

ОБЩЕСТВЕНИ КОМУНИКАЦИИ И ИНФОРМАЦИОННИ НАУКИ
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**EMPLOYEES' EXPECTATIONS OF THEIR MANAGER AT THE WORKPLACE
AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE EMPLOYEE RETENTION**

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Abstract: *Employees' expectations of their managers at the workplace and their influence on employee retention is the title of this scientific publication. The purpose of the study is to investigate employees' expectations of a manager at work and the impact of these expectations when it comes to employee retention. At the same time, it is important to examine previous experiences with managers. In addition, the main purpose was to analyze the skills and personality traits expected by employees in managers at the workplace. This includes expectations regarding the joint determination of goals, their positive effects when goals are achieved, and the influence and impact of a manager on employee well-being at the workplace. The study used a quantitative research method to investigate the above aspects. Through the use of a digital questionnaire, 100 people were surveyed, answering a total of 15 questions. The analysis of the study allowed, among other results, to determine the exact and expected skills and character traits of employees in relation to the manager.*

Keywords: *Employees, Manager, Expectations, Workplace*

INTRODUCTION

Furtner (cf. Furtner 2017, 15) states that employees expect their manager at work to set goals and expectations together with them in discussions that the employee should achieve. Here, he expects from his manager that above all that these goals are defined as precisely as possible in terms of content and time periods. At the same time, Furtner emphasizes that employees expect from their manager that there are positive effects for themselves if target- and performance-related expectations are met. This can take the form of personal compensation through praise or opportunities for further development, for example. On the other hand, compensation can also take place on a material level, for example through bonus payments or salary increases.

Furtner goes on to say that the manager needs to include possible compensations when the discussed goals are achieved or when the expectations are met as components of the employee appraisal. This ensures mutual transparency, plannability and leads to an increase in employee motivation.

This expectancy is supported by Vroom's expectancy theory. Expectancy theory is based on the three pillars of valence, instrumentality, and expectancy. Valence represents the importance of a goal for which it is worthwhile to increase performance. Instrumentality represents the utility of what the outcome will end up being. Expectancy represents the contingency with which the fulfillment of the goals will lead to the discussed outcome.

According to Laufer, employees' expectations towards their manager are firstly on an emotional

level. They expect their manager to perceive and recognize their performance. In addition, they expect their individuality to be recognized and appreciated. Furthermore, they would like to receive support at work if this is necessary and they expect consideration for private problems if these should arise (cf. Laufer 2018, 31).

Lorenz and Rohrschneider (cf. Lorenz 2022, 287) state that employees expect their manager to identify poor performance and not continuously accept it. They want to receive feedback in a personal meeting where they are given feedback and at the same time it must be shown how the employee can improve. This is because employees want to develop in a positive way.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This scientific section describes how the research was conducted. The aim of this work is to examine employees' expectations of their managers in the workplace. In addition, a sample is used to examine how satisfied the respondents were with their previous managers, what aspects are important to them in managing employees, and what characteristics they expect from their manager. Finally, the study examined how manager can influence employees' well-being at work.

In a quantitative study, a questionnaire with 15 questions and 100 respondents was completed. A questionnaire was created using an online tool and sent to a specific target group. At least 100 complete surveys were required. Previously, the survey participant was not contacted. The first question asked about gender, with male, female, and diverse as response options. Due to the fact that this study was intended to be representative of both gender groups, equal numbers of males and females were asked.

The second question also asked about age. The minimum age of the respondents was 18 years old, which is the average age to enter the workforce, such as through an apprenticeship or a degree program. Survey respondents had the maximum age of 67, which is the current retirement age.

The third question aimed to consider the respondent's qualification level and the answer options were based on the German qualification framework. If it is not possible for the respondent to classify themselves within the German qualification framework, they were classified as "unskilled."

The fourth question aimed to determine the target group for this study and to exclude individuals who were not relevant to this study. Only individuals who are currently employed in some capacity or seeking employment are relevant to this study. The target group for this study is trainees, students, working students, interns, employees, workers on parental leave, unemployed persons, and persons seeking employment. If self-employed, freelancers and retirees were selected in this question, they were excluded from the survey. This was determined because they are generally not representative or otherwise related to the subject of the survey. The self-employed and freelancers are generally unable to make statements about experiences and expectations of managers in the workplace due to a lack of informed opinions on this topic. This also applies to retirees, since the study mainly examines people who have a comparatively current connection to the subject.

The fifth question relates to work experience, as it can be compared with the number of training periods and their quality

The following precise questions and possible answers were asked:

1. Gender
 - a. Female
 - b. Male
 - c. Divers

2. Age

3. What is your highest degree?
 - a. Unskilled
 - b. Education
 - c. Bachelor/ master craftsman/ technician/
 - d. Master/ Business economist/ Diploma
 - e. PhD

4. What is your current professional situation?
 - a. Trainee/ Student/ Working student/ Intern
 - b. Employed
 - c. Self-employed
 - d. Freelancer
 - e. Retired
 - f. Parental leave
 - g. Unemployed/jobseeker

5. How many years of professional experience do you have?
 - a. Until 2 years
 - b. 2 to under 3 years
 - c. 3 to under 5 years
 - d. 5 to under 7 years
 - e. 7 years to under 10 years
 - f. 10 years and more

6. How satisfied have you been with your managers at work so far?
 - a. Not at all
 - b. Average
 - c. Very much

7. Setting goals and expectations together with my manager is important to me.
 - a. Does not apply
 - b. Applies
 - c. Applies very much

8. Positive outcomes in the fulfillment of set target and performance agreements are important to me.
 - a. Does not apply
 - b. Applies
 - c. Applies very much

9. Which positive outcomes do you expect if set target and performance agreements are fulfilled?
 - a. Compliments
 - b. Opportunities for further professional development
 - c. Bonuses
 - d. Salary increases

10. Do you expect that the positive outcomes must be predetermined?

- a. Yes
- b. No

11. With regard to which aspects do you have expectations of your manager?

- a. Communication
- b. Employee development
- c. Frequency of communication
- d. Availability of manager
- e. Feedback
- f. Joint formulation of goals
- g. Manager's knowledge of working conditions
- h. Situational leadership style

12. What do you expect from your manager?

- a. Less control and guidelines
- b. More trust
- c. Room for initiative
- d. Opportunity to take initiative
- e. Empathy

13. Which characteristics or skills should your manager have?

- a. Motivation
- b. Conscientiousness
- c. Self-reliance
- d. Awareness of problems
- e. Ability to analyze
- f. Problem-solving ability
- g. Creativity
- h. Ability to work in a team
- i. Communication skills
- j. Flexibility

14. How much of an impact does your manager have on your sense of well-being at work?

- a. Not at all
- b. Average
- c. Very much

15. Have you already left a company because you were not satisfied with your manager?

- a. Yes
- b. No

RESULTS

A total of 114 people took part in the survey. 57% of the participants were female, while 41% were male. Two percent of the survey participants identified themselves as diverse. A total of 66

females and 47 males participated in the survey, along with two diverse individuals. 49% of the respondents were between the ages of 18 and 29, 30% were between the ages of 30 and 44, 16% were between the ages of 45 and 60, and 5% were older than 60.

A bachelor's, technician's, specialist or business administration degree was cited as the highest degree by 36% of respondents. A master's or diploma degree was second at 26%. 24% of the survey participants had completed an apprenticeship. 5% of participants each had none of the above degrees or a doctorate. 2% of respondents had no education.

80% of survey participants answered "Employed" to the question "What is your current job situation?" 9% of participants indicated that they are currently seeking employment. At 5%, survey participants stated they were on parental leave. Four percent of survey participants answered the question with the status of student, working student, intern or trainee.

53% of the respondents stated that they have more than 10 years of professional experience. 13% of the survey participants had between 5 and 7 years of professional experience. 12% of respondents had between 3 and 5 years of work experience. Survey participants with up to two years of work experience accounted for 8%. 7% of participants had two to three years of work experience. The lowest percentage is 5% for respondents with 7 to 10 years of work experience.

Previously, the questions were answered to form groups of people based on demographic data and to draw additional conclusions about the responses by occupational characteristics, number of years in the profession, and qualifications.

For the 6th question, survey participants were asked the following question, "How satisfied have you been with your managers at work so far?" A rating between "not at all", "average" to "very" was possible. "Average" corresponded to a score of 50. The average response to this question was 66 points, 16 points above the average and 34 points below the "very" rating.

At the seventh point of the survey, participants were asked whether it was important for them to set goals and expectations together with their manager. It was possible to choose between "does not apply", "applies" and "applies very much". The answer option "applies" corresponded to a score of 50 points. The average response for the question was 67 points, which was 17 points above "applies" and 33 points below the rating "applies very much".

The eighth question aimed to rank the importance of positive effects when target or performance agreements were met. Here, too, respondents had the option of choosing between "does not apply", "applies" and "applies very much." The "applies" option received a score of 50 points. The average score for responding to the question was 70 points, with this being 20 points above "applies" and 30 points below "applies very much".

The ninth question examined what positive effects are expected in the achievement of the target and performance agreements set with the manager. 66% of the survey participants expect opportunities for professional development. 61% of participants would like to receive bonus payments if they meet the target and performance agreements. 56% of survey participants said they expect a salary increase. Participants who selected compliments as a positive impact make up the smallest percentage. The proportion is 49%.

72% of the participants answered "Yes" to the 10th question "Do you expect that the positive outcomes must be predetermined?". In the opposite direction, 28% answered "No" to the question.

The 11th question specifically examined the aspects with regard to which the expectations of the manager are held. For this purpose, the survey participants were asked the following question: "With regard to which aspects do you have expectations of your manager?" The results show that 72% of the survey participants have expectations regarding the communication of their manager. 53% of participants indicated that they have expectations of their manager regarding employee development. 52% of participants have expectations regarding their manager's accessibility. Regarding feedback and regularity of communication, 49% of survey participants each have

expectations of their manager. Regarding knowledge of workplace conditions, 44% of participants indicated they have expectations of their manager. 40% of the survey participants answered the question with situational leadership style. 33%, and thus the smallest share, was taken up by the aspect of jointly formulating goals.

What is expected from the manager is also examined in the 12th question. The survey participants answered the following question: "What do you expect from your manager?" 61% of the survey participants stated that they would like to be given opportunities to take the initiative. Room for initiative was selected by 60% of survey participants as an expectation of their manager. 54% of the participants answered the question with "More trust". Empathy is what 32% of survey participants expect from their manager. Less control and guidelines, on the other hand, are expected by 28% of survey participants, and this answer option received the lowest percentage.

"Which characteristics or skills should your manager have?" was the 13th question asked of survey participants. 67%, and thus the highest percentage, indicated that their manager should have problem awareness. 58% of the participants indicated that their manager must have communication skills. That their manager must be motivated and have problem-solving skills were both cited by 56% as expected character traits in their manager. Analytical skills are qualities that 51% of the participants looked for in their manager. Flexibility at 49%, self-confidence at 47%, and the ability to work in a team at 44% are also desired skills. Creativity is desired in their managers by 37% and reliability by 35% of the survey participants. The lowest proportion, 23%, position themselves with determination as an expected character trait.

"How much of an impact does your manager have on your sense of well-being at work?" was the 14th question asked of survey participants. A rating between "not at all", "average" to "very much" was possible. The average response to this question was 69 points, which is 19 points above the average and 31 points below the rating "very".

In the 15th question "Have you already left a company because you were not satisfied with your manager?" 68% of the participants answered "Yes". In contrary, 32% answered the question with "No".

CONCLUSIONS/DISCUSSION

The conducted research reveals that there is a relatively higher than average level of satisfaction with the manager at the workplace. When it comes to expectations of managers in the workplace, it is important for employees to establish their goals and what is expected of them with their manager. In this regard, managers should first ensure that such a conversation with this content takes place with new employees right at the beginning of their employment. Furthermore, managers should focus on having regular conversations about goals and expectations with existing employees so that they have the opportunity to improve and develop.

At the same time, managers are expected to guarantee positive outcomes for their employees if they meet pre-established goals and expectations. When previously set goals and expectations have been met, most employees expect their managers to provide opportunities for professional development. Bonus payments and salary increases are next in line among the positive effects. Praise as a positive impact is marginally lower than salary increases, which highlights its importance as a component in feedback discussions.

Simultaneously, employees expect from their managers that the positive outcomes resulting from the fulfillment of the agreed goals and expectations, just like the goals and expectations themselves, must be predetermined. This increases motivation and, at the same time, confidence that the positive effects discussed will actually occur.

Employees have overarching aspects in which they maintain expectations of their managers. This relates in particular to the communication skills of managers. Companies should ensure that

communication skills are a high priority as a hiring criterion for managers. Furthermore, companies should ensure that they continuously train and develop the communication skills of managers. Furthermore, in terms of general expectations of managers, employees have high expectations in terms of employee development skills. In addition to employee development, expectations are also placed on leadership style with regard to leadership topics, where a situational leadership style is expected in particular. Employees also have expectations of managers in terms of accessibility.

For example, managers should ensure that they create communication structures and channels in their teams that ensure reachability. In this way, managers can also meet employees' expectations regarding the regularity of communication. Communication structures, reachability and channels are also pillars of the feedback process between managers and employees, ensuring that feedback can be shared through multiple channels and ways. Employees also expect their managers to be informed about the workplace setting. From this, it can be derived for companies that they comprehensively design the professional perspective of onboarding for managers so that they are informed as quickly and intensively as possible about their area of responsibility. This applies, for example, to work processes, responsibilities and available resources. The joint definition of goals ranks last among employees' general expectations of managers.

Employees also expect their managers to provide them not only with opportunities to take the initiative, but also to give them room for their own ideas. With regard to emotional leadership, employees expect their managers to trust them and show empathy. This is congruent with employees' expectations of their managers in terms of less control and directives. The aforementioned expectations of leadership behavior from managers are skills and leadership tools that few managers can fully bring to the table in their entirety from the very beginning. Companies therefore have a growing responsibility to train their managers adequately and to develop them further in the area of leadership. The expected character traits or skills in managers are problem awareness, communication skills, problem solving skills and motivation. In addition, analytical skills, flexibility and self-confidence are also expected of managers. Creativity, reliability and determination are characteristics that are not expected across the board and are expected to a lesser extent than the previously mentioned characteristics.

As an action measure for companies, it was derived from this for practice that the character traits and abilities mentioned should be included in the job specifications for managers. This should result in the items being included in job postings so that applicants can reflect on themselves with regard to the expected characteristics and skills, and thus a higher degree of fit can take place between the applicants and the positions to be filled. In addition, applicants should be tested for the aforementioned character traits and skills as part of the application process, such as in interviews.

In this way, managers can be found for the respective companies who can also meet the expectations of employees. This leads to increased employee satisfaction and the risk of employees leaving the company because of their manager is significantly reduced. Indeed, the research confirmed that managers have an above-average influence on employees' sense of well-being at work. The two aforementioned research results, coupled with the finding that the majority have already left a company because of dissatisfaction with their manager, illustrates the importance that must be placed on meeting expectations with managers.

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ОЧАКВАНИЯТА НА СЛУЖИТЕЛИТЕ КЪМ ТЕХНИЯ РЪКОВОДИТЕЛ НА РАБОТНОТО МЯСТО И ТЯХНОТО ВЛИЯНИЕ ВЪРХУ ЗАДЪРЖАНЕТО НА СЛУЖИТЕЛИТЕ

Резюме: Очакванията на служителите към техните ръководители на работното място и тяхното влияние върху задържането на служителите е заглавието на тази научна публикация. Целта на изследването е да се проучат очакванията на служителите към ръководителя на работното място и влиянието на тези очаквания, когато става въпрос за задържане на служителите. Същевременно е важно да се проучи предишният опит с мениджърите. Освен това основната цел е да се анализират уменията и личностните характеристики, които служителите очакват от мениджърите на работното място. Това включва очаквания по отношение на съвместното определяне на целите, положителните им ефекти при постигането им, както и влиянието и въздействието на мениджъра върху благосъстоянието на служителите на работното място. В проучването е използван количествен изследователски метод за проучване на горепосочените аспекти. Чрез използването на цифров въпросник бяха анкетирани онлайн 100 души, които отговориха на общо 15 въпроса. Анализът на проучването позволи, наред с други резултати, да се определят точните и очаквани умения и черти на характера на служителите по отношение на ръководителя.

Ключови думи: *служители, мениджър, очаквания, работно място*

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