of a leader that is independent of professional skills and ultimately brings about a change in values in the person being led." (Scholz, 2000, p. 954).

Robert J. House has analysed leadership behaviour and the leadership environment in his *Charismatic Leadership Theory*. The charismatic manager as leader is characterised by dominance and a strong will to power, a strong will to influence his environment, high self-confidence, strong future orientation and eloquent rhetoric. The charismatic manager thus creates indicators that those he leads will follow him.
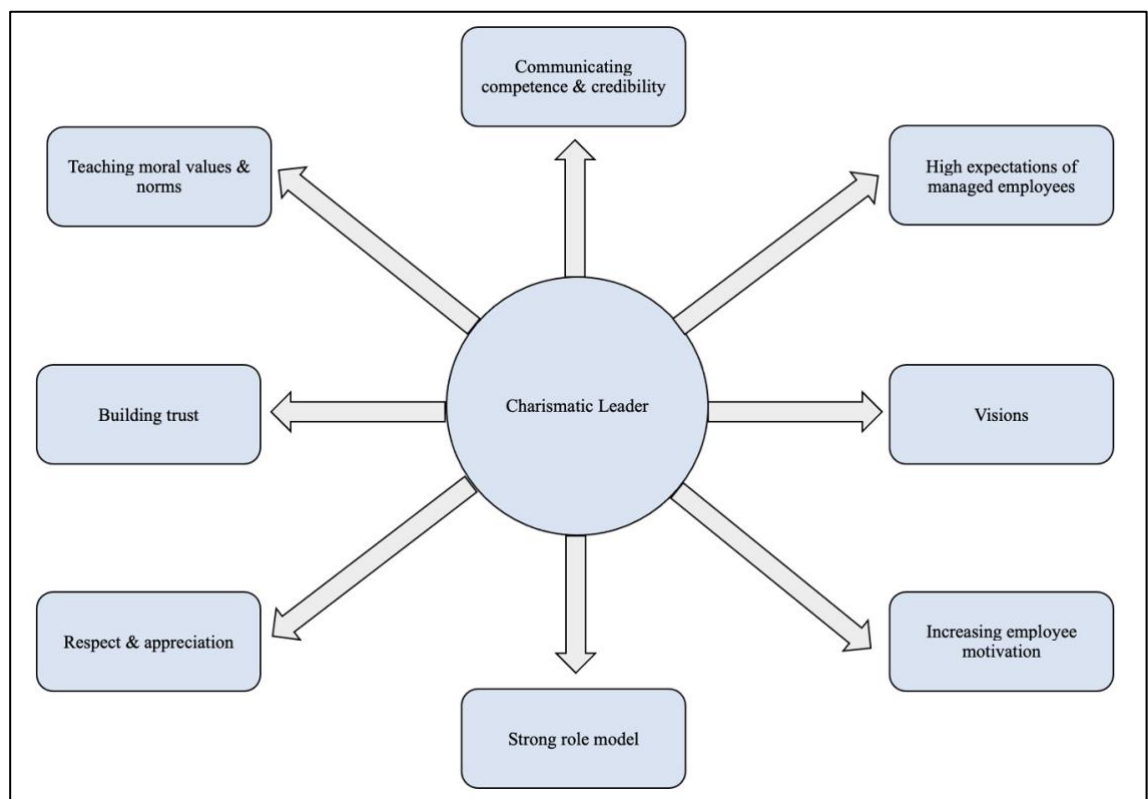
Figure 20: Indicators of the charismatic leader

(Northouse, 2021)

2.3.2.2 Challenging leadership

The intellectual challenge of the employee is at the centre of the manager's demanding leadership style. The aim is, on the one hand, to emphasise the performance of the employee and to bring him "into the role of an internal entrepreneur" (Scholz, 2000, p. 961) and, on the other hand, to achieve a stabilisation of this action that leads to sustainable use, i.e. to empowerment (Scholz, 2000).

It is challenging when managers encourage their employees to "question prevailing views and look at problems from new angles."(Spisak and Della Picca, 2016, p. 72). This challenges existing beliefs and attitudes and promotes creative solutions and innovative thinking. The active involvement of the employee as an expert in their area of responsibility is a basic prerequisite (Spisak and Della Picca, 2016).

2.3.2.3 Promotional leadership

This type of leadership means that the manager places the individual employee at the centre and is based on recognition, appreciation, personal development, constructive criticism and a high degree of employee participation. The manager supports and encourages the employee and acts as a coach (Spisak and Della Picca, 2016). The instruments of supportive leadership are coaching and mentoring.

The strong focus on the needs of the employee and his or her individual development corresponds to what is known as *servant leadership*. The concept of servant leadership was developed by Robert K. Greenleaf and puts service first: the servant leader is first a servant and then a leader (Greenleaf, 2002). This approach puts the person to be led at the centre. "Servant leadership empathize with them, and nurture them. Servant leaders put followers first, empower them, and help them develop their full personal capacities." (Northouse, 2021, p. 225)

In another leadership approach, called *resonant leadership*, the leader is in tune with his environment and creates resonance with his community by using his emotional intelligence, which enables him or her to control the emotions of others and build trusting relationships (Boyatzis and McKee, 2005).

2.3.2.4 Visionary leadership

Views on the conceptual definition of the term "vision" differ. Nevertheless, some commonalities or similarities can be found in the definitions. "A vision is a clear, credible and consistent picture that represents the future development of the company and provides a guideline for a framework for action, but is still non-binding enough to be able to act flexibly." (Vahs, 2015, p. 124).

The task of the leader in the visionary leadership style is to create a vision and to communicate it credibly to those being led so that the employee are enthusiastic about the vision. The prerequisite for this is that the leader himself is convinced of the vision and has a strong own identification with the company. In this context, visionary leadership helps to ensure that organisational action ultimately offers a transparent view of the whole.

Critically, however, it is noted that a vision that is too much tailored to the individual needs of the leader can lead to blindness to developments in the corporate environment.

2.3.3   Heroic and post-heroic leadership

Thomas Carlyle's so-called Great Man Theory from the early 20th century is one of the oldest historical approaches to leadership. According to this theory, leadership qualities are innate and are reflected in physical characteristics such as height and health. In addition, leadership qualities are expressed through innate characteristics such as assertiveness, motivation and intelligence. According to this approach, people follow leaders because of their innate leadership qualities; success is attributed solely to the leader. This theory ignores other factors influencing success, with the exception of the personality dispositions of the manager. As a generalist model, this trait-oriented approach explains leadership success in an oversimplified and inadequate manner, which conversely does not mean that leadership success is unaffected by leadership traits (Wagner, 2020).

Post-heroic management theory rejects the idea of the lone decision-maker. It is replaced by a team concept in which all employees complement each other and work together in

different ways. The task of managers is primarily to moderate internal and external communication. The boundaries of the organisation are seen as changeable. Post-heroic managers are able to open up new organisational areas and abandon existing ones in order to achieve the company's goals. Utilising the skills and knowledge of employees is the key to success in order to reduce business uncertainty and avoid stagnation. Managers can achieve this by learning to build trust and responsibility in the team and by creating organisational framework conditions (Rüth and Netzer, 2014). Kurt Baecker (2015) describes "post-heroic leadership [as] [...] not only situational, incrementalist and improvised, but also process-oriented in the sense that there is a constant re-examination of which ideas, diagnoses, competences and resources were used under which circumstances and which experiences were made." (Baecker, 2015, p. 1 et seq.) The constructs of post-heroic leadership research are self-leadership, superleadership, empowering leadership and shared leadership. Superleadership and empowering leadership aim to increase the self-determination and independence of managed employees and to develop them into self-leaders. In shared leadership, all members of a team assume leadership responsibility and share leadership. The formal manager works together with the team at the same level. The result is the sharing of knowledge, higher performance and effectiveness. Heroic leadership, on the other hand, leads to high dependency and helplessness as soon as the leader leaves the organisation (Furtner and Baldegger, 2016).

2.3.4 Charismatics and toxic leadership

When looking at leadership concepts from a historical perspective, it becomes clear that heroic leadership was generally the standard in the past. This relied on the abilities of charismatic leaders as a motivational and performance incentive. The ability of charismatic leaders is to bind other people to themselves and thus make them receptive to enforcing their own will. Behind charismatic managers there is often a profound narcissistic personality disorder as the original driving force. This manifests itself in an insatiable desire to compensate for offences in early childhood with great achievements in adulthood, whereby there is a danger that the feelings will turn into envy or hatred (Schmidt-Lellek, 2004). As long as employees are treated fairly, they feel less stressed,

suffer less from mental illness, have less absenteeism, are more committed to the workplace and are therefore significantly more productive and valuable to the company (Grote, 2012). In everyday working life, however, situations can arise in which it may be necessary to align one's own actions with toxic behaviour. Toxic leadership behaviour promotes turnover intentions, lower satisfaction, lack of commitment and lower performance and can lead to psychological stress such as anxiety, depression and exhaustion (Wiradendi Wolor et al., 2022). As a study by Work-Life Consulting shows, 73% of employees state that they have already worked under a toxic boss (Singh et al., 2018). What is important here is the possibility of free choice, which toxic people do not have, as they are trapped in their specific behavioural repertoire and can therefore only act toxically. A certain charisma, persuasiveness and self-confidence are also often desirable in managers and employees. Most people are more willing to follow a radiant leader than a boring or shy, reserved person. The most important difference to toxic people should be that clear and comprehensible goals are set that are in line with the values and goals of the organisation (Schüler-Lubienetzki and Lubienetzki, 2017).

2.4   Summary of Literature Review

The literature review first presents some of the most prominent motivation theories, including the flow model, Maslow's pyramid of needs, Herzberg's two-factor theory, McGregor's X and Y theory and Vroom's valence-instrumentality-expectancy theory. These theories are frequently discussed in the literature in order to explain and optimise the behaviour of employees in organisations. The flow model describes a state of intense concentration and high performance that occurs when a person is up to a challenge and can fully utilise their abilities. Maslow's pyramid of needs suggests that people have certain needs that they must fulfil in a certain order, from the most basic needs such as food and security to higher, self-actualising needs. Herzberg's two-factor theory distinguishes between hygiene factors, which prevent dissatisfaction, and motivators, which promote satisfaction and motivation. McGregor's X and Y theory describes two assumptions about human nature: Theory X, which assumes that people are naturally lazy and in need of motivation, and Theory Y, which assumes that people are intrinsically motivated and want to take on responsibility. Vroom's valence-instrumentality-

expectancy theory emphasises the importance of expectations and rewards in predicting motivation.

An important difference between these theories is their focus and emphasis on different aspects of motivation. The flow model focuses more on the individual state of flow, while Maslow's pyramid of needs focuses on needs and their hierarchy. Herzberg's theory emphasises the distinction between satisfaction and dissatisfaction, while McGregor's X and Y theory emphasises assumptions about employee behaviour. Vroom's theory emphasises the importance of expectations and rewards as motivators. Overall, these different theories offer different perspectives and approaches to explaining and promoting employee motivation in organisations.

In accordance with the research objective of this thesis, particular attention will be paid to the theoretical foundations of Herzberg, Maslow and Vroom. Basically, the question of whether and how employee motivation is influenced by management behaviour is to be clarified. Some of the employees interviewed have certain ideas about their superiors. In addition, they talk about their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the management to which they are exposed. Some interviewees also comment on their expectations and which rewards they perceive as motivators, based on the theory of Victor H. Vroom.

In addition to motivation, leadership models such as the leadership continuum, the Ohio State studies, Fiedler's contingency theory and Hersey and Blanchard's maturity model are also considered in detail. These models emphasise the diversity of leadership styles, the adaptation of leadership to the situation and the development of employees, and basically divide leadership theories into behaviour-oriented, situational and object-oriented theories. Another sub-area of leadership is the implemented leadership style that is applied by superiors. These different styles are generally categorised into transactional and transformational leadership. Studies of transactional leadership styles include the Ohio State studies. They identified two dimensions of leadership behaviour: initiating structure and relationship orientation. This research emphasised the importance of leaders being both task-oriented and employee-oriented to ensure effective leadership. The leadership continuum, which followed a few years later, is a theory that states that leadership is not an either-or concept, but a continuum of different leadership styles ranging from authoritarian to participative. The theory emphasises the importance of

situational leadership, in which the leadership style is adapted to the respective situation and the needs of the employees.

The scientific statement of the leadership continuum is based on the statements of some of the people interviewed in this empirical study, which confirm this and are described in chapter five. Another theory that was presented is Fiedler's contingency theory. It argues that the success of a leader depends on the fit between the person's leadership style and the situation. The theory suggests that certain leadership styles are more effective in certain situations than others and views leadership as a dynamic interaction between the leadership style and the situation. Finally, Hersey and Blanchard's maturity model looks at the development and maturity of employees and suggests that the leadership style should be adapted accordingly. It distinguishes between four levels of employee development: incapable and unwilling, incapable but willing, capable but unwilling, and capable and willing. Depending on the maturity level of the employees, the management style should vary from a delegative to a directive management style.

Potential differences between leadership theories could relate to the emphasis placed on different factors such as leadership style, situation, employee development and adaptability. While the leadership continuum emphasises the diversity of leadership styles, the Ohio State studies focus on the balance between task and employee orientation. Fiedler's contingency theory emphasises the importance of the fit between leadership style and situation, while the maturity model considers employee development as a central aspect. Despite their differences, these theories complement each other and together offer a more comprehensive perspective on effective leadership. A further sub-objective of this thesis is to find out which leadership style is perceived as particularly pleasant and whether a change in the implementation of different styles can be noticed by employees. The results of the interviews in this research paper are analysed to find out how leadership behaviour influences employee motivation and which leadership style is considered effective. This holistic approach, combining theories of motivation and leadership, provides a comprehensive perspective on the development of employees in organisations.

3.   **Research Question**

In this chapter three, the research title is first presented, which serves as a guideline for the entire study. Based on this, the three research questions are formulated, which

precisely identify the specific problems or topics to be investigated. The research objectives are then set out to define the focus and framework of the scientific enquiry and to support the achievement of the research questions.

3.1 Research title

With the current research project entitled *"The concepts of post-heroic leadership: demands on future managers. A qualitative study to investigate the influence of leadership behaviour on employee motivation"*, this work aims to investigate the challenges and demands on future managers in the context of the post-heroic leadership approach. Through a qualitative study analysing leadership behaviour and its influence on employee motivation, insights will be gained to help companies develop effective leadership concepts that meet both the needs of employees and the demands of the modern work environment.

3.2 Research question

This Master's thesis examines the extent to which leadership style can have an influence on employee motivation and performance. Furthermore, the effects of a toxic leadership style on employees are examined. Another aspect of this thesis is the elaboration of the requirements for future leaders with regard to current trends. Finally, the following three research questions form the basis of this thesis:

- What influence does leadership behaviour have on the performance motivation of subordinates?
- Can a change in leadership be recognised by the employees?
- What effects can toxic leadership have on the work environment and on the individual employee?

3.3 Research objectives

The research objectives of this thesis include:

- ***Objective 1****:* To investigate the influence of leadership behaviour on employee motivation.

- *Objective 2*: To provide results on changes in leadership behaviour compared to the past and how employees evaluate these changes.

- *Objective 3*: To discuss the impact of toxic leadership in the workplace to help managers recognise and avoid toxic leadership.

The main objective of the research is to investigate the impact of leadership behaviour on employee performance motivation (*Objective 1*). In addition, there are two further sub-objectives. Firstly, the study should provide results on whether leadership behaviour has changed compared to the past and whether certain changes are perceived as positive by employees or not (*Objective 2*). Another sub-objective deals with toxic leadership and is intended to provide information on the effects of toxic leadership in the workplace (*Objective 3*). This should help managers to avoid toxic leadership and recognise the signs of this type of leadership. The methods used to answer these questions are presented in chapter four below.

4. __Methodology and Design__

This master's thesis utilises qualitative empirical research according to Philipp A. E. Mayring using the problem-centred interview. The background is that this type of research is based on perceptible social problems (Mayring, 2016). The research questions posed in this master's thesis relate to problems that affect our society and companies. In addition, social behaviour is to be interpreted. The idea of qualitative research can be understood as social interaction as an interpretative process, as people have to interpret social situations for themselves and recognise what roles are expected of them and what options they have. Since social action is to be understood as interpretation, the researcher himself can actively act as an interpreter (Mayring, 2016).

4.1 Research design

The research design refers to the research plan or the type of research. On a formal level, it describes the research process and the research objective and defines certain rules as framework conditions to determine the possibilities of communication between researcher and subject (Mayring, 2016). In this master's thesis, access to the subject is

established via a personal interview. Subjective meanings cannot simply be derived from observations. In the expert interview, the subjects themselves therefore have their say, as they are the experts for their meanings. The qualitative interview refers to the evaluation of the interview material using qualitative-interpretative techniques. In a problem-centred interview, where the problem has been previously analysed by the interviewer, the interviewee can speak almost freely and is only guided by the interview guide. This method is similar to an open dialogue, but the interviewer focuses the conversation on a specific problem. The problem was analysed in advance and certain aspects were identified and compiled in an interview guide (Mayring, 2016).

4.2 Methods

The research method used in this master's thesis is exploratory and based on qualitative research. This includes important steps of qualitative content analysis, such as coding the material, identifying categories and subcategories, summarising key statements and interpreting the results. To this end, ten experts were interviewed individually using a semi-standardised, problem-centred interview guide. During the interviews, questions deviating from the guidelines could be asked spontaneously. The recorded interviews were then transcribed and analysed using Mayring's qualitative content analysis. "Qualitative content analysis as a research instrument [...] aims to systematically analyse texts by processing the material step by step with theory-guided category systems developed from the material." (Mayring, 2002, p. 114).

Through this analytical approach, deep insights and findings can be gained to clarify the above-mentioned research questions.

4.3 Six quality criteria of qualitative research according to Philipp Mayring

Mayring's qualitative research is conducted and evaluated according to six quality criteria.

The *procedural documentation* contains a detailed record of the individual work steps so that the procedure can be checked by everyone. The procedure of this work is comprehensible through the interview guide and additionally through the use of the coding guide (see Appendix C). This criterion is fulfilled.

The interpretation of the results should be justified with *comprehensible arguments*. In this thesis, the formation of categories and subcategories as well as the interpretation of the results in chapter five justify the interpretation, which also fulfils this criterion (Mayring, 2016).

The *rule-based approach* requires a systematic procedure with the help of previously defined rules. The step-by-step performance of each individual paraphrase, the subsequent generalisation and final reduction (see Appendix B) ensure the quality of the interpretation and thus fulfil the criterion (Mayring, 2016).

Subject proximity in qualitative research means interviewing the subjects in their natural everyday world. In the interviews conducted, they were asked about a topic that concerns them privately, which explains the proximity to the subject and therefore fulfils this criterion (Mayring, 2016).

The quality criterion of *communicative validation* requires the work to be presented to the test subjects again to find out whether they can confirm the interpretation. No validation can be said to have taken place in this study, as the test subjects were not confronted with the topic afterwards. The criterion is not fulfilled (Mayring, 2016).

Triangulation includes the use of different methods, researchers and samples in order to find different solutions to the research question. This approach does not apply to this work and therefore this criterion is also not fulfilled (Mayring, 2016).

4.4   Data collection

The following sections explain the approach to empirical research on which this Master's thesis is based.

4.4.1   Description of the sample

The sample was drawn from the immediate circle of acquaintances. Only people who are employed and have at least five years of professional experience were interviewed. These criteria were discussed with the respondents before conducting the individual interviews. The interviewees are between 25 and 60 years old and both male and female. No emphasis

was placed on specific occupational groups or sectors. The selection was done randomly. Table 2 gives an overview of the gender, age, profession and industry of the sample.

Inter-view	ID	Gen-der	Age	Job Ref.	Industry	Date	Time	Dura-tion
1	C.H.	f	60	Strategic Buyer	Automo-bile	24/06/2024	2.00 p.m.	9 min.
2	T.B.	m	34	Team Leader Shipping Dep.	Logistics	25/06/2024	1.30 p.m.	14 min.
3	W.B	m	44	Tech-nical Repre-sentative	Building materials	26/06/2024	1.15 p.m.	7 min.
4	C.E.	m	50	Supply Chain Manager	Automo-bile	26/06/2024	3.30 p.m.	10 min.
5	S.H.	f	54	Adminis-trative assistant	Public service	27/06/2024	4 p.m.	12 min.
6	E.J.	f	25	Corpo-rate Learning Special-ist	Process engineer-ing	28/06/2024	1 p.m.	12 min.
7	N.D.	m	27	Tech-nical Clerk	Pharma	28/06/2024	3 p.m.	12 min.
8	J.M.	m	48	Project Manager	Pharma	30/06/2024	2 p.m.	7 min.

9	C.G.	f	27	Lawyer's assistant	Lawyer's office	01/07/2024	2:30 p.m.	8 min.
10	A.R.	m	31	General agency business clients	Insur-ance	01/07/2024	6:30 p.m.	7 min.

Table 2: Overview of the sample

4.4.2 Conducting the expert interviews

When researching people and their social interactions, certain rules must be observed. The protection of personal data that provides information about the personal or factual circumstances of the interviewees must be safeguarded and is regulated by law. In expert interviews, personal facts may emerge during the transcription. If they are not relevant to the purpose of the interview, they can be deleted from the relevant interview passages. Otherwise, this data must be anonymised so that it is no longer possible to draw conclusions about the interviewee. This was not necessary for the interviews conducted. Furthermore, personal data may not be stored for longer than is necessary for the purpose of the research. Another aspect is informed consent. The researcher is obliged to inform the interviewee about the research objective of the study and to obtain their consent to the use of the data obtained in the interview. The interviewee should also be informed that they can withdraw their consent at any time, even retrospectively. Maintaining confidentiality is an important point when conducting and recording expert interviews (Kaiser, 2021). The information and consent of the ten interviewees was obtained before the interviews began. The interviews took place in private in order to maintain confidentiality. They were recorded and then transcribed verbatim.

4.4.3 Evaluation of the interview material

The audio files were transcribed using Microsoft Word. Matching content was marked in yellow in the appendix of the interviews (see Appendix A) and then inserted as a

shortened paraphrase in Table 17 for the corresponding interviewee. The abbreviations from Table 17 were then inserted into a separate table for each interviewee, including the frequency with which the individual expressions were mentioned. Microsoft Excel was used for the further evaluation of the statements and for the creation of diagrams.

4.4.4 Interview guideline

1. Performance Motivation
1.1 What do you think is most motivating and performance-enhancing at work?
1.2 Are you allowed to work independently at your current workplace? How important is independent work to you in terms of your willingness to perform?
1.3 What is your current willingness to switch? Please give reasons for your statement.
1.4 Have you changed jobs frequently in your career so far? If yes, for what reasons?
1.5 Would you say that you experience a spatial, temporal and organisational delimitation of work? If so, what is being done to ensure that your health and well-being do not suffer as a result?
2. Leadership
2.1 Which leadership styles do you know? How would you describe the leadership style of your current manager?
2.2 Can you see in yourself or others that leadership has changed in recent years?
2.3 Are you satisfied with your current manager? What qualities distinguish them?
2.4 Do you get regular feedback from your supervisor on your performance?
2.5 In your opinion, how great is the influence of a manager on employee motivation and performance?
2.6 Imagine a good leader. What qualities and skills should a good leader have?

Table 3: Interview guideline

4.4.5 Category formation

The analysis is broken down into individual, previously defined interpretation steps. This makes it comprehensible and intersubjectively verifiable, which makes it transferable and usable for others (Mayring, 2022). Inductive categorisation derives the categories from the interview without referring to the theory beforehand. Deductive categorisation is based on preliminary considerations, the previous state of research or theoretical concepts (Mayring, 2022). In this master's thesis, the interview guide was formed from three categories using a deductive approach: Performance Motivation, Leadership and Toxic Leadership. Each of the three categories was subdivided into further subcategories. These subcategories are labelled in the interviews in the appendix and listed as paraphrases in Table 17 (see Appendix B).

4.4.6 Summary content analysis according to Philipp Mayring

The transcription is divided into individual units of analysis and put into tabular form. In the next step, the individual coding units are paraphrased into a descriptive form limited to the content. Text components that are ornamental and do not contribute to the content are omitted. This is followed by generalisation. In the first reduction, the first level abstraction is created and all paraphrases below the level are then generalised. Paraphrases above the abstraction level are left for now, which may lead to content-like paraphrases that are deleted. Irrelevant paraphrases are omitted. Finally, in the reduction process, statements are bundled together in a last step. It is checked whether these statements still represent the original text material. Often a second summary is necessary, in which the level of abstraction is set even higher and the steps are gone through again, so that a new, more concise and more general system of categories emerges (Mayring, 2015).

4.5 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations play a crucial role in qualitative research, particularly in interviews. Incorporating ethical considerations at every stage of the research process is vital to ensure that the integrity of the study is maintained and participants are protected

from harm. The following subsections outline the three key principles that were observed during the research process.

4.5.1 Principle of respect of self-determination

The most important principle concerns respect for self-determination. This includes voluntary participation in the study, as the subjects must never be forced, pressurised or persuaded to participate, but should decide for themselves whether or not they want to take part in the study (Hussy et al., 2013). In research, the voluntary consent of respondents is crucial in order to maintain ethical standards. By obtaining this consent, researchers can ensure that participants are aware that they are taking part in the study and that their data will be used. Only through the voluntary consent of respondents can research results be obtained in an ethical and moral manner.

Sometimes this principle also includes the so-called participant information, which means that all information and their tasks must be fully communicated to the test subjects. This is intended to create transparency in the study. The participants should be able to assess for themselves what is expected of them and whether this is compatible with their personal attitude (Hussy et al., 2013).

Furthermore, access to research findings is crucial for the transparency and credibility of the research. Collaboration and dialogue with interviewees can help ensure that their perspectives and experiences are adequately represented. Researchers should give their interviewees the opportunity to review the findings and provide feedback prior to publication. This process can help to avoid potential misunderstandings or misinterpretations and improve the quality of the research. Through open and transparent communication, researchers can build a trusting relationship and ensure that their work is ethical and respectful. Ultimately, working closely with respondents leads to a more comprehensive and nuanced account of the research findings and contributes to the relevance and validity of the study.

During the studies, however, a high degree of transparency can also jeopardise or even prevent the achievement of the research objective. Nevertheless, this principle of research ethics must be observed at all costs.

4.5.2 Principle of non-injury

Another principle is that of non-injury (Hopf and Kuckartz, 2016). This regulates that the study does not lead to serious impairment or damage. The researcher must ensure that the subjects are not exposed to severe psychological stress, that their privacy is protected and that inappropriate, provocative or humiliating research material is avoided. However, depending on the aim of the study, it may be necessary to confront the subjects with stressful situations, but these may only be of short duration. If the aim of the study is to harm the participants, this is simply unethical.

The protection of privacy and data protection are also aspects of non-discrimination. Personal data must not be disclosed in order not to jeopardise the privacy of the participants (Hopf and Kuckartz, 2016). In order to prevent harm to the test subjects, a promise of confidentiality and anonymity should be guaranteed (Hopf and Kuckartz, 2016). Anonymisation, for example, ensures that participants remain unrecognised and that their statements in the research remain anonymous. This helps to maintain ethical standards and strengthen participants' trust in the research.

4.5.3 Principle of care

The third principle of ethical research is the principle of care. This refers to the fact that participants may only be assured of a benefit that can be realised through the research. However, the optimisation of potential benefits is rarely discussed from an ethical perspective.

4.5.4 Principle of justice

The fourth principle is the principle of justice. This comprises four aspects:

- Balance of effort and compensation for research participation
- Equal treatment of all participants
- Groups of potential participants
- Possible utilisation of the research (Kindler, 2016)

The inclusion and exclusion criteria as well as the description of the planned sample recruitment in the ethics application provide information on the above points. The participants in the study or control group must be treated fairly at all times. Furthermore, no differences may be made with regard to origin, religion, sexuality, skin colour, etc.

4.6 Reflection on work

The quality standards of objectivity, reliability and validity of standardised research are generally not used for qualitative research (Wichmann, 2019). In order to ensure the quality of this work, six quality standards according to Mayring of qualitative research were used, which are explained in more detail in section 4.3. This study was conducted within this framework. For quality assurance purposes, the interviewees were interviewed in their natural working environment. With the assurance that personal data would be treated anonymously and carefully, the interviewee was able to speak openly. It goes without saying that the interviews were not conducted in the presence of the interviewee's line manager, so as not to make them feel uncomfortable.

There were no interruptions during the interviews. According to Mayring, the applied qualitative content analysis does not provide for any further categorisation. This is due to the fact that three types of categories were formed prior to the investigation and content analysis, namely *Performance Motivation*, *Leadership* and *Toxic Leadership*. The categories can be seen in the interview guide (see Table 3). Only qualitative data was used for the study. In addition, only subordinate employees were interviewed as part of the study. An attempt was also made to achieve a balance between male and female interviewees. For a more detailed survey, quantitative data or other sample groups, such as the managers themselves, could also be used.

5.   **Findings and Analysis**

The following sections present the results of each individual interview and summarise the most important key statements made by the interviewees.

5.1 Presentation of the results

5.1.1 Result of the first interview C.H.

Category	Subcategory	Expression	Nam-ing
1. Performance motivation	1.1 Motivation and performance	▪ Monetary factor ▪ Recognition and appreciation ▪ Work content ▪ Human factor	1 1 1 1
	1.2. Professional personal responsibility	▪ High priority ▪ Works independently	1 1
	1.3 Willingness to change current job	▪ none	1

	1.4 Job change frequency	▪ frequent ▪ Restructuring ▪ Manager	1 1 1
	1.5 Spatial, temporal delimitation from work	▪ Spatial and temporal ▪ Self-discipline, delimitation ▪ Necessary working materials are provided	1 1 1
2. Leadership	2.1 Knowledge of leadership style	▪ Authoritarian ▪ Laissez-faire ▪ Toxic ▪ Currently cooperative	1 1 1 1
	2.2 Change Leadership	▪ Yes ▪ Previously authoritarian	1 1
	2.3 Satisfaction with manager	▪ Satisfied ▪ Human factor positive	1 2
	2.4 Regular feedback by manager	▪ Twice a year	1
	2.5 Influence of performance motivation by the manager	▪ high	1
	2.6 Leadership qualities	▪ Human factor ▪ Leadership competence	3 3
3. Toxic leadership	3.1 Understanding toxic leadership	▪ Egoistic behaviour	2
	3.2 Problems with manager	▪ By himself ▪ Through control of the manager	1 1

| | 3.3 Performance motivation in toxic leadership | ▪ No motivation ▪ Willingness to change | 2 2 |
| | 3.4 Illness and error | ▪ Sick more often ▪ Error constant | 1 1 |

Table 4: Results table expression C.H.

C.H. is 60 years old and works as a strategic buyer for a well-known car manufacturer. She is satisfied with her current job. She is not willing to change jobs because she is happy with her supervisor who has confidence in her. However, she is also approaching the end of her career. Important points for her are salary, recognition and joy in her work. C.H. receives regular feedback from her supervisor. The human factor and leadership qualities are important for her. She has changed jobs within the company several times, due to restructuring and once because she had a controlling supervisor with whom she did not get along. *"However, I also know other styles of leadership, e.g. very controlling and supervising bosses. I wanted to get away from such bosses, because I cannot work like that if someone does not trust me."* (Interview one C.H., 2024, lines 54-57). She was unmotivated during this time and also sick more often. C.H. can recognize a change in leadership and in her opinion supervisors used to be more authoritarian.

5.1.2 Result of the second interview T.B.

Category	Subcategory	Expression	Naming
1. Performance motivation	1.1 Motivation and performance	▪ Monetary factor and additional benefits ▪ Professional development ▪ Self-responsibility	2 1 1

	1.2. Professional personal responsibility	▪ High priority ▪ Works independently	1 1
	1.3 Willingness to change current job	▪ none ▪ Manager	1 1
	1.4 Job change frequency	▪ Three times ▪ Lack of development opportunities	1 1
	1.5 Spatial, temporal delimitation from work	▪ Spatial and temporal ▪ Overload due to constant availability	1 1
2. Leadership	2.1 Knowledge of leadership style	▪ Cooperative ▪ Authoritarian ▪ Current authoritarian	1 1 1
	2.2 Change Leadership	▪ Yes ▪ From authoritarian to friendly	1 2
	2.3 Satisfaction with manager	▪ Unsatisfied ▪ Leadership competence negative	1 3
	2.4 Regular feedback by manager	▪ Monthly ▪ positive	1 1
	2.5 Influence of performance motivation by the manager	▪ high ▪ Reward for good performance is equally important	1 1
	2.6 Leadership qualities	▪ Human factor	3

3. Toxic leader-ship	3.1 Understanding toxic leadership	▪ Pessimistic supervisor	1
		▪ Assign tasks from top to bottom	1
	3.2 Problems with manager	▪ By himself	1
		▪ The leadership style becomes authoritarian	1
		▪ Reject changes	1
		▪ Do not listen to ideas	1
	3.3 Performance motivation in toxic leadership	▪ No motivation	2
		▪ Performance decreases	1
	3.4 Illness and error	▪ Sick more often	2
		▪ Error constant	1

Table 5: Results table expression T.B.

T.B. Is 34 years old and works in a logistics company as a team leader in shipping department. He is not satisfied with his current job because of his manager. Therefore, his willingness to change is quite high. What is important to him is money, bonuses and that he can develop himself further. He has already worked in three big companies and he changed his job because of the routine and lack of self-development opportunities. T.B. is currently experiencing toxic leadership, he is not noticed by his supervisor and his ideas are not listened to. As a result, he is often unmotivated and also sick more often. He gets feedback every six to eight weeks, which he perceives as positive. T.B. can definitely can see a change in leadership, because hierarchies are becoming flatter and leadership was rather authoritarian 10-15 years ago. Today it is more friendly. He says that communication at eye level motivates employees more than authority. However, for him, the money factor is even more important for motivation than the leader. *"Because if you do a good job and end up getting 200 euros more, then you can definitely go to work with a broad chest."* (Interview two T.B., 2024, lines 136-138). As a manager, one should

focus on one's team *"I think a supervisor should have an open ear for the employees."* (Interview two T.B., 2024, lines 148-149). He lacks spatial and temporal boundaries and feels that constant availability is a burden for the company: *"According to the motto: He is always available, so just call him. That also does something to you in the long term."* (Interview two T.B., 2024, lines 66-67).

5.1.3 Result of the third interview W.B.

Category	Subcategory	Expression	Naming
1. Performance motivation	1.1 Motivation and performance	▪ Monetary factor ▪ Recognition and appreciation	1 2
	1.2. Professional personal responsibility	▪ High priority ▪ Works almost on its own responsibility	1 1
	1.3 Willingness to change current job	▪ none	1
	1.4 Job change frequency	▪ rare	1
	1.5 Spatial, temporal delimitation from work	▪ none	1
2. Leadership	2.1 Knowledge of leadership style	▪ Authoritarian ▪ Cooperative ▪ Current cooperative	1 1 2
	2.2 Change Leadership	▪ Yes ▪ Former dominant ▪ Team-based today	1 1

		▪ Freedom of choice	1
	2.3 Satisfaction with manager	▪ Satisfied ▪ Human factor positive ▪ Leadership competence positive	1 1 1
	2.4 Regular feedback by manager	▪ regular	1
	2.5 Influence of performance motivation by the manager	▪ high	1
	2.6 Leadership qualities	▪ Human factor ▪ Leadership competence	2 1
3. Toxic leadership	3.1 Understanding toxic leadership	▪ Working against each other	1
	3.2 Problems with manager	▪ By himself ▪ Choleric ▪ Professionally incompetent	1 1 1
	3.3 Performance motivation in toxic leadership	▪ Motivation constant	1
	3.4 Illness and error	▪ Absence days constant ▪ Error rate constant	1 1

Table 6: Results table expression W.B.

W.B. is 44 years old and works as a technical representative in a building materials distribution company. He is very satisfied with his current job, he is allowed to work independently 80% of the time. He appreciates his supervisor's team-oriented thinking as

well as the factual, precise announcements. He receives regular feedback. He shows no willingness to change. He says: *"No, I have rarely changed my profession. Now, after 15 years, for the first time."* (Interview three W.B., 2024, lines 25-26). Spatial or temporal delimitation are not possible for him. He has also had experiences with a toxic supervisor. He was shouted at and had a technically incompetent supervisor who passed off W.B.'s ideas as his own. This led to a drop in motivation and performance. *"I just kept working. I did not let my boss, who was shouting, shout at me. I told him to think about what he was saying. Because shouting people do not think! After a while I just left."* (Interview three W.B., 2024, lines 85-87). He was also not sick more often and did not make more mistakes. However, he says that with a good leader you enjoy working and you are also more motivated. Team spirit and honesty are important to him. He sees a change in leadership, which used to be more dominant (*"In the past, the boss was the one who* was *in charge."*) (Interview three W.B., 2024, lines 43-44) and is now more team-oriented.

5.1.4   Result of the fourth interview C.E.

Category	Subcategory	Expression	Naming
1. Performance motivation	1.1 Motivation and performance	▪ Human factor	1
	1.2. Professional personal responsibility	▪ High priority ▪ Works independently	1 1
	1.3 Willingness to change current job	▪ medium ▪ High workload	1 1
	1.4 Job change frequency	▪ Never before	1
	1.5 Spatial, temporal delimitation from work	▪ Temporal delimitation ▪ Work-life balance offers	1 1

2. Leadership	2.1 Knowledge of leadership style	▪ Authoritarian	1
		▪ Cooperative	1
		▪ Currently cooperative	1
	2.2 Change Leadership	▪ Yes	1
		▪ Formerly separate management structure, now cooperative	1
	2.3 Satisfaction with manager	▪ Satisfied	1
		▪ Leadership competence positive	3
	2.4 Regular feedback by manager	▪ Every six to eight weeks	1
		▪ Semi-annual online feedback	1
	2.5 Influence of performance motivation by the manager	▪ high	1
		▪ In addition, the work contents	1
	2.6 Leadership qualities	▪ Human factor	4
3. Toxic leadership	3.1 Understanding toxic leadership	▪ Micromanagement	1
		▪ Control	1
		▪ Mistrust	1
	3.2 Problems with manager	▪ Colleague	1
		▪ Build pressure to achieve goals with warning letters	1
	3.3 Performance motivation in toxic leadership	▪ No motivation	1
		▪ Willingness to change	1
	3.4 Illness and error	▪ Lack of concentration	1

Table 7: Results table expression C.E.

C.E. is 50 years old and works as a supply chain manager in a manufacturing automotive company.The most important thing for him is the team he works in. He is satisfied with his leadership, which is due to the open management stylem which is solution- and goal-oriented and gives him a lot of freedom. He receives regular feedback. His willingness to change is medium, which is due to the workload. The lack of time constraints is more of an organisational thing for him. *"Time is such an organisational thing; it is hard to narrow it down at the moment because we have so much to do."* (Interview four C.E., 2024, lines 33-34). He has never changed jobs. C.E. started and successfully completed his training at his current company. He has now been with his employer for 30 years. In his company there are many opportunities to improve the work-life balance. *"Personally, I cannot do that much with these things, I have to be honest. I have my own way of dealing with things."* (Interview four C.E., 2024, lines 46-47). He can see a change in leadership, in the past there were clear leadership structures, now they are more cooperative. He rates the influence of the leader on the motivation to perfom highly, only the content of the work is above it. *"The only thing that could be more attractive from my point of view as an employee is not the salary, but the work I have to do. […] Perhaps the risk of conflict between you and your supervisor is relatively small."* (Interview four C.E., 2024, lines 90-94). C.E. has not personally experienced toxic leadership, but *"a friend of mine has, because he was put under massive pressure. His employer put enormous pressure on the employees to achieve the company*'s goals. *[…] In my friend's case, warnings were issued because of mistakes and missed targets. That is completely wrong way."* (Interview four C.E., 2024, lines 124-130). This colleague received a warning because he had not achieved targets satisfactorily. This led to a huge loss of motivation, which subsequently led to health problems. Eventually, he changed jobs.

5.1.5 Result of the fifth interview S.H.

Category	Subcategory	Expression	Naming
1. Performance motivation	1.1 Motivation and performance	▪ Human factor ▪ Recognition and appreciation	1 1
	1.2. Professional personal responsibility	▪ High priority ▪ Works almost on its own responsibility	1 1
	1.3 Willingness to change current job	▪ high ▪ Manager	3 1
	1.4 Job change frequency	▪ Never before	1
	1.5 Spatial, temporal delimitation from work	▪ none ▪ No work-life balance offers	1 1
2. Leadership	2.1 Knowledge of leadership style	▪ Cooperative ▪ Toxic ▪ Current toxic	1 1 1
	2.2 Change Leadership	▪ Yes ▪ Subjectively more authoritarian	1 1
	2.3 Satisfaction with manager	▪ Dissatisfied	1
	2.4 Regular feedback by manager	▪ No ▪ Offered once, not used	1 1
	2.5 Influence of performance motivation by the manager	▪ high ▪ Supervisor is reason for wanting new job	1 1

	2.6 Leadership qualities	▪ Human factor	3
		▪ Leadership competence	1
3. Toxic leadership	3.1 Understanding toxic leadership	▪ Current situation	1
		▪ Mistrust	1
		▪ Denounce colleagues	1
	3.2 Problems with manager	▪ By herself	1
		▪ To have one's eye on you	1
		▪ Inappropriate changes	1
	3.3 Performance motivation in toxic leadership	▪ No motivation	1
		▪ Performance decreases	1
	3.4 Illness and error	▪ More days of absence	1
		▪ Hearing loss	1

Table 8: Results table expression S.H.

S.H. is 54 years old and works as an administrative assistant in the public sector. So far she has never changed jobs. Now her willingness to change is very high, which can be attributed to dissatisfaction with her new supervisor. *"But for the first time, I and my colleagues have a supervisor with whom we have difficulties."* (Interview five S.H., 2024, lines 28-29). S.H. describes this supervisor as unpleasant, controlling and overworked. S.H. says that she currently experiences toxic leadership. *"For example, as soon as a manager says something that you know exactly is not appropriate. Just below the belt!"* (Interview five S.H., 2024, lines 121-122). Regular feedback does not take place, it was offered once that this could take place if requested. This was not taken up. S.H. is currently unmotivated and often strong: *"I was sick more often, I noticed that. Admittedly, it was also the case that I took sick leave more quickly than before. I just could not stand being on call all time anymore, when it was like you do not even see it an appreciate it."*

(Interview five S.H., 2024, lines 139-141). She has already suffered a hearing loss. She can only judge a change in leadership subjectively, as it became more authoritarian with her over time. For her, a spatial and temporal delimitation from work is not possible. Nothing is done for her health, if at all, then only through her own initiative.

5.1.6   Result of the sixth interview E.J.

Category	Subcategory	Expression	Nam- ing
1. Performance motivation	1.1 Motivation and per- formance	▪ Recognition and apprecia- tion	2
	1.2. Professional per- sonal responsibility	▪ High priority ▪ Works independently	1 1
	1.3 Willingness to change current job	▪ none ▪ Recently changed ▪ Workload	1 1 1
	1.4 Job change fre- quency	▪ Never before	1
	1.5 Spatial, temporal delimitation from work	▪ Spatial and temporal ▪ positive	1 3
2. Leadership	2.1 Knowledge of lead- ership style	▪ Authoritarian ▪ Laissez-faire ▪ Cooperative ▪ Currently Laissez-faire or cooperative	1 1 1 1
	2.2 Change Leadership	▪ Yes ▪ Previously authoritarian	1 1 1

	2.3 Satisfaction with manager	- Satisfied - Leadership competence positive - Expertise negative	1 1 1
	2.4 Regular feedback by manager	- Once a year - Wishes for more frequent conversations	1 1
	2.5 Influence of performance motivation by the manager	high	2
	2.6 Leadership qualities	- Expertise - Leadership competence	1 3
3. Toxic leadership	3.1 Understanding toxic leadership	- Toxic trust - Treat employees badly - Unfair assessment - Employees do not notice - Do not make any calls	1 1 1 1 1
	3.2 Problems with manager	- By herself - Too much responsibility - Overload - Unclear tasks	1 1 1 1
	3.3 Performance motivation in toxic leadership	High motivation	1
	3.4 Illness and error	- Illness - Psychological problems	1 1

		▪ Insomnia	1
		▪ Signs of paralysis in the hand	1
		▪ Job change	1
		▪ Higher error rate	1

Table 9: Results table expression E.J

E.J. is 25 years old and works as a Corporate Learning Specialist in industrial process engineering. She recently changed jobs because she could no longer identify with the work content. She felt overwhelmed by her supervisor, was given too much responsibility and unclear tasks. Her motivation was high. *"The motivation was actually high because I really wanted to achieve what was imposed on me. But my performance that I was able to bring in the end was rather low because sometimes I was really overwhelmed."* (Interview six E.J., 2024, lines 111-113). She became ill, developed mental health problems, paralysis in her hand and suffered from insomnia. *"I did not know what to do first or what exactly my task was. I did not understand what it was all about at all."* (Interview six E.J., 2024, lines 113-115). Her mistakes accumulated due to ignorance. After changing jobs, she is satisfied and shows no more willingness to change. The manager's leadership style is cooperative, but in her opinion she lacks the necessary expertise. She receives feedback once a year, although she would like to have more frequent conversations. On the issue of delimitation, she says: *"There is a delimitation. But I have to say in advance that I find that very positive. [...] We can arrange our own times. We also have spatial delimitation, which means we can work from home. [...] I would therefore say that it has a positive effect on their health and well-being. There is no organisational separation for me."* (Interview six E.J., 2024, lines 31-38). She can see a change in leadership, it used to be more authoritarian, now it is more cooperative or laissez-faire.

5.1.7   Result of the seventh interview N.D.

Category	Subcategory	Expression	Naming
1. Performance motivation	1.1 Motivation and performance	▪ Monetary factor and additional benefits ▪ Professional development ▪ Recognition and appreciation	1 1 1
	1.2. Professional personal responsibility	▪ High priority ▪ Works almost on its own responsibility	1 1
	1.3 Willingness to change current job	▪ none	1
	1.4 Job change frequency	▪ Two job changes in the same company ▪ Supervisor ▪ Colleagues	1 1 1
	1.5 Spatial, temporal delimitation from work	▪ Spatial and temporal ▪ positive	1 1
2. Leadership	2.1 Knowledge of leadership style	▪ Authoritarian ▪ Laissez-faire ▪ Cooperative ▪ Currently Laissez-faire or cooperative	1 1 1 1
	2.2 Change Leadership	▪ Yes ▪ To get more out of employees, more thought is being given to the workforce due to the skills shortage	1 1

	2.3 Satisfaction with manager	▪ Satisfied ▪ Economic factor positive ▪ Human factor positive	1 2 1
	2.4 Regular feedback by manager	▪ Twice a year ▪ Not in the mood for it	1 1
	2.5 Influence of performance motivation by the manager	▪ high	1
	2.6 Leadership qualities	▪ Human factor ▪ Economic factor	6 3
3. Toxic leadership	3.1 Understanding toxic leadership	▪ Be influenced ▪ Manipulation ▪ Unfair treatment	1 1 1
	3.2 Problems with manager	▪ By himself ▪ Authoritarian supervisor ▪ Do not recognize employees ▪ Frighten someone	1 1 1 1
	3.3 Performance motivation in toxic leadership	▪ High motivation ▪ Resignation among colleagues	1 1
	3.4 Illness and error	▪ High sickness rate ▪ Even not more days of absence	1 1

Table 10: Results table expression N.D.

N.D. is 27 years old and works a technical clerk in a pharmaceutical company. Within nine years he has changed jobs twice in the same company. Once because of his supervisor and the second time because of his colleagues. N.D. shows no current willingness to change jobs, he is satisfied with his current supervisor because he leads cooperatively, does not distribute meaningless tasks and does not restrict his subordinates. He is allowed to work independently. Performance appraisals are held twice a year, which he does not wish to attent. He has the opinion of working in a home office, which means he can work outside the office. He can also observe a distancing in terms of time, but he perceives both as positive for his well-being. *"I do not have to do anything for my well-being because it is just good for me."* (Interview seven N.D., 2024, lines 44-45). N.D. has experienced toxic leadership himself. An authoritarian supervisor who did not acknowledge the employees. *"Due to his authoritarian manner, he also frightened many employees, especially in the department. It was very difficult to work under his leadership."* (Interview seven N.D., 2024, lines 114-116). His motivation was very high at that time. *"My motivation was based on the fact that I wanted to do my work as correctly and properly as possible. Also, within the time frame that was given to me. Because I said to myself, precisely because I have this difficult boss, I do not want to be blamed in the end. But there were also other colleagues who resigned."* (Interview seven N.D., 2024, lines 120-124). The sickness rate in the department was quite high, he himself had no more days absent.

5.1.8 Result of the eighth interview J.M.

Category	Subcategory	Expression	Naming
1. Performance motivation	1.1 Motivation and performance	▪ Monetary factor ▪ Work content ▪ Recognition and appreciation	1 1 1
	1.2. Professional personal responsibility	▪ High priority ▪ Works almost on ist own responsibility	1 2

+

	1.3 Willingness to change current job	▪ none	1
	1.4 Job change fre-quency	▪ frequent ▪ Local removals ▪ Financial reasons	1 1 1
	1.5 Spatial, temporal delimitation from work	▪ Spatial and temporal ▪ Work equipment for home office ▪ positive	1 1 1
2. Leadership	2.1 Knowledge of lead-ership style	▪ Authoritarian ▪ Laissez-faire ▪ Currently Laissez-faire	1 1
	2.2 Change Leadership	▪ Yes ▪ Not in direct supervisor re-lationship	1 1
	2.3 Satisfaction with manager	▪ Satisfied ▪ Human factor positive	1 3
	2.4 Regular feedback by manager	▪ Regular feedback ▪ Fixed dates semi-annually and annually ▪ On request also in between	2 1 1
	2.5 Influence of perfor-mance motivation by the manager	▪ high ▪ Unmotivated employees lead to team problems	1 1
	2.6 Leadership qualities	▪ Leadership competence ▪ Human factor	2 1

3. Toxic leadership	3.1 Understanding toxic leadership	• Professionally incompetent supervisor who wants to evaluate performance	1
	3.2 Problems with manager	• Colleague • Workload too high • Ignore employees • Do not recognize excessive demand	1 1 1 1
	3.3 Performance motivation in toxic leadership	• No motivation • Perfomance decreases	1 2
	3.4 Illness and error	• More days of absence • Higher error rate	1 1

Table 11: Results table expression J.M.

J.M. is 48 years old and works as a project manager in the pharmaceutical industry. He has changed jobs frequently within the same company, either because of a move or for financial reasons. He is satisfied with his current supervisor who lives the laissez-faire style of leadership and is concerned about the well-being of others, is open and takes his time. He considers a manager's influence on staff motivation and performance to be very important. *"That is very important. I think if the supervisor does not manage to motivate his staff, then you basically have a problem within the team."* (Interview eight J.M., 2024, lines 82-83). J.M. shows no willingness to change. He receives regular feedback from his supervisor. In his case, there is both a spatial and temporal delimitation of work through home office. The temporal boundaries are shifting for him. *"Today, for example, appointments are schedulded at times when break times used to be adhered to in the past."* (Interview eight J.M., 2024, lines 46-47). His health and well-being do not suffer. He is provided with the necessary equipment by his employer. A change in leadership can be observed, but he does not see it in the direct relationship with his supervisors. *"Not in the*

relationship with my direct supervisor, but in general I can definitely see that in the general management of the company." (Interview eight J.M., 2024, lines 63-64). He has not personally experienced toxic leadership. One colleague resigned because of the excessive workload, which was reported to the supervisor several times. The colleague's motivation was *"In the end, the motivation was zero. So, he was completely incapable to do the simplest things in the day-to-day-business."* (Interview eight J.M., 2024, lines 109-110). He had more absent days and also made more mistakes in day-to-day business. The supervisor did not recognize this overload and did not intervene to prevent the imminent departure of his employee.

5.1.9   Result of the ninth interview C.G.

Category	Subcategory	Expression	Nam-ing
1. Performance motivation	1.1 Motivation and per-formance	▪ Recognition and apprecia-tion ▪ Monetary factor ▪ Human factor	2 1 2
	1.2. Professional per-sonal responsibility	▪ High priority ▪ Works independently	1 1
	1.3 Willingness to change current job	▪ none ▪ Recently higher salary	1 1
	1.4 Job change fre-quency	▪ rare	1
	1.5 Spatial, temporal delimitation from work	▪ Temporal ▪ Shortage of personnel re-sulting in overtime ▪ No work-life balance offers	1 1 1

2. Leadership	2.1 Knowledge of leadership style	▪ Toxic	1
		▪ Current toxic	1
	2.2 Change Leadership	▪ Yes	1
		▪ Supervisor used to be more respected	1
	2.3 Satisfaction with manager	▪ Dissatisfied	1
		▪ Human factor negative	1
		▪ Economic factor negative	2
		▪ Leadership competence negative	2
	2.4 Regular feedback by manager	▪ Regular feedback in front of clients	1
		▪ No personal conversations	1
	2.5 Influence of performance motivation by the manager	▪ high	1
	2.6 Leadership qualities	▪ Human factor	1
3. Toxic leadership	3.1 Understanding toxic leadership	▪ Talking shit about colleagues	1
		▪ Denunciation	1
		▪ Do not address conflicts	1
	3.2 Problems with manager	▪ Colleague	1
		▪ Talking shit about colleagues	1
		▪ Discuss conflicts with third parties and not with the person concerned	1

	3.3 Performance motivation in toxic leadership	▪ No motivation ▪ Willingness to change	2 1
	3.4 Illness and error	▪ Frequent days of absence ▪ Error rate constant	2 1

Table 12: Results table expression C.G

C.G. is 27 years old and works as a lawyer's assistant in a law firm. She has rarely changed jobs and is not ready for a change even in her current job. *"So, after my last interview, I do not see any reason to change my job anymore because I now have more salary."* (Interview nine C.G., 2024, lines 20-21). She is dissatisfied with her supervisor because the way she treats her colleagues is not appreciative. She demands too much, has little trust in new employees, only promotes older employees and prevents possible development potential. In her personal dealings with C.G., however, the manager is appreciative: *"Yes, because I am also different. I am really not often sick, and I am also willing to work overtime, although that cannot be the point, but it does not really bother me that much. [...] That is how I would put it."* (Interview nine C.G., 2024, lines 78-81). Regular feedback is given, but not face-to-face, but while working in front of clients. C.G. is currently experiencing toxic leadership from her boss because he talks shit about colleagues and discusses internal conflicts with C.G. and not with the employees concerned themselves. Colleagues are unmotivated and show a high willingness to change jobs. The sickness rate is quite high, mistakes do not occur more often. C.G. mentions that there is a time restriction in her office due to a lack of staff. *"Yes, there is a temporary temporal delimitation. But this is a consequence of the staff shortage, so that overtime often has to be worked. And no, nothing is done about it. Unfortunately!"* (Interview nine C.G., 2024, lines 34-36). For C.G., the human factor such as empathy is the most important quality a manager must possess.

5.1.10 Result of the tenth interview A.R

Category	Subcategory	Expression	Nam-ing
1. Performance motivation	1.1 Motivation and per-formance	▪ Recognition and apprecia-tion ▪ Human factor ▪ Monetary factor and addi-tional benefits	2 1 1
	1.2. Professional per-sonal responsibility	▪ High priority ▪ Works independently	1 1
	1.3 Willingness to change current job	▪ high ▪ Professional development	1 1
	1.4 Job change fre-quency	▪ Frequently, every two to three years internally new areas of responsibility	1
	1.5 Spatial, temporal delimitation from work	▪ Spatial and temporal ▪ Overload due to constant availability ▪ Supervision of working time by supervisors ▪ Work-life balance offers	1 1 1 1
2. Leadership	2.1 Knowledge of lead-ership style	▪ Cooperative ▪ Authoritarian ▪ Laissez-faire ▪ Empowerment ▪ Currently cooperative	1 1 1 1 1
	2.2 Change Leadership	▪ Yes ▪ Due to increased workload	1

	2.3 Satisfaction with manager	▪ Currently two managers	1
		▪ Satisfied:	1
		o Human factor positive	
		o Leadership competence negative	3
			1
		o Expertise positive	1
		▪ Moderately satisfied:	
			2
		o Human factor negative	
		o Leadership competence negative	1
		o Expertise positive	1
	2.4 Regular feedback by manager	▪ Reviews twice a year	1
		▪ Feedback in between is obtained yourself	1
	2.5 Influence of performance motivation by the manager	▪ high	1
		▪ Not 100%	1
	2.6 Leadership qualities	▪ Human factor	3
		▪ Economic factor	1
		▪ Leadership competence	1
3. Toxic leader-ship	3.1 Understanding toxic leadership	▪ Negative influence on the employment relationship due to bad behaviour	1
	3.2 Problems with man-ager	▪ Colleagues	1
		▪ Lying to employees	1
		▪ Preventing a chance of pro-motion	1

	3.3 Performance moti-vation in toxic leader-ship	▪ No motivation ▪ Willingness to change	1 1
	3.4 Illness and error	▪ Absence days equal	1

Table 13: Results table expression A.R.

A.R. is 31 years old and works as a general agent for business customers in a large insurance group. He currently has two supervisors. He is very satisfied with one manager because she is helpful, calm, empathetic and supportive. He is not satisfied with the other supervisor because, although technically good, he is performance-oriented and less empathetic and also distributes unclear tasks. A.R.'s willingness to change within the company is high because he wants to develop professionally. So far, he has changed jobs internally every two to three years to get to know new areas of responsibility. *"I usually changed because I was interested in a new job. But basically my previous jobs were always offered to me, I never actively looked for them."* (Interview ten A.R., 2024, lines 41-42). Officially he receives feedback twice a year, in between A.R. likes to get it himself. He rates the influence of his manager on performance motivation highly, but not 100%. He says that he can notice a change in leadership. *"I think it is because of the mass of work we have. I have noticed that the workload has increased significantly in recent years, not only in my industry but also in other companies, and this inevitably means that managers can no longer be in control and workers need more freedom than before."* (Interview ten A.R., 2024, lines 107-111). In a leader, the human factor, the economic factor and leadership skills are very important to him. He has already experienced toxic leadership with colleagues. A colleague was deliberately lied to by the manager and thus prevented a possible promotion opportunity. This colleague's willingness to change was very high at that time. It also led to an unmotivated attitude. However, she was not sicker than before and her error rate remained stable.

Based on the interviews, the key results can be summarised very similarly. A clear overall picture can be created. In terms of work motivation, the interviewees are influenced by many factors, such as salary, recognition, enjoyment of work, independence and development opportunities. *"Basically, the environment in which you work. That includes your colleagues and also your boss. For me personally, it is very important [...] you get regular feedback. I also think that appreciation is very important. The work should be seen [...] that is a big factor for motivation."* (Interview five S.H., 2024, lines 9-14). Appreciation of performance and the importance of a positive working environment are crucial for employee motivation. Recognition and appreciation had a high reputation during the interviews. *"In any case, praise, recognition, money and the correct assessment of the private situation."* (Interview nine C.G., 2024, lines 9-10).

The willingness to change jobs was often influenced by restructuring, personal reasons and conflictual relationships with the current line manager. *"Also very high. I have a terrible supervisor. I think that is the reason, because the boss is often the main reason."* (Interview two T.B., 2024, lines 38-39). Creating opportunities for advancement and positive cooperation can help the company to retain employees in the long term. It became clear that employees are much more likely to think about changing jobs if they have a bad manager, even though all other conditions are satisfactory. *"Apart from my management, I would not feel the need to change at the moment, because everything else is good. The catchment area is wonderful, the colleagues too, so I cannot complain. But now, [...] I should go through with it."* (Interview five S.H., 2024, lines 37-41).

One key finding is that work-life balance is becoming increasingly important for employees. The COVID-19 pandemic has blurred the boundaries between work and private life. Measures to maintain health and separation of work and personal time are crucial for organisations to maintain employee wellbeing. *"Definitely spatially. Just because of the COVID pandemic and the fact that we can do a home office. [...] I do not have to do anything for my well-being because it is just good for me."* (Interview seven N.D., 2024, lines 39-45).

The second research question examines whether employees perceive a change in the way management is implemented. In fact, almost all interviewees stated that they were

experiencing a change in leadership. A cooperative, supportive leadership style is noticed and favoured by employees, while an authoritarian or toxic leadership style has a negative impact on well-being and performance. Regular feedback and clear communication are essential for effective leadership. *"I have had very authoritarian bosses before and I never really got along with them."* (Interview eight J.M., 2024, lines 57-58). *"I am actually very satisfied and that is simply of the cooperative management style that my boss practices. It is also because of the freedom [...] at work. That suits me very well."* (Interview four C.E., 2024, lines 76-79).

All interviewees see a major influence of managers on employee motivation. In particular, the effect on employee motivation and performance as well as the effect on the mood in the team is seen as crucial. *"I think if the supervisor does not manage to motivate his staff, then you basically have a problem within the team."* (Interview eight J.M., 2024, lines 82-83). *"On a scale of 1-10, I would say 9."* (Interview four C.E., 2024, line 90). According to the interviewees, other aspects such as recognition, trust, regular feedback and positive collaboration contribute to satisfaction and performance.

The main findings on toxic leadership are that this type of leadership is characterised by a lack of recognition, pressure and negative interactions. In the long term, this leads to a decline in employee motivation and performance and a higher sickness rate. *"My performance and motivation have diminished more and more. Because you simply cannot pursue your ideas anymore and your are only in an executive position, so to speak, and no longer in a reflective position. That [...] my motivation and performance also declined."* (Interview two T.B., 2024, lines 172-176). *"Very bad! Well, I am the only one who is often there and the others are often sick."* (Interview nine C.G., 2024, lines 125-126).

Overall, the interviews show that a supportive working environment, clear communication, recognition of performance and a respectful, cooperative management style are key factors in promoting the motivation, performance and well-being of employees in the workplace. Measures to address toxic leadership behaviours and create a positive working environment are crucial for companies and their managers to effectively increase employee satisfaction and retention.

5.3   Derivation of hypotheses

The interview analysis shows that the optimal motivation of employees can be generated through a democratic management style. Feedback, appreciation, information exchange and a certain degree of self-determination can maximise employees' intrinsic motivation. In this way, the intrinsic motivation of employees can be refined and successfully utilised through the right management style. Research also shows that external motivational factors are always used to increase employee motivation. These, in combination with internal motivational factors, lead to higher employee motivation. Further studies can include other sample groups, such as the managers themselves. Quantitative data can also be obtained through larger surveys, for example. With the help of this data, other aspects such as external factors and their influence can be analysed in more detail and supplemented if necessary. Another method is to conduct research in conjunction with newer leadership style theories.

6.   **Discussion of Results**

The true significance and relevance of the results only unfold through careful interpretation, which makes it possible to gain important insights and draw well-founded conclusions.

6.1   Interpretation of the results

6.1.1   Performance motivation

Category	Subcategory	Expression	Naming
1. Performance motivation	1.1 Motivation and performance	▪ Monetary factor ▪ Monetary factor and additional benefits ▪ Recognition and appreciation	7 8 13

		▪ Self-responsibility	1
		▪ Work content	2
		▪ Professional development	2
	1.2. Professional personal responsibility	▪ High priority	10
		▪ Works independently	6
		▪ Almost autonomous	4
	1.3 Willingness to change current job	▪ none	1
	1.4 Job change frequency	▪ medium	1
		▪ none	1
		▪ high	1
		Reasons:	
		▪ Professional development	1
		▪ Higher salary	1
		▪ Higher workload	2
		▪ Manager	2
	1.5 Spatial, temporal delimitation from work	▪ Spatial and temporal	1
		▪ Only temporal	1
		▪ none	1
		▪ Staff shortage due to overtime	1
		▪ Overload due to constant availability	2
		▪ Supervison of working time by supervisors	1

		▪ Work equipment for home office	2
			3
		▪ positive	
		▪ Self-discipline, delimitation	2
		▪ Work-life balance offers	2
		▪ No work-life balance offers	2

Table 14: Category performance motivation

Respondents named recognition and appreciation as the most important motivators and performance enhancers at work. According to the respondents, the monetary factor and fringe benefits are the second most important factors for motivation and performance. In third place is the human factor, which includes working relationships with colleagues and supervisors. This is followed by professional development, job content and personal responsibility.

In question two, all respondents indicated that the importance of professional autonomy is high for them. This confirms that the autonomy factor as an intrinsic motivator also contributes to the promotion of motivation and performance (Furnham and MacRae, 2017). Six of ten respondents work autonomously in their current job, four of them almost autonomously.
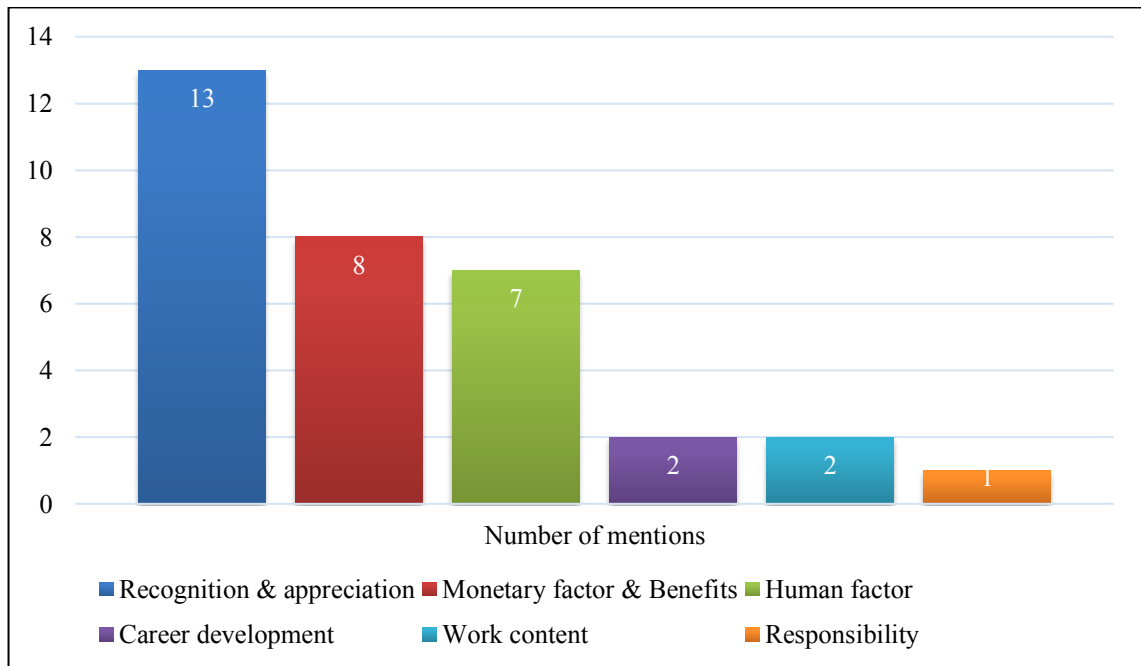
Figure 21: Motivator and performance enhancer at work

Six people are not willing to change their current position. This shows that more than half of the respondents are motivated by their current job. Three people speak of a high willingness to change. The reasons given for this are the desire for professional development or a higher salary, a too high workload and the manager. For one person, the willingness to change is moderately pronounced.
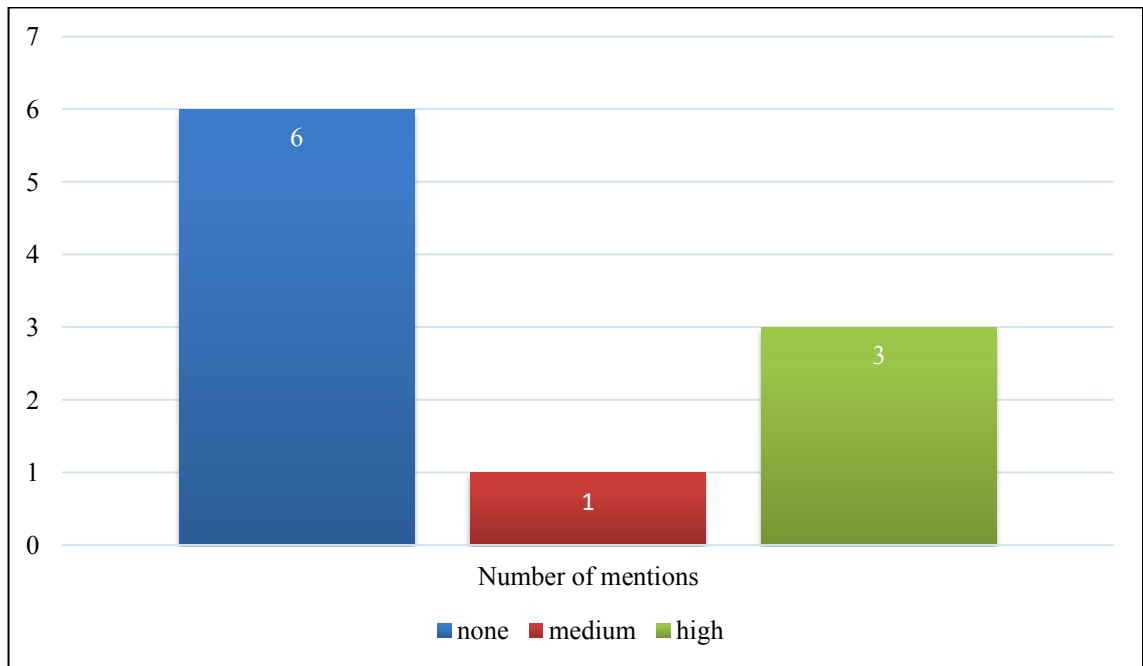
Figure 22: Current willingness to switch

Three of the respondents said that they had never changed their employer. The reasons for changing jobs are monetary factors and benefits, the supervisor, restructuring, the human factor or professional delevopment.
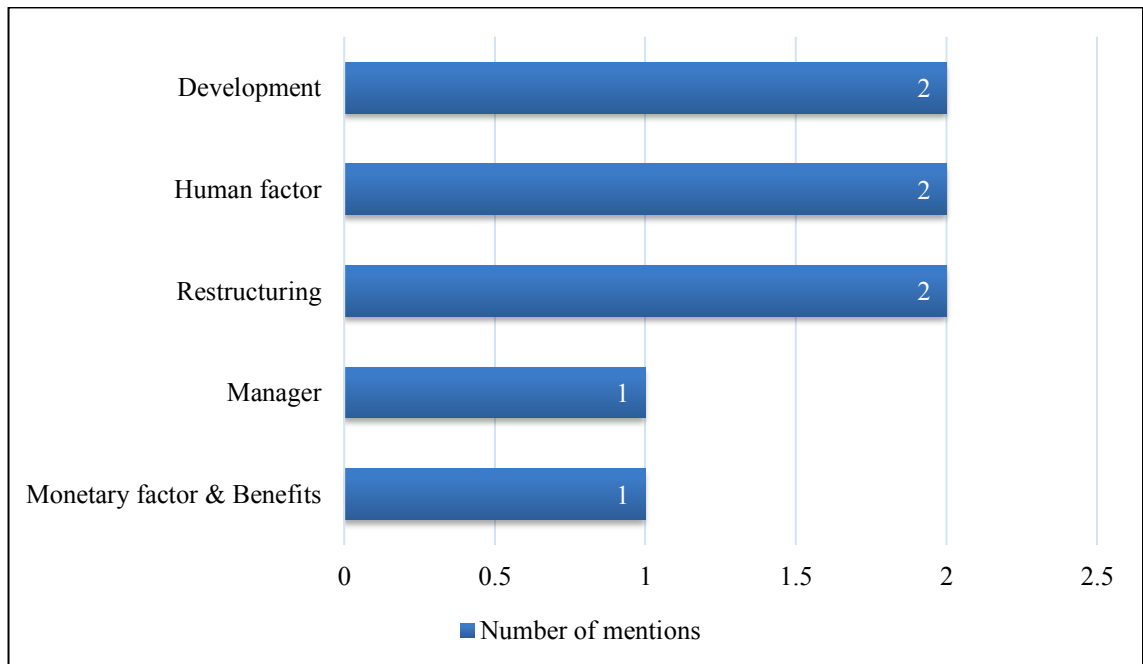
Figure 23: Reasons for the change of job

The majority of respondents can see a spatial and temporal delimitation of work. Only two people can still work at the same place at fixed times. Such a change in the world of work demands even more attention from employers to ensure a good work-life balance for their employees.
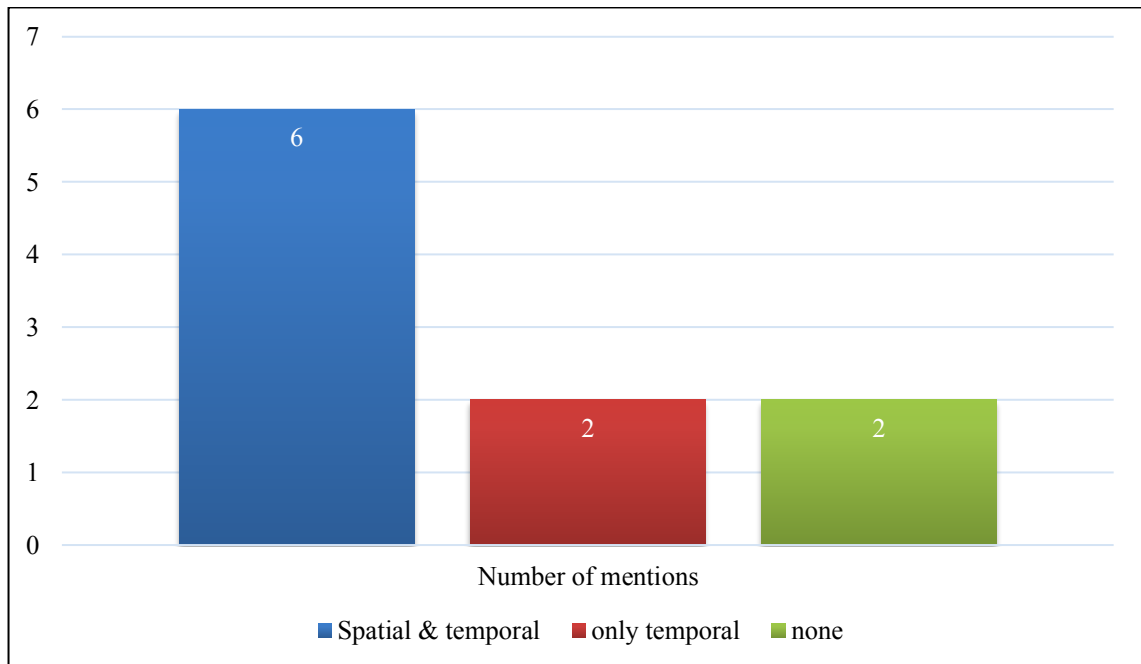
Figure 24: Dissolution of the boundaries of work

6.1.2 Leadership

Category	Subcategory	Expression	Nam-ing
2. Leadership	2.1 Knowledge of lead-ership style	▪ Authoritarian ▪ Laissez-faire ▪ Cooperative ▪ Toxic ▪ Empowerment Current Manager: ▪ Authoritarian ▪ Laissez-faire ▪ Cooperative ▪ Toxic	7 5 6 3 1 1 4 4 1

	2.2 Change Leadership	• Yes	10
		• Not in direct supervisor relationship	1
		• Due to increased workload	1
		Previously:	
		• Authoritarian	4
		• Supervisor was more respected	1
		• Attempts were made to get more out of employees	1
		• Distinct management structures	1
		Today:	
		• Cooperative	2
		• Team-based	2
		• Laissez-faire or empowerment	1
		• Due to a shortage of skilled workers, more thought is given to employees	1
		• Subjectively more authoritarian today	1
	2.3 Satisfaction with manager	• Satisfied	7
		• Dissatisfied	3
		• Human factor positive	10
		• Human factor negative	3
		• Expertise positive	2
		• Expertise negative	
		• Economic factor positive	1

		▪ Economic factor negative	2
		▪ Leadership competence positive	2
			6
		▪ Leadership competence negative	5
	2.4 Regular feedback by manager	▪ never	1
		▪ once a year	1
		▪ more often than once a year	8
	2.5 Influence of performance motivation by the manager	▪ high	10
		▪ In addition, the work content	1
			1
		▪ Remuneration for good performance is as important as the type of supervisor	1
		▪ Supervisor is reason for wanting new job	1
		▪ Mood in the team tips over	1
		▪ Unmotivated employees lead to team problems	1
		▪ Not 100%	
	2.6 Leadership qualities	▪ Human factor	26
		▪ Expertise	1
		▪ Economic factor	4
		▪ Leadership competence	10

Table 15: Category leadership

When asked about the known leadership styles, the authoritarian, the cooperative, the toxic and the laissez-faire leadership styles were named or specifically described. One

person also mentioned the keyword "empowerment" in connection with leadership. According to the respondents, the cooperative style is currently the most frequently used leadership style (mentioned seven times). Only two interviewees are currently led in a toxic way, one person in an authoritarian way. These three people are dissatisfied with their leadership, as can be seen in Figure 22.
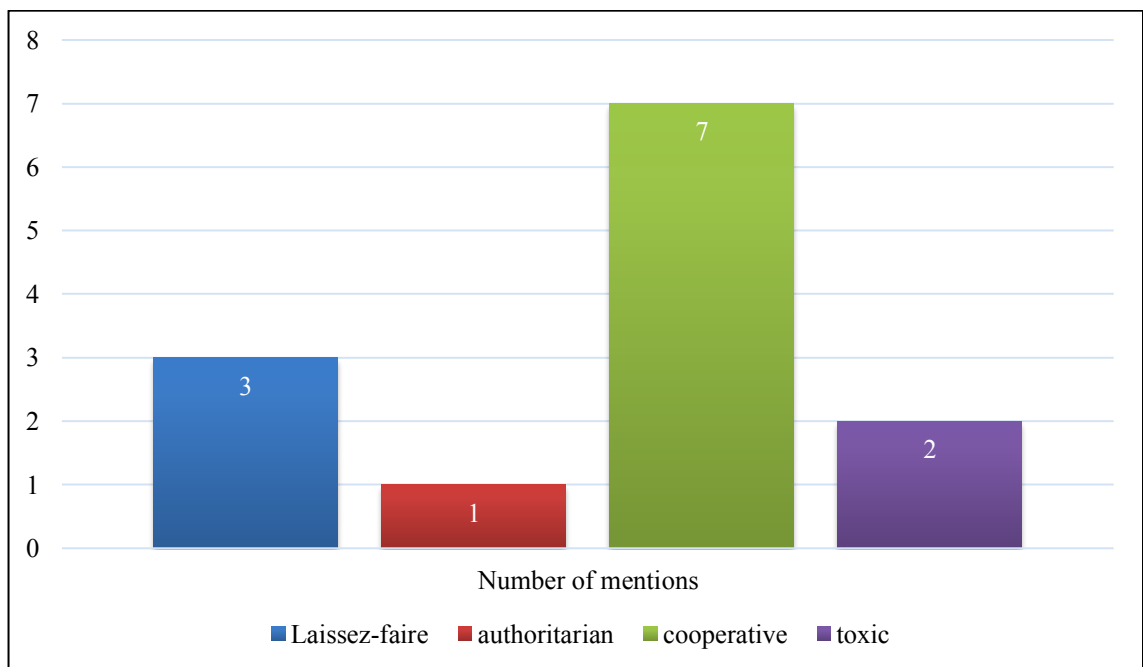
Figure 25: Leadership style current leader
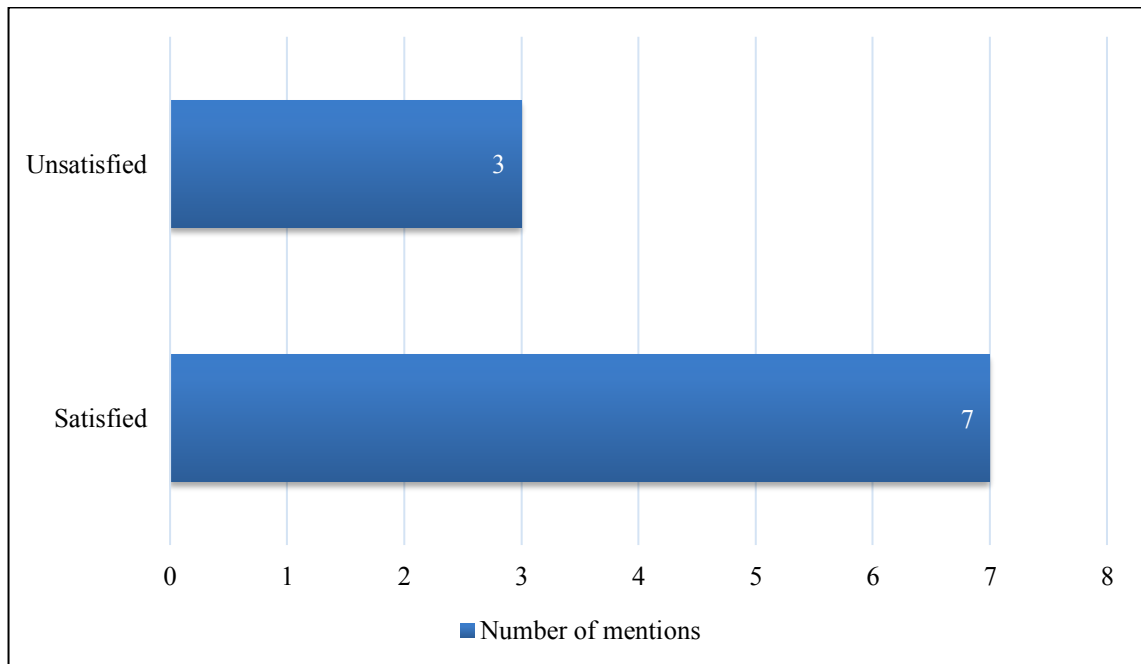
Figure 26: Satisfaction with the manager

Seven respondents are satisfied with their current manager. Respondent 10 (A.R.) is currently managed by two managers. He is satisfied with one and moderately satisfied with the other. These two answers were combined in the diagram under "satisfied with the manager". It is interesting that in A.R.'s company two managers share the task in a matrix structure, which is rather rare. However, due to the new world of work caused by trends and changes, this circumstances will be even more common in the future than it has been so far.

All ten respondents can identify a change in leadership. Four of the respondents said that leadership used to be more authoritarian than it is today. It was also mentioned that leaders used to be more respected and that they tried to get more out of their employees. Due to the current skills shortage, the focus is now more on the employees, as the company is aware that it has to take care of them. Also, according to one interviewee, leadership structures were more pronounced decades ago. Today, leadership is perceived more as a cooperative and team-oriented process. Laissez-faire and empowerment were also mentioned in connection with the question about today's leadership culture. Only one person stated that their leader today is subjectively more authoritarian.

Eight out of ten respondents receive feedback more often than once a year. One person receives it at least once a year and one respondent stated that they never receive personal feedback on their work.

All interview partners rate the influence of the manager as high. One person even stated that the content of the work was even more important than the type of supervisor. Another person said that the influence was high, but not maximum.

The most important quality a leader should have is the human factor, with 26 mentions. The leader should definitely have a certain degree of empathy. Leadership qualities make up the second largest share with ten mentions. Less important are the economic factor with a total of four mentions and expertise with one mention.
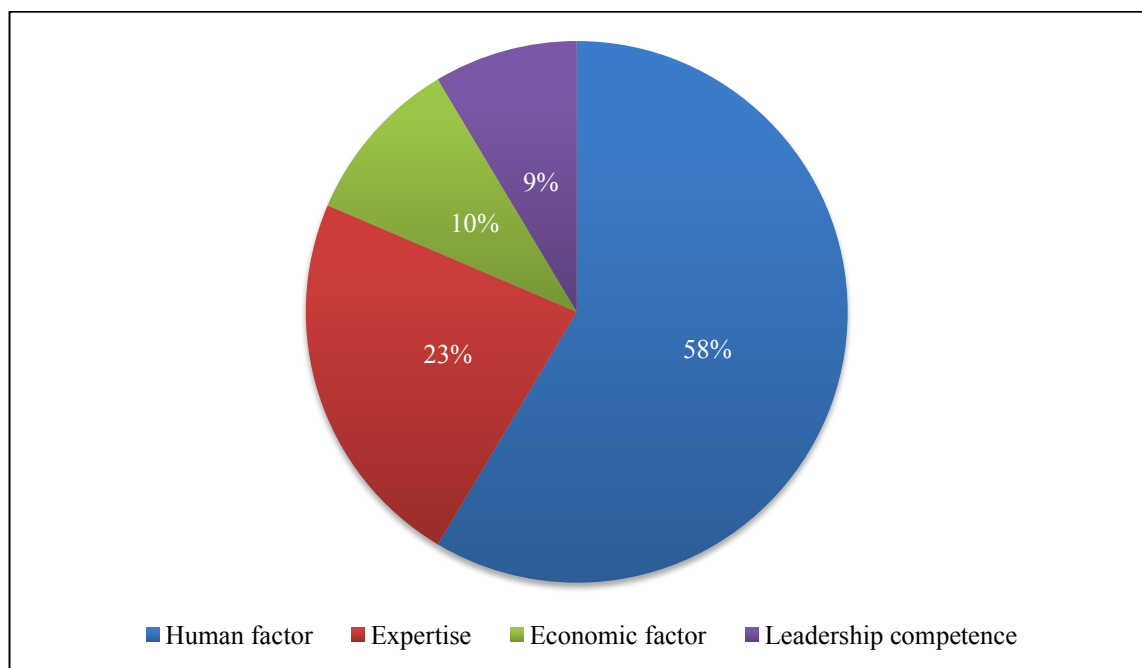
Figure 27: Most important qualities of a leader

6.1.3 Toxic leadership

Table 16 below shows that the respondents all have a clear understanding of toxic leadership. Egoistic and narcissistic behaviour, wanting to assert one's own interests with all one's might, control and mistrust, unfair evaluations as well as manipulation and bad behaviour are only some of the paradigms mentioned under the term toxic leadership.

Each of the respondents has already had experiences of toxic leadership with themselves or with colleagues.

Category	Subcategory	Expression	Naming
3. Toxic leadership	3.1 Understanding toxic leadership	▪ Egoistic behaviour ▪ Assert your own interests ▪ Pessimistic supervisor ▪ Assign tasks only from above ▪ Working against each other ▪ Micromanagement ▪ Control ▪ Mistrust ▪ Keeping an eye on someone ▪ Statements below the belt ▪ Denouncing ▪ Toxic relationship of trust ▪ Treat employees badly ▪ Unfair treatment ▪ Do not see employees ▪ Do not talk ▪ Allow to be influenced ▪ Manipulation ▪ Professionally incompetent supervisor who supposed to assess performance ▪ Talking about colleagues ▪ Do not address conflicts	1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 2 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1

		▪ Negative influence on the employment relationship through bad behaviour	1 1
	3.2 Problems with manager	▪ Has experienced toxic leadership in self or others	10
		▪ Control	
		▪ Leadership style changed to authoritarian	1
		▪ choleric	1
		▪ Professionally incompetent	1
		▪ Build up pressure to achieve goals with warnings	1
		▪ Overload	1
		▪ Too much responsibility	1
		▪ Unclear tasks	1
		▪ Authoritarian supervisor	1
		▪ Ignore employees	1
		▪ Not recognising excessive demands	1
		▪ Talking about colleagues	1
		▪ Discuss conflicts with third parties and not with the person concerned	1
		▪ Lying to employees	1
		▪ Prevent a chance of promotion	1
		▪ Inappropriate comments	1
	3.3 Performance motivation in toxic leadership	▪ No motivation	10
		▪ Motivation remains constant	1
		▪ High motivation	
		▪ Performance decreases	2

		▪ Willingness to change	4
		▪ Resignation	5
			1
	3.4 Illness and error	▪ Sick more often	8
		▪ Not sick more often	3
		▪ Error rate remains constant	4
		▪ More mistakes	2
		▪ Loss of concentration	1
		▪ Mental health problems	1
		▪ Insomnia	
		▪ Termination	

Table 16: Category of toxic leadership

A decline in motivation and performance under toxic leadership is mentioned ten times, a decline in performance four times, as shown graphically in Figure 28. A high level of motivation under toxic leadership is mentioned twice, constant once.
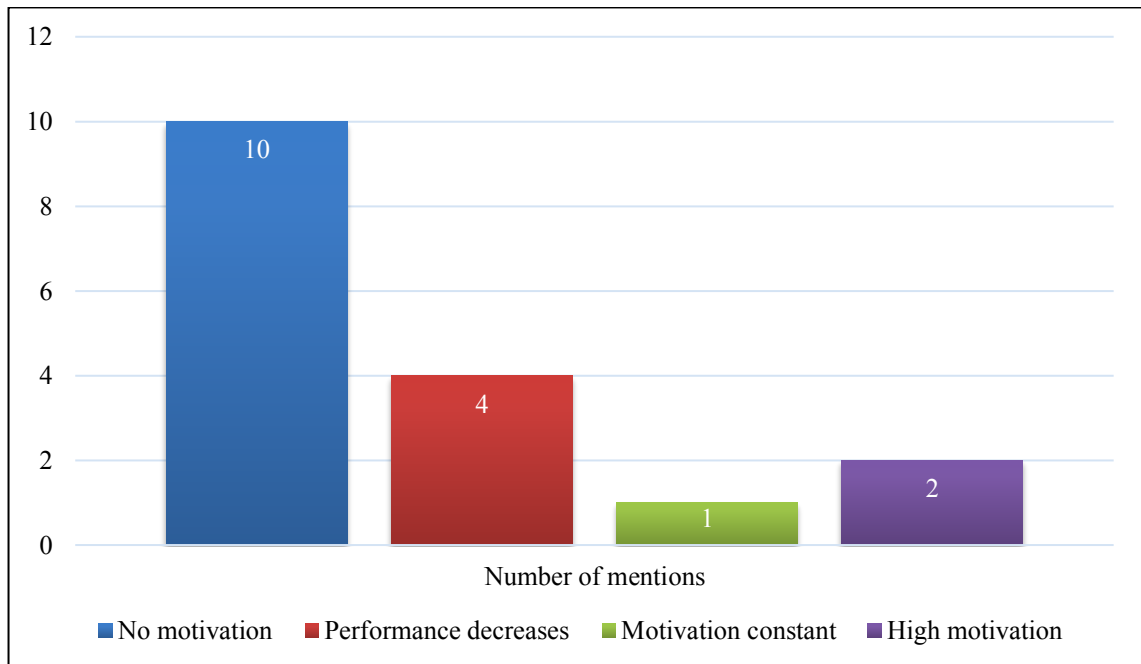
Figure 28: Motivation and performance in toxic leadership

The factor of illness and absence should also not go unmentioned, because toxic leadership can also increase absence due to illness. This fact should not be neglected. For example, eight times it was found that sick days increase with toxic leadership. Hearing loss, difficulty concentrating, psychological stress, insomnia and paralysis were described as symptoms. This evaluation confirms the possible effects explained in the theoretical part of this Master thesis in section 2.3.4.
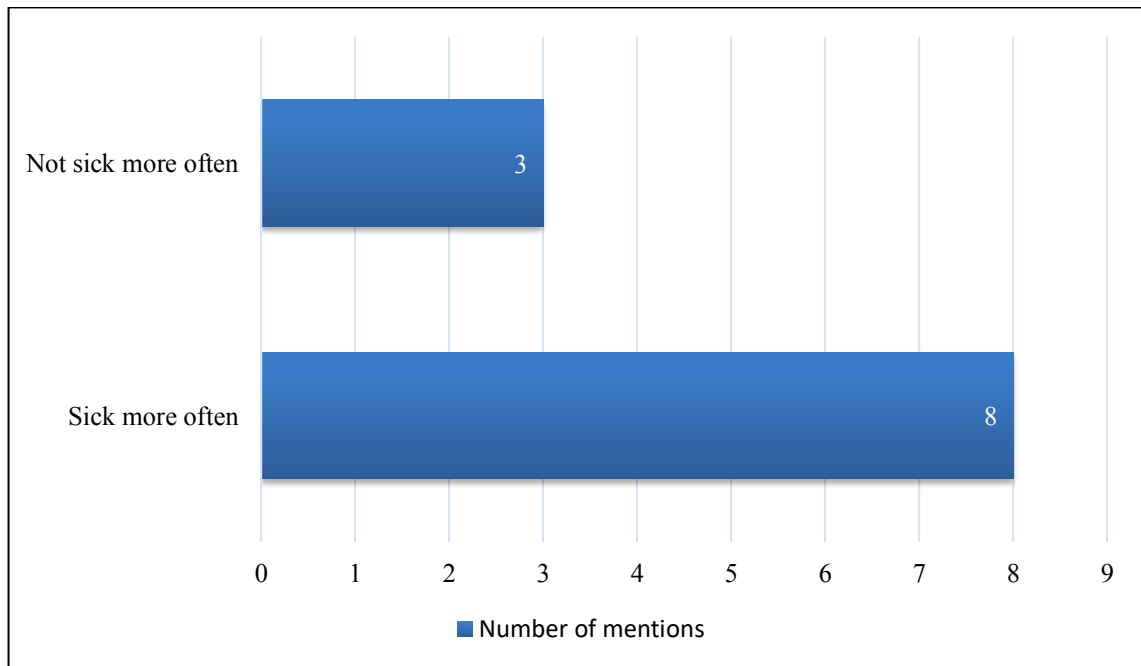
Figure 29: Disease with toxic leadership

6.2   Limitations of study

The study conducted relates exclusively to the impressions, feelings and opinions of subordinate employees, which means that each participant has a superior to whom they report. For this reason, all respondents are in a direct managerial relationship that influences them emotionally. This is the main limitation of this study, as it does not shed light on the perspective of senior managers. It therefore remains interesting to examine the opinions of people who lead others on a daily basis and act as role models. Research could address the following questions: What essentially motivates them? What inspires them to lead others? How might employees behave to make the leader's job more enjoyable and boost their morale?

There is also the possibility that some of the respondents in the study have an interpersonal issue with their manager that was previously hidden from the researcher. This makes a rational assessment of their management style difficult. This circumstance could only be discussed in advance of the interview, but could not be completely ruled out.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

The following sections summarise the most important findings, derive recommendations for action and provide an outlook for future research.

7.1 Conclusion to the study

The aim of this Master's thesis is to investigate the influence of leadership behaviour on the performance motivation of employees. With the help of literature research and standardised, guideline-based interviews on the topic of performance motivation, leadership and toxic leadership, results are obtained on the research questions posed in the introduction.

The first research question can be answered by recognising that managers can have a considerable influence on the performance motivation of their employees. The interviews revealed a unanimous majority that the manager has a high influence on performance motivation. Furthermore, seven of the interviewees are satisfied with their current manager, three are not. For these three people, the willingness to change is high due to the manager. Low commitment can cost companies dearly, as the Gallup Engagement Index shows. A high willingness to change indicates a desire for new challenges or internal resignation (Gallup Inc., 2023). Employees who are satisfied with their manager are less ill and also work more efficiently (Albs, 2005). Companies should therefore develop their managers in such a way that they take a holistic view of their employees (Niermeyer, 2007). One approach in this direction is post-heroic leadership, in which team members complement each other (Rüth and Netzer, 2014) and lead themselves or share leadership with a formal manager at the same level.

Research question two deals with the extent to which one can speak of a change in leadership. Each of the interviewees can recognise a change in leadership. The majority can recognise a dissolution of boundaries in their work, be it in terms of time or space, in some cases even both. This point inevitably contributes to a change in leadership, as the manager can no longer exercise control over the employees to the same extent as would be possible without the dissolution of boundaries. Due to physical and temporal distance and increasing self-organisation, presence-oriented and controlling management concepts will soon be a thing of the past (Gebhardt et al., 2015). The survey on self-responsible

and self-organised work also provides a clear result. More than half of those surveyed stated that they work independently. The other half work almost independently. The current development means that managers can no longer maintain an overview of all issues on their own. They are dependent on the potential and skills of their employees (Buhr et al., 2018). Mature employees who work independently and implement their own ideas are the future (Schreyögg and Koch, 2020). One interviewee stated in an interview that he worked in a matrix structure under two superiors. This is still the exception today, but could become an option for management in the future, as organisations and areas of responsibility are becoming increasingly complex and changing ever faster. In this respect, it can be summarised that one can speak of a change in leadership from authoritarian or heroic leadership to cooperative or democratic, post-heroic leadership. This is also confirmed by the interviews.

The final research question, which investigates whether toxic leadership can have an impact on our working environment and on individual employees, was also answered clearly in the interviews. Each of the interviewees had already experienced toxic leadership themselves or with colleagues. The consequences can be increased absenteeism, stress, less motivation or poorer work performance (Grote, 2012). A decrease in motivation and performance with toxic leadership was mentioned a total of ten times in the interviews conducted, and the illness factor also increases exponentially with toxic leadership. Hearing loss, loss of concentration, psychological problems, insomnia and even signs of paralysis are described as symptoms.

In view of the current megatrends, it remains exciting to see how leadership will develop in the future.

7.2   Recommendations

Many managers are already trying to initiate and shape change in our flexible and networked working world with post-heroic behaviour (Gebhardt et al., 2015). In order to increase employee motivation, managers should invest a lot of time in training to improve their leadership skills. In addition, they should endeavour to maintain open communication, mutual appreciation and regular feedback with their employees. These factors are crucial and are highly valued by employees. Managers should constantly act

as role models and promote development opportunities and career prospects for employees, should they wish to do so. A positive feedback culture and recognising achievements can also help to increase employee motivation and commitment in the long term. By implementing all of these measures, line managers can have a positive influence on employee motivation and thus promote employee performance and well-being within the organisation. Finally, line managers can do a lot to realise low staff turnover in the company and create positive employee loyalty.

7.3   *Future research*

Further studies could possibly focus more strongly on managers. What behaviour, characteristics and qualities of an employee are important to them in order to be able to lead optimally? This could create a balance that can provide insights into both sides. Ultimately, an optimal understanding between manager and employee can be created and the level of knowledge regarding employee motivation enriched.

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Appendix A   Interview transcripts

Appendix A1

1   1. Interview

2   Date and time: 24/06/2024 at 2 p.m.

3   Duration: 9 minutes

4   Name: C.H.

5   Social demographic features: female, 60 years old, Strategic Buyer

6

7   *I:* So, I would like to start with the category "Performance Motivation". What do

8   you think is most motivating and performance-enhancing at work?

9   *C.H.:* The salary in any case. Yes, if the payment is right. The recognition that

10   you get or just unfortunately you do not get sometimes. Also, the fun you have at

11   work.

12

13   *I:* Are you allowed to work independently in your current job? How important is

14   working independently to you in terms of your motivation to perform?

15   *C.H.:* Working independently, that is something I immediately tackled when I

16   I got a new boss. That is the most important thing for me. If I cannot work

17   independently and on my own responsibility, then there is no point. I could not

18   work like that if I was constantly being controlled.

19

20   *I:* How high is your current willingness to switch? Please give reasons for your

21   statement!

22   *C.H.:* It is no longer an issue for me at the moment because I am at the end of

23   my professional life. But I would also want to keep the job because I have a very

24   good boss.

25

26   *I:* Have you changed jobs frequently in your career so far, and if so, for what

27   reasons?

28   *C.H.:* I have changed jobs very often, although I have always been in the same

29   company, because we have very frequent restructuring, the superiors have

33 changed very often. Once I changed jobs because of restructuring and another
34 time I started a new job for personal reasons. The cooperation with my boss was
35 not very good.

36

37 *I:* Would you say that you are experiencing a spatial, temporal, as well as
38 organisational delimitation of work, and if so, what is being done to ensure that
39 your health and well-being do not suffer as a result?
40 *C.H.:* Yes, due to the Covid pandemic and the associated home office, there is of
41 course a spatial delimitation. There is also a temporal delimitation, because you
42 also have to work on yourself and your personality, so that even though you are
43 actually no longer at work, you no longer sit down at home at the laptop in the
44 evening. You have to be very careful about that. Beyond that, however, a lot is
45 done for health. We have all the work equipment at our disposal, we can borrow
46 new chairs and buy new monitors. This is running impeccably.

47

48 *I:* Okay, then we come to the second block of this interview, the topic of
49 leadership. What leadership styles do you know and how would you describe the
50 leadership style of your current supervisor?
51 *C.H.:* My current supervisor is very trusting. He relies on the fact that when he
52 gives me a task, I carry it out. He is aware that there cannot always be only
53 good feedback, but I give him feedback from time to time and that is fine with
54 him. He knows that the work is in good hands with me. However, I also know
55 other styles of leadership, e.g. very controlling and supervising bosses. I wanted
56 to get away from such bosses, because I cannot work like that if someone does
57 not trust me.

58

59 *I:* And do you know any other leadership styles?
60 *C.H.:* Yes, I have experienced many leaders. I have experiences bosses who did
61 not care about anything. I have also experienced bosses who were egoists and
62 only thought of themselves.

63

64 *I:* Can you see in yourself or in others that the topic of leadership has changed

65	in recent years?
66	C.H.: Yes, definitely. ==The management style used to be more authoritarian==, that
67	has to be said. Of course, the boss is still the boss and should be in charge, ==but it==
68	==is no longer the case that he is regarded with a certain with a certain reverence,==
69	==as it was at the beginning of my career.==
70	
71	I: Are you satisfied with your current manager? What qualities make them out?
72	out?
73	C.H.: ==I am very happy because he trusts me.== He also listens to my advice or
74	opinion when sometimes issues come up in the department. In my opinion, he
75	does that because I have been working there longer than him and I know the
76	colleagues better. ==I think in that respect, he relies on my judgement.==
77	
78	I: And do you also get regular feedback from your supervisor on performance?
79	performance?
80	C.H.: ==Yes, we always have our mid-term and year-end reviews.== Mainly because
81	we have a bonus system that your evaluation has an influence on. Fortunately, I
82	usually get positive feedback.
83	
84	I: In your opinion, how great is the influence of a manager on the motivation and
85	performance of his or her employees?
86	C.H.: ==Very high!== The influence is definitely enormous.
87	
88	I: Please imagine a good leader! What qualities do you think this person should
89	have?
90	C.H.: This should ==be respectful== and treat his employees in the same way. My
91	manager should not boast about being the boss. I believe that the manager ==must==
92	==set the direction== but also ==trust the employees.== Ultimately, a boss ==should==
93	==challenge and encourage his team.==
94	
95	I: Now we come to the third block of this interview. This is about toxic
96	leadership. What do you understand by toxic leadership?

97   *C.H.:* For me, toxic leadership ==would be when someone only thinks about==

98   ==himself and his career.== Moreover, if someone only wants to assert his interests

99   and ==does not really care about his employees.== In summary, toxic leadership is

100   when the manager sees his own employees as ==just a step in his career ladder.==

101

102   *I:* Have you or somebody close to you ever had difficulties with managers

103   because of their behaviour? Please explain briefly!

104   *C.H:* ==Yes, I once had a manager== who thought that if he gave me a piece of paper

105   that had to be copied, I had to be told again that I had to copy it. He also read

106   out the names of the people for whom I had to copy the paper. ==He also followed==

107   ==me to the toilet== to make sure I was not standing around talking somewhere.

108   I do not think he had enough to do, I do not know, but ==I could not stand working==

109   ==like that for long.==

110

111   *I:* Okay, and what was your performance and motivation like at that time?

112   *C.H.:* ==I had no motivation to continue working there. I was not doing well== at the

113   time ==and I was glad that I could then change my job.== What is also very bad is

114   when you are not working to capacity and your performance can suffer

115   enormously.

116

117   *I:* Were you also sick more often at that time?

118   *C.H.:* ==Yes! That is definitely related. You are not motivated to go to work in the==

119   ==morning and you count the hours until you are finally served.==

120

121   *I:* Would you say that more mistakes were made?

122   *C.H.:* ==That was not really the case with me.== No, I cannot say that like that. But ==I==

123   ==was just not happy working there.==

124

125   *I:* Okay, then I come to the last question. Do you have any further comments, do

126   you want to say anything else about the topic that you might have missed?

127   *C.H.:* No, actually we have addressed and discussed everything. ==For me, the==

128   ==most important thing is that performance is noticed and appreciated.== That what

129 one does is seen and that one ==is rewarded accordingly.== It is also important ==to==

130 ==have a good team around you.== These things are actually the most important for

131 me.

132

133 *I:* Okay great, thank you very much for the interview!

134 *C.H.:* With pleasure.

Appendix B   Summary content analysis

Interview	Line	No.	Paraphrase	Generalisation	Reduction
1	9-11	1	Even pay alone is not motivating and performance-enhancing. Recognition and enjoyment of the work are also important.	Motivating and performance-enhancing if ▪ Appropriate payment ▪ Recognition ▪ Fun at work	**Category 1** 1.1 Monetary factor, recognition, work content 1.2 High priority, works independently
1	15-17	2	Independent work is the most important thing, otherwise there is no point in constant control.	High value on independent work without control	
1	22-23	3	Willingness to change no longer an issue, as already at the end of working life.	No willingness to change because she is at the end of her professional life	1.3 No willingness to change
1	23-24	4	I would want to keep the job because I have a good supervisor.	Satisfied with manager	2.3 Satisfied with manager
1	28-29	5	Many job changes within the same company, frequent changes in the organisation.	Frequent job changes due to restructuring within the company A self-initiated change due to disagreements with the previous manager	1.4 Frequent, restructuring 1.4 Manager
1	34-35	6	Once because the cooperation with the boss was not right.	Disagreement with supervisor	3.2 Unsatisfied
1	40-44	7	The COVID pandemic and home office result in a spatial and temporal delimitation. You have to work on yourself not to sit at the computer at the end of working hours. All the necessary work equipment is provided.	Spatial and temporal delimitation through COVID pandemic and home office, self-discipline Necessary work equipment for home office is provided	1.5 Spatial and temporal delimitation, self-discipline, necessary work equipment for home office

1	51	8	Current supervisor has great confidence	Leader gives trust	**Category 2** 2.1 authoritarian, laissez-faire, toxic
1	54-57	9	Knows other leadership styles, supervising superiors who do not care about anything and superiors who only think about themselves.	Knowledge of leadership styles: ▪ Controlling supervisors (authoritarian) ▪ Supervisors who do not care (laissez-faire) ▪ Supervisors who only think of themselves (egoistic)	
1	66	10	Leadership style used to be more authoritarian, supervisors are no longer regarded with such reverence as they were at the beginning of professional life.	Change in leadership can be observed, formerly authoritarian	2.2 Formerly authoritarian
1	73, 76	11	Very satisfied with current manager because trusts, listens to advice and relies on judgement.	Very satisfied with current manager because: ▪ trusts ▪ listens to advice and judgement	2.3 Satisfied, human factor 2.1 Currently cooperative
1	80	12	Regular feedback in discussion rounds, mid-term discussion, final discussion at the end of the year.	Receives regular feedback.	2.4 Once per year
1	86	13	The influence of a manager on the motivation and performance of his or her employees is very high.	Influence of a manager on the motivation and performance of his or her employees is rated high.	2.5 high
1	90-93	14	Managers should treat employees with respect, not let the boss hang out, set the direction, trust people and have confidence in them, encourage employees.	Managerial qualities: ▪ treat employees with respect ▪ do not let the boss hang out ▪ take direction ▪ trust ▪ encourage employees	2.6 Human factor Leadership competence

1	97-99	15	Toxic leadership means when someone thinks only of himself and his career. He only wants to push through his interests and does not care about the employees.	Toxic leadership is selfish behaviour.	**Category 3** 5.1 Egoistic action, pushing through his interests
1	104-105	16	I had a supervisor who thought that if he put down a document to be copied, he had to tell me to copy it.	Supervisor has controlled and pursued.	3.2 Control
1	108-109	17	I could not stand working like that for long	Did not keep it up for long	3.3 Change of job
1	112-113	18	I had no motivation to stay there any longer. I was not well and I was glad that I could change jobs.	No motivation to stay, change of job	3.3 No motivation, change of job
1	118	19	Being sick more often, that is definitely related to leadership. You just do not feel good.	Sick more often	3.4 More days of absence
1	119	20	You are not motivated to go to work in the morning and you count the hours until finally the time is served.	Unmotivated	3.3 No motivation
1	122	21	That was not really the case with me.	Error constant	3.4 Error constant
1	129-130	22	It is also important to have a good team around you.	Good team	1.1 Good team
2	9-12	23	Motivating and performance-enhancing is money, bonuses and a flawless development plan.	Motivated and efficient when: • Money • Bonuses • A good development plan	**Category 1** 5.1 Monetary factor and fringe benefits, professional development
2	21-22	24	The job must be paid accordingly if you do it well.	Good performance on the job must be rewarded in terms of pay.	1.1 Monetary Factor

130

2	31-32	25	The importance of independent work in terms of performance motivation is high. If you can work independently, you are much more motivated because you have more freedom.	High priority placed on independent work.	1.2 High priority, works independently
2	33-34	26	If you can work independently, you are much more motivated.	Motivation through personal responsibility.	1.1 Personal responsibility
2	38	27	I am currently very willing to change jobs. I have a terrible supervisor.	High willingness to change due to leadership behaviour.	1.3 High willingness to change, manager
2	38	28	I have a bad supervisor.	Dissatisfied with the manager.	2.3 Dissatisfied
2	43-47	29	I was employed by three big companies because I got bored after a maximum of four years. Because the job always stayed the same and you could not move on to another position.	Changed companies three time. Boredom after a maximum of four years, due to: ▪ Routine ▪ No development opportunities	1.4 Three times, no development opportunities
2	56, 66-67	30	I do not have any spatial, temporal or organisational delimitation to work. In my opinion, it is not healthy that you always have to be available. That changes you in the long run.	Spatial, temporal and organisational delimitation to work. Constant availability is perceived as stressful.	1.5 Spatial and temporal, burden due to constant availability
2	71-73	31	The leadership style of the current manager is more top-down than collaborative, it is more like tasks are just given instead of finding a solution together.	Leadership style of the current manager authoritarian.	**Category 2** 2. Authoritarian
2	71	32	And that was when my motivation stopped.	He himself is unmotivated due to leadership behaviour.	2.5 Is unmotivated himself due to leadership behaviour
2	80-85	33	My last two employers were American companies. It was more relaxed there because they had flat hierarchies. It is easier, you do not	Knowledge of leadership styles: ▪ American with flat hierarchies	2.1 Cooperative, authoritarian

			have to consult ten interfaces to be allowed to do something. At the others, leadership is still like it was 10-15 years ago, very authoritarian. Sometimes you do not even dare to go to your supervisors.	▪ Cooperative with few interfaces and personal responsibility ▪ Authoritarian, so that you do not dare to go to the supervisor	
2	93-95, 101-103	34	The topic of leadership has definitely changed in recent years. 10-15 years ago in training, you could see an authoritarian focus on leadership styles. And in the last six years, more companies are operating with flat hierarchies. More and more in a friendly way and not this authoritarian approach anymore.	Change in leadership From authoritarian to flat hierarchies with a friendly nature in the last six years	2.2 From authoritarian to friendly
2	108-110	35	Regular feedback for performance at last job almost monthly, which I think is good because you know where you are at the moment and can be corrected quickly by your manager.	Monthly feedback on performance, positively perceived	2.4 More often than once a year
2	126-128	36	The influence of the leader on the motivation and performance of employees can, as long as the relationship is at eye level, keep motivation ten times higher. This is not possible with authoritarian leadership. If I have a good supervisor, I prefer to go to work because I feel more comfortable there.	Good supervisors have a positive influence on the motivation and performance of employees	2.4 high
2	136-138	37	If someone gets paid 200 euros more for a job well done, they definitely prefer to go to work. In contrast, if the boss only praises you or gives you a pat on the back.	Reward for good performance is just as important as the way and manner of the supervisor	2.5 Reward for good performance is equally important
2	142-143. 148-149	38	A good leader should be open and receptive. She should be committed to the team.	Qualities of a good leader: ▪ Open and receptive ▪ Standing up for the team	2.6 Human factor

				▪ Helpful to the staff	
2	152-153, 155-157	39	Toxic leadership is when you have a pessimistic supervisor who only distributes tasks in an arrogant way. Even if the supervisor does not appreciate the performance of his team. Many bosses do not care because they get their high salary at the end of the month anyway.	Toxic leadership ▪ Pessimistic supervisor ▪ Assigns tasks only in an arrogant manner	**Category 3** 3.1 Toxic leadership is pessimistic leadership Assigning tasks from the top down
2	163-165, 168	40	I had difficulties with a manager because of his behaviour. When my manager changed his management style, I felt like I was running into a wall. Because I could no longer present my intentions, or what I felt was beneficial, to him. He was no longer open to other opinions.	Has difficulties with the leader himself because: ▪ Has switched to an authoritarian style ▪ No longer open to other opinions ▪ Ideas are no longer listened to	2.3 Dissatisfied, Leadership competence negative 3.2 Experiencing toxic leadership himself, leadership style changed to authoritarian, rejecting change, not listening to ideas
2	172-174	41	My performance and motivation have diminished more and more. Because you can no longer bring in your own ideas and are only in the executive position.	Performance and motivation have decreased	
2	180	42	I was sick more often at that time. The error rate, I think, not so much.	More days absent Error rate remains constant	3.3 Performance and motivation decrease 3.4 More days absent, error rate remains constant
3	11	43	Praise, recognition and money are motivating and performance-enhancing.	Motivated and efficient when: ▪ Praise ▪ Recognition ▪ Money	**Category 1** 1.1 Monetary Factor, recognition and appreciation
3	15-16	44	I work 80% independently, the importance is quite high.	Independent work at 80%, high priority	1.2 High priority, works almost independently

	20-21	45	I am satisfied. No willingness to change.	No willingness to change	1.3 No willingness to change
3	25-26	46	I have rarely changed my profession. Now, after 15 years, for the first time.	Rarely changed the job	1.4 Changed jobs very rarely
3	31	47	No spatial, temporal or organisational delimitation of work. At my workplace, everything is separate.	No spatial, temporal or organisational delimitation of work	1.5 No spatial, temporal and organisational delimitation to work
3	37-39	48	I already had a dominant leadership. At the moment, the leadership style is more team-oriented. It is currently the case that the team idea counts and working together.	Change in leadership. Formerly dominant, now it is more team-oriented. Possibility of freedom of decision.	**Category 2** 5.1 Authoritarian, cooperative, currently cooperative
3	43-46	49	It used to be more dominant than today. A few years ago, it was the manager who gave all the instructions himself. It has changed in the sense that people work more with each other and no longer act according to orders. These days you are more often allowed to make your own decisions.	Change in leadership. Formerly dominant, now it is team-based. Greater freedom of decision	5.1 Change in leadership, formerly dominant, now more team-based, freedom of decision-making
3	50	50	I am satisfied.	Satisfied with current job	2.3 Satisfied
3	50	51	It is very team-based.	Current manager is team-oriented	2.1 Current manager is team-oriented
3	51	52	Instructions are relevant, short and concise.	Current manager gives clear guidelines for tasks	2.3 Human factor positive, leadership competence positive
3	54	53	I get regular feedback for my performance.	Regular feedback for work performance	
3	58-59	54	The influence of a manager on the motivation and performance of employees can be very great. If the manager is good enough, then people like to work and are also more motivated.	With a good leader, people prefer to work and are also more motivated.	2.4 More often than once a year

3	62-65	55	A manager should work in a team-oriented way and not take anything personally, even if the employee criticises once. She should address when you do something well, but also when you do something badly. They should be honest.	Manager should not take anything personally and work in a team-oriented way. Give good feedback back to the staff.	2.5 Can be very big. With a good leader you prefer to work and are more motivated 2.6 Human factor, leadership competence
3	70-74	56	Toxic leadership is when you work against each other. When the leader assigns someone tasks that are only meant to distract you. But not because the tasks make any concrete sense.	Toxic leadership is when you work against each other.	**Category 3** 3.1 Working against each other
3	78-81	57	I had supervisor who just shouted. I could not deal with that. He treated his staff like little children, I did not like that. My previous boss was totally incompetent and passed off other people's work as her own.	Choleric supervisor and professionally incompetent boss	3.2 Choleric, professionally incompetent
3	85-89, 92	58	I did not let my choleric boss shout at me. Shouting people do not think about their actions. As a result, I left. With the previous supervisor, I worked as I saw fit. Despite her professional incompetence, I was always motivated at work.	Nevertheless, he was motivated at work and does not let anything be said.	3.3 Was motivated anyway
3	96	59	At that time, I was not sick more often or made mistakes more often.	Neither mor frequent sickness nor a higher error rate	3.4 Absence days and error rate constant
4	9-10	60	The team in which one works is motivating and performance-enhancing.	Motivation and performance promotion by the team	**Category 1** 1.1 Human factor
4	15-16	61	I am allowed to work independently. The priority of this is very high.	Is allowed to work independently, high priority	1.2 High priority, works independently
4	21	62	Willingness to change is medium, not because the manager is bad, but because the professional situation is currently unsatisfactory.	Willingness to change is medium	1.3 Willingness to change is medium

4	26	63	So far, the job has not been changed frequently.	Never changed jobs before	1.4 Never changed jobs before
4	31-34, 42-47	64	I do not have spatial delimitation. I can work at home, but I do not have to. Time is an organisational thing that is difficult to narrow down because of all the work. We have some offers that can be taken advantage of. There are courses on the night shift, various online courses or meditation during the break, which I have not made friends with yet.	No spatial delimitation, home office is possible on a voluntary basis Temporal delimitation is present, too much work To maintain health, timely delimitation from work. Online courses and meditation are offered. Cannot identify with this.	1.5 No spatial delimitation, voluntary home office 1.3 Temporal delimitation exists, high workload 1.5 Self-discipline, delimitation, work-life balance offers
4	52-56	65	The current leader has an open management style and is goal-oriented. How the goal is reaches is a personal matter and if you need help, you can ask for it. I did not have this situation in other companies. There were clear guidelines and interim reports, so it was rather dictatorial. This was far from working independently.	Current manager lives an open management style. She is goal-oriented Other leadership style was characterised by clear guidelines and interim reports Dominant	**Category 2** 2.1 Authoritarian, cooperative
4	66-72	66	I can definitely see a change in leadership. Because we are a conservative and traditional company and because we have very distinctive management structures, you notice more and more in the meantime that we work more cooperatively, which is very unusual. Our managers also work more cooperatively with the higher levels.	Change in leadership discernible Conservative company with pronounced management structures has changed to cooperative management styles Employees are involved	2.2 Change in leadership, formerly distinct leadership structures, now it is cooperative
4	76-79	67	I am satisfied with my current manager. It is very useful and pleasant that she gives me a lot of freedom to work.	Satisfied with current manager. Cooperative management style with a lot freedom.	2.3 Satisfied, leadership competence

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4	82-86	68	We have regular feedback sessions every six to eight weeks, where I receive feedback on my performance. In addition, we have a biannual online tool through which feedback can be requested.	Regular feedback every six to eight weeks Biannual online tool to receive feedback	2.4 More often than once a year
4	90-95	69	If the influence of a manager on the motivation and performance of employees is mapped on a scale of 1-10. Then I would give myself a value of 9. And the only thing that is more attractive is what the manager actually does. Then the conflict with the manager might not be there, even if the manager praises the employee less. One notices how well things are going and is satisfied with oneself. Because not everyone can work where they would be best employed. The job may not be free either, so it is an important part of being a manager that you deal with these issues.	The influence of a manager on the motivation and performance of employees is rated very highly. The only thing above this is the work content	2.5 Influence is high, work content above that
4	101-102, 106	70	Qualities of a good leader should be even-tempered, cooperation and empathy for the situation. You should simply work well together.	Qualities of a leader: ▪ Be even-tempered ▪ Cooperativeness ▪ Empathy ▪ Cooperation	2.5 Human factor
4	124-130	71	A friend of mine has, because he was put under massive pressure. His employer put enormous pressure on the employees to achieve the company's goals. Even more so with methods that were not exactly appropriate. In my opinion, you can always do something better, but you should also talk to people. In my friend's case, warnings were issued because of mistakes and missed targets. That is completely wrong way.	Colleague was put under pressure to achieve goals Warning	**Category 3** 3.1 Building up pressure to achieve goals with warnings

4	134-136	72	He changed jobs only two months later. Internally, but I think the colleague would have left the company anyway if there had been no other job for him. The motivation had disappeared.	Internally, changed job two months later Loss of motivation	3.2 Unmotivated, change of job
4	139-140, 141	73	It is hard for me to judge whether he was sick more often. But his manager immediately picked up on every mistake he made, that he was not concentrating enough again.	Loss of concentration	3.2 Loss of concentration, days absent unknown
5	9-11	74	The environment in which you work is important for promoting motivation and performance. Interaction with colleagues and the boss. It is important to receive positive feedback and appreciation on a regular basis.	The environment in which you work is motivating and performance-enhancing. In addition, the colleagues, the supervisor, regular feedback and appreciation are important.	**Category 1** 1.1 Human factor, recognition and appreciation
5	18-20	75	I am allowed to work independently or in consultation with my colleagues. I think that is important too.	I am allowed to work independently, but in consultation with my colleagues. I also think that is important.	1.2 High priority, may work almost independently
5	27-33	76	Willingness to change is currently very high. For the first time, my boss is someone with whom I have difficulties. You do not get much appreciation. It also bothers me that he can criticize more easily than he can praise. That is why I have already looked for other jobs.	Willingness to change is very high due to dissatisfaction with the manager.	1.3 High, Manager
5	37-41	77	I have always worked in the same place and would not have changed because I think everything else is fine. But for the first time, I am wondering if maybe I should not change jobs.	Never changed jobs yet.	1.4 Never changed jobs before
5	46-48, 50-51	78	For health and well-being, rather little is done on the part of my supervisor. You have to be	Little is done for health and well-being	

			proactive. Nevertheless, there are training opportunities that every employee can take advantage of. The COVID pandemic has exacerbated all this.	Personal initiative	1.5 No spatial and temporal delimitation, no work-life balance offers
5	58-73	79	I have had four supervisors so far. The first one was choleric and very strict, but very benevolent towards me. He always encouraged me. He was a good supervisor for me, but not always easy for my colleagues because of his hot-tempered manner. Then I had a chaotic manager who was very cordial. After that I got my current boss, who combined all the qualities. She consulted how her employees were doing, was very clever, structured and eloquent. At the moment I have a supervisor who acts up but cannot how her employees be doing, was very clever, structured and eloquent. At the moment I have a supervisor who acts up but cannot fulfil the duties of this responsible position. It is not pleasant to work under him.	Knowledge Leadership styles: ▪ Choleric supervisor who only promotes individual employees ▪ Cordial but chaotic supervisors ▪ Respectful and competent leader ▪ Unpleasant, controlling and overtaxed boss	**Category 2** 2.1 Toxic, cooperative, currently toxic
5	77-79	80	In our company, there is inevitably a change of manager. With us, it is all about personality. We have only one supervisor. In terms of his character, he has changed a lot for us.	Change in leadership can only be judged subjectively. Depends on the character	2.2 Change in leadership subjectively assessed is character dependent
5	85	81	I am not satisfied or rarely satisfied with my current manager.	Dissatisfied with my current leadership	2.3 Is dissatisfied with current manager
5	98, 100-101	82	We do not yet receive regular feedback for past performance. If it had been desirable, we could have made an appointment with our boss. But I refrained from doing so.	No regular feedback for performance Possibility for a feedback meeting would have been possible	2.4 No feedback, it was offered once but rejected due to resignation

				Was not taken	
5	105-107, 109-110	83	The influence of a manager on the motivation and performance of employees is very high. If the cooperation with a manager does not work, then the atmosphere can tip over and a change of job is threatened.	Influence of the manager on the motivation and performance of employees is highly valued.	2.5 Influence of the manager on motivation and performance is rated high, manager is reason for job change on mood in the team
5	113-115	84	The qualities of a good leader are appreciation and respect for what the colleague does every day, what background he or she brings with him or her. Above all, they should be considerate and open to personal conversations.	Qualities of a good leader: ▪ Appreciation ▪ Respect ▪ Consideration ▪ Giving feedback	2.6 Human factor, Leadership competence
5	119-123	85	In my opinion, this is already partly the case with us, when the supervisor has someone on his mind, that he makes statements that are not acceptable. He also leaves mean notes on my timetables.	Currently experiencing toxic leadership: ▪ Having someone on your mind ▪ Unprofessional statements	**Category 3** 3.1 Current situation, mistrust, denouncing colleagues 3.2 Experiencing current toxic leadership, having someone on your back, inappropriate comments
5	130-131, 133-135	86	Performance and motivation at the current time are low.	Efficiency and motivation are low	
5	139-141	87	I was sick more often. I called in sick sooner than I used to, because by now I do not see that I am wearing myself out physically and it is not appreciated.	Sick more often Call in sick more often, as benefits are not recognised anyway.	3.3 Performance and motivation decrease 3.4 Sick more often, call in sick sooner because it is not appreciated
6	8-9	88	Manager acceptance and feedback are the strongest performance and motivation enhancers.	Acceptance and feedback are motivating and performance-enhancing	**Category 1** 1.1 Recognition and appreciation

6	13-14	89	I am allowed to work independently. I supervise many projects whose importance is very high.	Independent work Many projects High priority of work	1.2 High priority, works independently
6	19-20	90	No willingness to change because I have just changed. I currently feel very comfortable.	No willingness to change jobs, as they currently feel comfortable.	1.3 No willingness to change, recently changed due to workload
6	24-25	91	Changed jobs because could no longer identify with the job content.	Changed jobs due to the workload being too heavy	
6	31-38	92	There is a delimitation, which I find very positive. There is a temporal delimitation, because I am at the company in the morning and at home in the afternoon. I can arrange my own working hours. Unfortunately, there is no organisational delimitation. Nevertheless, the home office is well compatible with children and family. My health and well-being are very positive.	Spatial and temporal delimitation of work is perceived as positive: ▪ Home office option in the afternoon ▪ However, also works in the evening ▪ Flexibility good for personal well-being and health	1.4 Spatial and temporal, positively perceived
6	43-47	93	I know three leadership styles so far: authoritarian, laissez-faire and cooperative. I have already been confronted with all three styles. Currently, my manager works in a laissez-faire or cooperative style. Personally, I like that best.	Knowledge of leadership styles: laissez-faire, cooperative and authoritarian. Current leadership is cooperative and laissez-faire	**Category 2** 2.1 Authoritarian, laissez-faire, cooperative
6	51-54	94	Authoritarian leadership styles have mainly been encountered after training. My first experiences with the cooperative or laissez-faire style were in the last few years.	Change in leadership can be observed. Formerly authoritarian, today more cooperative, laissez-faire or empowerment	2.2 Change in leadership can be identified, formerly authoritarian, today cooperative, laissez-faire or empowerment
6	59-66	95	I am satisfied with my leadership. I think very highly of the cooperative and laissez-faire	Satisfied with current manager	

			management style. You need people who can and want to work independently. Sometimes I do not get the necessary expertise from supervisors, because by delegating the work, managers often no longer have a clue.	Good opinion of the cooperative and laissez-faire management style. Supervisor's expertise is lacking	2.3 Satisfied, leadership competence positive, expertise negative
6	70-75	96	I usually receive a performance evaluation once a year. After the first six months of my probationary period, my entry was reflected to me. I am a little critical of the fact that the performance evaluation is only once a year. In my opinion, two interviews would make more sense.	Performance evaluation once a year Desire for more frequent discussions	2.4 Once a year, would like more frequent talks
6	79-81	97	The influence of a manager on the motivation and performance of employees is very high, because the manager gives an assessment of performance. Personally, it is important to me how I am seen and how my performance is evaluated.	The influence of the manager on the motivation and performance of employees is very high.	2.5 Influence of the manager on motivation and performance is rated high
6	84-85, 88-90, 135	98	A good quality of a leader is when he or she carries out a cooperative leadership style with a lot of expertise. According to the leading staff, the leader must switch back and forth between leadership styles. It is imperative that the leader keeps the team in mind. Who harmonises well with each other?	Leadership qualities: ▪ A lot of expertise ▪ Cooperative leadership style ▪ Switching between leadership styles ▪ Keeping an eye on the team	2.6 Expertise, leadership competence
6	96-99	99	For me, the attribute "toxic" means a poisoned relationship of trust between two entities. If the manager treats someone badly, evaluates unfairly, does not communicate or is not responsive to his employees.	Toxic leadership ▪ Poisoned trust relationship ▪ Employees are treated badly ▪ Unfair assessment ▪ Inability to respond to his employees ▪ Bad communication	**Category 3** 3.1 Toxic relationship of trust, employees are treated badly, unfair assessment, employees are not seen, no conversations

| 6 | 104-108 | 100 | So far, I have had a leadership that has given me too much responsibility. Nevertheless, I had pointed out several times that I did not want that. From that point on, I felt an overwhelming demand on myself. I did not know what to do next. I did not understand exactly what my task was. | Had toxic leadership myself

Was overburdened to the supervisor at the time, given too much responsibility and unclear tasks. | 3.2 Yes, too much responsibility excessive demands, unclear tasks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 111-113 | 101 | Motivation was high, but only because I wanted to do the tasks I was given. My performance was accordingly not good. | Motivation was high, but only to get the job done. | 3.3 High motivation |
| 6 | 121-123, 106-108 | 102 | This overload went on for several weeks and even months, it finally made me sick and I left the company. Initially, it starts with a slight cold, that the body reacts. At some point it got worse and I developed psychological problems and acute insomnia. | Illness, mental problems

Insomnia | 3.4 Sick, mental problems, insomnia |
| 6 | 126-127 | 103 | Due to a certain degree of ignorance and lack of know-how, many mistakes have also been made. | Higher error rate due to:

▪ Ignorance
▪ Lack of know-how
▪ Overload | 3.4 Errors have risen |
| 7 | 9-11 | 104 | Recognition of performance is important. Not only praise, but also through various opportunities such as leave, pay or getting more responsibility. | Recognition through performance through opportunities such as:

▪ Holiday
▪ Salary
▪ Responsibility | **Category 1**
1.1 Monetary factor and fringe benefits, recognition and appreciation, professional development |
| 7 | 15-17 | 105 | I work very independently, possibly a bit too much. The priority for this is very high in my company because the more self-reliant the | May work independently | 1.2 High priority, works almost independently |

			employees work, the more flexible they become and the work they get.	The importance of working independently is very high.	
7	23-25	106	There is no willingness to change because I have experienced many other bosses who were much worse than my current supervisor.	No willingness to switch	1.3 No willingness to switch
7	29-34	107	I have only changed jobs twice within my company. In the first department, the boss was one of the worst I have ever experienced. In the second department, my manager was fine, but my team colleagues were miserable. That is why I was forced to change positions again. I like it very much in my current department.	Two job changes within the same company. ▪ First reason for change was the boss ▪ Second reason for change was the colleagues at work	1.4 Two job changes; first change because of supervisor, second change because of colleagues
7	39-45	108	I definitely have a spatial delimitation. Just because of the COVID pandemic and the associated home office. Time-wise, I have delimited myself a bit before, because I prefer to start at 9am instead of 6:30am. I had to start work very early for years when I worked in production. One day I was happy when I did not have to do that anymore. Currently, I am very happy, because that is what is good for me.	Spatial delimitation through COVID pandemic, exclusively home office Temporal delimitation through flexible working hours Good for well-being	1.5 Spatial and temporal, positive
7	50-52, 54-55	109	My first boss was authoritarian. The next boss followed the laissez-faire approach, so the relationship between him and his team did not fit. My current boss is also a laissez-faire leader, but she also brings in cooperative influences.	Knowledge about leadership style: ▪ Authoritarian ▪ Laissez-faire ▪ Cooperative	**Category 2** 2.1 Knowledge about leadership style: ▪ Authoritarian ▪ Laissez-faire ▪ Cooperative
7	61-66	110	Until a few years ago, my company tried to squeeze as much as possible out of its employees. The higher the shortage of skilled workers becomes, the more they seem to approach their	In the past, people tried to get more out of their employees.	Currently laissez-faire, but also cooperative

			employees in the last five to six years. They are thinking more about their own employees.	Due to the shortage of skilled workers, more through is being given to employees.	2.2 Change in leadership. In the past, attempts were made to get more out of the employees, but due to the shortage of skilled workers, more consideration is being given to the employees
7	72-75	111	The current manager is not like giving people pointless, unnecessary tasks that restrict everything. It is more that she lets her staff do their work independently, but she also expects that if a problem arises, they will contact her.	Satisfied with current manager: • Does not give meaningless tasks • Does not restrict employees • Employees should contact the manager if they have problems	2.3 Satisfied, economic factor, human factor
7	80-81	112	I have a performance review once a year, although I do not really feel like it. Occasionally, we have one twice a year.	Two feedback meetings as year that are not looked forward to	2.4 More often than once a year, no desire to do so
7	87	113	The influence of the manager on the motivation and performance of employees is very high.	The influence of the leader on motivation and performance is very high	2.5 high
7	92-96	114	A leader should have qualities like a sense of justice, kindness and empathy. She should not have any prejudices against people. She should also have a certain understanding of economic contexts.	Leadership qualities: • Have no prejudices • Sense of justice • Kindness • Empathy • Understanding of economic contexts	2.6 Human factor, economic factor
7	100-104	115	A toxic leader is a boss who places two to three people in each of his teams who tell him everything. In the end, he judges and treats his staff exactly according to this information. That is, in my opinion, toxic leadership.	Toxic leadership is when: • The supervisor allows himself to be influenced and manipulated by the opinion of individual employees. • Unfair treatment	**Category 3** 3.1 Being influenced, manipulation, unfair treatment
7	112-116	116	Prejudices were developed towards other employees, who have since not been accepted and were not given a fair chance by the boss. He	Has experienced toxic leadership himself • Authoritarian supervisor	3.2 Has experienced toxic leadership himself, authoritarian supervisor,

			also scared many people with his authoritarian manner.	▪ Colleagues who were not recognised ▪ Creation of fear	employee was not recognised, cause fear
7	120-124	117	My motivation was based on the fact that I wanted to do my work correctly and properly. Moreover, I wanted to do it within the time frame set by the boss. I said to myself, if I have such a bad boss, then at least I will not be accused of anything. There were other colleagues who gave up.	Was self-motivated as I wanted to do my work correctly and not blame myself. Colleagues resigned and were sick more often.	3.3 Self-motivated, colleagues have resigned
7	126-127	118	The sickness rate is around 20%. This means that every fifth employee is on sick leave every day of the year.	Sickness rate at about 20%.	3.4 High sick leave, not even more days absent from work
8	9-10	119	The appreciation of the supervisor and the money are the fruits of purposeful work.	Appreciation of the supervisor and money	**Category 1** 1.1 Monetary factor, recognition and appreciation, work content
8	14-15	120	I am allowed to work independently. However, there are points in the daily business that need a certain rhythm.	Independent work. Individual work processes require a certain rhythm.	1.2 Works almost independently
8	19	121	Currently indispensable	High priority	1.3 High priority
8	25-26	122	A change is not an option for me. I feel comfortable and do not want to change.	No willingness to change, feels comfortable	1.4 No willingness to change
8	30-32	123	I have changed jobs several times. Once because of local moves, that the area of my work shifted from city to city and I did not want to go along with that in the long run. But I have also changed jobs for financial reasons.	Already changed jobs more often, due to local moves and for financial reasons.	1.5 Already changed jobs more often. Because of local moves and for financial reasons
8	37-40, 46-47, 50	124	There is a spatial, temporal or organisational delimitation resulting from the COVID	Spatial delimitation through the COVID situation. Home office	

			pandemic, because many employees moved to the home office. The employer is willing to make this possible for the employees. He has provided me with all the equipment. I notice that the time limitations are already shifting a bit, also in terms of break times. Business appointments are being made when it used to actually be necessary to take a break. I think for some colleagues this can potentially affect their health or well-being. Personally, it does not bother me.	Employer provides equipment for home office Time limitations shift, appointments are fixed in break time Health and well-being do not suffer	1.6 Spatial and temporal. Work equipment for home office, positive
8	57-59	125	I already had an authoritarian supervisor, but I never really got along with her. My current supervisor thinks that he gives his employees a completely free hand. He only intervenes at critical moments.	Knowledge about leadership style: ▪ Authoritarian ▪ Laissez-faire	**Category 2** 2.1 Authoritarian, Laissez-faire, current Laissez-faire
8	63-64	126	Within my personal leadership relationships, the topic of "leadership" has not changed in recent years. But I can already observe changes in the general leadership in our company.	Change in leadership can be seen, but not in direct supervisor relationship.	2.2 Change in leadership can be identified, but not in direct supervisor relationships
8	68-70	127	I am very satisfied at the moment. He always wants to please every employee and is very open to other opinions. My boss constantly takes the time for us. He also has regular discussions with his employees.	Satisfied with current manager. Is concerned about the welfare of others and is open and takes time for staff. Regular conversations	2.3 Human factor
8	74-76	128	We get feedback continuously. We have fixed dates. These are held every six months. Nevertheless, he always takes time when we ask for half an hour.	Regular feedback. Fixed dates that are held every six months. Also possible on request	2.4 Regular conversations 2.4 More often than once a year
8	82-83	129	The influence of a manager on the motivation and performance of the employees is very important,	Influence of the manager on motivation and performance is very important.	

			because if the manager does not manage to motivate his employees, this leads to a problem within the team.	Do not motivate your employees, this leads to problems in the team.	2.5 Influence is high, unmotivated employees lead to team problem
8	88-89	130	A good leader should be able to compromise. They should also be fair and good at praising.	• Ability to compromise • Praise • Fairness	2.6 Leadership competence, human factor
8	93-94	131	As soon as my supervisor has no idea what I actually do and he is ultimately supposed to assess my work.	Cluelessness of the supervisor, but who is supposed to assess the work performance.	**Category 3** 3.1 Cluelessness of the supervisor, but who is supposed to assess the performance
8	99-104	132	I myself have not had a problem yet. A colleague resigned because of the high workload and more and more work was being put on him. He had already pointed this out several times. For him it was simply too much work. I cannot judge whether it was really too much for him.	No problems with the manager himself. Colleague resigned because of high workload. The manager ignored the notice. Workload had increased further.	3.2 Colleague had problems, high workload, staff ignored
8	109-110	133	The colleague's motivation was zero. He was incapable of doing the simplest things in his day-to-day work.	No motivation and performance left. Colleague was unable to do the simplest things.	3.3 No motivation and performance. Performance decreases
8	115-116	134	He made many mistakes and was often sick.	More days absent and higher error rate	3.4 More days absent. Made more mistakes
8	116-117	135	In my opinion, the manager did not realise that he had to be taken out of there.	Manager did not realise that he had to be taken out.	3.2 Overload was not recognised
9	9-10	136	Be able to assess praise and recognition, money and private situations correctly and show understanding	Praise, recognition, money, assessing private situations correctly, showing understanding.	**Category 1** 1.1 Recognition and appreciation, monetary factor, human factor
9	13, 16	137	I am allowed to work independently. That is also very important for me.	May work independently. High priority	1.2 High priority, works independently

9	20-21	138	After the last interview I had, I no longer have any willingness to change, as I now get more salary than before.	No willingness to change. Recently received salary increase.	1.3 No willingness to change, recently higher salary.
9	26-27	139	I have rarely changed my job.	No change of job so far	1.4 Rarely changed job
9	34-36	140	There is a temporal delimitation due to an acute shortage of staff, so that overruns often have to be made. Nothing is done about this.	Temporal delimitation due to lack of staff. Need to overcome, but no countermeasures.	1.5 Temporal, lack of staff, need for overtime, no work-life balance offers
9	41-45	141	I do not really know any other leadership style than the one of my current boss. I find the current leadership very questionable and also not good. Some colleagues have big problems with my boss and there is a high turnover of colleagues. That is not normal.	Only knows the current leadership style of her manager. No other experience Is dissatisfied with their current leadership. Many colleagues have problems with this leader. High turnover	**Category 2** 2.1 Knows only the leadership style of the current leader
9	48-53	142	She demands too much from the staff or often does not want to involve those who are not present so much and do not know their way around. In addition, she always wants to promote only the experienced top performers and does not allow new employees to learn anything new. This leads to conflicts, which could be avoided.	Demands too high Does not trust new employees with anything. Promotes only senior and experienced employees. Prevents development of employees.	2.3 Dissatisfied, huma factor negative 2.3 Economic factor negative, leadership competence negative
9	57-62	143	A lot has changed negatively in the office since only people who are no longer motivated are employed. There used to be colleagues who were	Change in leadership	2.2 Change in leadership, supervisor used to be more respected

			almost never sick. Now we have many employees who are often sick and stress about every issue they do not agree with. The reputation of my boss has also developed negatively in contrast to before.	Leadership used to be more respected than it is today.	
9	84-86	144	I get feedback regularly. However, my boss does not do this in face-to-face meetings, as I would like, but in front of the clients.	Regular feedback, not in face-to-face meetings, but in front of clients.	2.4 More frequently than once a year, no face-to-face meetings, only in front of clients
9	90	145	In my opinion, the influence of a manager on the motivation and performance of employees is very high.	The influence of a manager on the motivation and performance of employees is high.	2.5 high
9	105	146	One quality of a good leader is certainly a certain understanding of private matters.	Be able to show understanding for private matters.	2.6 Human factor
9	111-115	147	Toxic leadership is already something like the kind of leadership I am experiencing at the moment.	Experience straight toxic leadership for herself.	**Category 3** 3.2 She is currently experiencing toxic leadership herself
9	98-100	148	The boss blasphemes about her own employees. If someone makes a mistake, she tells others. I blame her for not talking to people herself and calling them on it.	Toxic leadership is blasphemy against colleagues. It denounces and does not talk to those affected.	3.1 Talking bad about colleagues, denouncing, not addressing conflicts
9	119-122	149	I do not have any problems with my supervisor, but the other colleagues do. It is often the case that the boss comes to me and says that a colleague has done something differently than agreed. I always have to listen to that. She should talk to the person herself about it.	Manager blasphemes about colleagues. Discusses conflicts with third parties and not with the person concerned.	3.2 Talking bad about colleagues, discusses the conflicts with third parties and not with the person concerned
9	125	150	Performance and motivation of colleagues are quite bad.	No motivation	3.3 No motivation

9	125-126	151	I am the only one who is often present and the others are mostly sick.	Frequent days of absence of colleagues	3.4 Frequent days of absence
9	129-130	152	My colleagues have a high willingness to change jobs. They have already applied elsewhere.	Colleagues apply to other companies	3.3 High willingness to change
9	131	153	No, my error rate has not increased. I make just as many mistakes as usual.	Error rate remains constant	3.4 Error rate remains constant
9	136-137	154	I have the feeling that my colleagues do not care about anything. That is the attitude I would attribute to them.	No motivation Change in attitude to work	3.3 No motivation
10	10-11	155	Positive feedback and praise. We achieve our goals together.	Positive feedback and praise Collective successes	**Category 1** 1.1 Recognition and appreciation, human factor
10	17, 21	156	Yes, I am allowed to work independently. That is very important for me.	Works independently High priority	1.2 High priority, works independently
10	32-37	157	The willingness to change outside the company is very low. Only under certain conditions, I would say. Inside the company, however, it is high because I like to take on new tasks and learn new things.	There is a high willingness to change within the company in order to take on new tasks and learn new things.	1.3 High, further development
10	37, 41-42	158	So far, I have changed jobs every two or three years. Most of the time I changed because I was interested in a new job. And most of the time I was offered the job. I have not looked proactively.	Change of workplace every two to three years. Interest in taking on new tasks.	1.4 Frequently, every two to three years, new areas of activity are developed internally.
10	57, 59-62, 70-77, 78	159	I definitely have a space problem, even before the COVID pandemic. On 1-2 days a week we are supposed to come to the office. The time pressure	Spatial delimitation, working on site 1-2 days per week. Temporal delimitation, working in a global unit.	1.5 Spatial and temporal. Excessive demands due to constant availability.

			is only slightly less, that has improved. Due to the global set-up of our unit, this has been realised. The workload was very high at certain times. The accessibility is unfortunately 12-13 hours a day, which I find quite ridiculous. That was very exhausting for me. When it was already too late, measures were taken to respect the core working hours and to reduce overtime. We agreed to reduce the overtime and give me Friday afternoon off. Subsequently, my working hours were monitored even more, including by my supervisor. Mental health seminars are offered.	Overstrain due to constant availability. Sick more often. Measures for health and well-being: keep core working hours, reduce overtime, working hours are more closely monitored, seminars for mental health.	Supervision of working hours by supervisors. Work-life balance
10	86, 95-96, 102	160	I know cooperative, controlling, authoritarian and relaxed leadership styles. I am also familiar with empowerment.	Leadership styles cooperative, controlling, authoritarian, loose, empowerment.	**Category 2** 2.1 Cooperative, authoritarian, laissez-faire, empowerment
10	107-111, 115-116	161	There has been a change in leadership, but I think that is because of the mass of work we have. I think the workload has increased significantly in recent years. This inevitably also leads to the fact that supervisors can no longer be the executing forces at all and have to give their staff more freedom. Supervisors need leadership and the necessary expertise often lies with the staff.	A change in leadership can be observed. The reason is the increase in workload.	2.2 There has been a change in leadership as workloads have increased, leaders need guidance and expertise often lies with staff
10	120-130	162	I have two supervisors and I am very happy with one of them. He is very helpful, empathetic and good with people. He is good at leading and brings a lot of work experience. He also has qualifications in mentoring and coaching. He excels at handling things calmly and is not choleric. The other leader is alright. He is rather less empathetic and very performance-oriented. I	Currently two managers. I am very happy with one of them because he is helpful, empathetic, calm and has a lot of work experience. The other manager is okay. He is less empathetic and very performance-oriented. No clear guidelines, but above average expertise.	2.3 Currently two managers, satisfied with: ▪ Human factor positive, leadership competence positive, expertise positive Moderately satisfied with:

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			often miss a human side that would be necessary. Professionally, however, he is very good.		▪ Human factor negative, leadership competence negative, professional knowledge positive
10	133, 136-138	163	I receive regular feedback, but I get some of it myself. In addition, twice a year we have so-called reviews that have to be carried out. These are organised by the company and are strictly documented.	Regular feedback, but this is obtained from the students themselves. Twice a year so-called reviews, which are obligatory.	2.4 The company regularly solicits feedback, more frequently than once a year
10	142	164	My motivation to work is very high. But not 100%.	High work motivation	2.5 Very high but not 100%
10	144-149	165	Our leadership has it in its hands how the togetherness in the team works, how the processes run and even If you are in a difficult time, you expect your leader to bring you through well. He should not, for example, become choleric or pass on his own stress to the staff. A good leader should also be able to take stress away from the team or keep the team together so that the employees feel valued in their work.	The leader should ensure good cooperation and that the work processes run smoothly. Do not show choleric reactions and turn stress away from the team. Show appreciation.	2.6 Human factor, economic factor, leadership competence
10	152-154	166	A supervisor who negatively influences the relationship between the employees, the working conditions and also the interaction between employees and the manager through his or her behaviour. For me, that is toxic leadership.		**Category 3** 3.1 Negative influence on the employment relationship due to bad behaviour
10	158-163, 167-168	167	Yes, I have experienced toxic leadership more than once. I can tell you about an example where the supervisor deliberately lied to the employee. The employee only found out about this lie afterwards. In another case, a colleague had applied for a vacant position in the company. Nothing came of it because she had received a	Often experienced toxic leadership, employees were deliberately lied to and deceived. Opportunities for promotion were prevented.	3.2 A colleague had problems, lied to staff and prevented the possibility of promotion

			negative evaluation from her supervisor at the time, although she was the top candidate for the job.		
10	173-174	168	Performance and motivation had completely disappeared afterwards. She left the company immediately after this action.	Performance and motivation were gone, immediate change of job	3.3 No motivation, willingness to change
10	178-180	169	She was not sick more often. It was only three months until she left anyway.	Not sick more often	3.4 Not sick more often

Table 17: Summary content analysis

Appendix D	Coding guideline			
Category	*Subcategory*	*Definition*	*Anchor example*	*Coding rule*
1. Performance motivation	1.1 Motivation and performance	Personal factors that contribute to increased motivation and performance	*"Being seen, the feedback and actually also a professional evaluation of my work."* (Interview six E.J., 2024, lines 8-9).	The definition must be applicable
	1.2 Professional personal responsibility, significance	Importance to be able to work independently	*"Yes, I am allowed to work independently. […] and the importance of personal responsibility is very high for me."* (Interview four C.E., 2024, lines 13-14).	
	1.3 Willingness to change current job	How high is the current willingness to change? Is there an inner resignation?	*"Not at all, I am currently very satisfied and have no intention of changing jobs."* (Interview three W.B., 2024, lines 20-21).	
	1.4 Job change frequency	How often has the job been changed? What were the reasons?	*"I usually changed because I was interested in a new job. But basically, my previous jobs were always offered to me, I never actively looked for them."* (Interview ten A.R., 2024, lines 41-42).	
	1.5 Spatial, temporal disengagement from work	Can the respondent identify a temporal or spatial dissolution of work, how is the work-life balance?	*"I do not really have any spatial limits. I can work at home, but I do not have to. Nevertheless, I would find it desirable to come to work in person more often. But that is just a guess on my part. Time is such an organisational thing; it is hard to narrow it down at the moment because we have so much to do."* (Interview four C.E., 2024, lines 31-34).	
2. Leadership	2.1 Knowledge of leadership styles	Knowledge and awareness of leadership and leadership styles	*"Well, so far, I know three leadership styles: authoritarian, cooperative and laissez-faire. I would say that I have been confronted with all three styles."* (Interview six E.J., 2024, lines 43-44).	The definition must be applicable
	2.2 Change in leadership styles	Perceptions about changes in leadership	*"Thinking back, I got to know this authoritarian leadership style mainly after my training or directly after school. In recent years, however, it has developed more in the direction of laissez-faire or cooperative style. I think today it is also called empowerment."* (Interview six E.J., 2024, lines 51-54).	
	2.3 Satisfaction with manager	Satisfaction with current leader – what characteristics make this so?	*"I am very happy because he trusts me."* (Interview one C.H., 2024, line 73).	

	2.4 Regular feedback by manager	Frequency feedback on performance, appreciation, intrinsic motivation	*"Yes, we get that regularly. We have fixed dates. They are every six months and every year. But apart from that, my boss still makes time for us when we ask him for a personal meeting."* (Interview eight J.M., 2024, lines 74-76).	
	2.5 Influence of performance motivation by manager	Assessment of the influence of a manager on the motivation and performance of his/her employees	*"I think the influence can be very big. If the leader is good, then you also prefer to work and are more motivated."* (Interview three W.B., 2024, lines 58-59).	
	2.6 Characteristics of the leader	Personally important qualities of a good leader	*"In my opinion: be even-tempered, cooperation skills and, in the broadest sense, empathy in certain situations."* (Interview four C.E., 2024, lines 101-102).	
3. Toxic leadership	3.1 Understanding toxic leadership	Perceptions and awareness of toxic leadership	*"I know the word "micromanagement". So, a boss who checks every employee every day or every two days."* (Interview four C.E., 2024, lines 112-113).	The definition must be applicable
	3.2 Problems with manager	Have you ever had problems with a manager? What were the causes?	*"I once had a boss who was always shouting. I could not stand that anymore. He was someone who treated you like a little child, and I did not like that either."* (Interview three W.B., 2024, lines 78-80).	
	3.3 Performance motivation in toxic leadership	Influence on performance and motivation in toxic leadership	*"I had no motivation to continue working there. I was not doing well [...] and I was glad that I could then change my job."* (Interview one C.H., 2024, lines 112-113)	
	3.4 Sickness and error rate	Frequency of days absent and errors in toxic leadership	*"I was sick more often. Definitely! The error rate, I think, not so much."* (Interview two T.B., 2024, line 180).	

Table 18: Coding guideline