

A person wearing a white lab coat is working on a complex mechanical device. The device has various components, including a coiled spring, a green cable, and a black handle. The person's hands are visible, one holding the handle and the other adjusting a part of the device. The background is blurred, showing a blue shirt and a dark surface.

ETORKIZUNA  
**ERAIKIZ**  
think tank

**WORK OF THE FUTURE**  
**REPORT OF THE 14th MEETING**

17/02/2022



## Contents

1. Programme	3
2. In attendance:	3
3. Welcome	4
4. Presentation: individual experiences	5
5. Group dynamic	15
6. End of session	18
7. Appendices	19
a. Presentation used during the session	19
b. Working Document No. 16	27
c. Session programme	30



## SPACE FOR DELIBERATION ON THE WORK OF THE FUTURE

17 February 2022, 4 pm – 6 pm

### 1. Programme

Timetable	Theme	Presentation/dynamisation
4:00 pm – 4:15 pm	Welcome	Jabier Larrañaga. Provincial Councillor for Economic Promotion, Tourism and the Rural Environment
4:15 pm – 5:00 pm	Presentation: individual experiences	Unai Elorza, Mondragon Unibertsitatea Maite Zaitegi. Mondragon Unibertsitatea Abel Armendariz. Vocational Education Teacher
5:00 – 5:55 pm	Group dynamic	Unai Andueza, Director of Strategic Projects at the Department of Economic Promotion, Tourism and the Rural Environment
5:55 pm – 6:00 pm	End of session	Jabier Larrañaga. Deputy (Provincial Minister) for Economic Promotion, Tourism and the Rural Environment

### 2. In attendance:

- Jabier Larrañaga
- Unai Andueza
- Jon Gurrutxaga
- Sebastian Zurutuza
- Ander Arzelus
- Joseba Amondarain
- Ana Ugalde
- Itziar Abarisketa
- Juan Ángel Balbás
- Nerea Zamacola
- Anabel Yoldi
- Pili Alonso
- Xabier Iruretagoiena
- Ángel Martín
- Lucia Amo
- Aitor Txurruka
- Marta Rosende
- Unai Elorza
- Ane Sarasola
- Miren Larrea
- Mikel Gaztañaga



## 3. Welcome

The Director of Strategic Projects opened the session. *'Good afternoon everyone, and welcome to today's session. As always, thank you for coming and taking part in this session. We have a couple of guests today. However, before handing over to them, I want to briefly outline today's session. As you know, in some sessions we will talking about the experiments begin carried out in companies. In other sessions we will work on governance. However, today we will hear the experiences of a number of individuals. These are people who have changed job. And they will be talking about that change in their careers. As always, we will also have a group dynamic. Now I will hand over to the Deputy for Economic Promotion, Tourism and Rural Environment. Thank you'*



The Deputy (Provincial Minister) for Economic Promotion, Tourism and the Rural Environment took the floor and thanked the Director of Strategic Projects. *'Thank you*



*all very much for taking part in this session. As always, it is a pleasure to be involved. Today I would like to create a dialogue. We have to learn from these experiences. We are eager to learn. I want to remind you that these sessions are very important to us. The competitiveness of Gipuzkoan companies is at stake. Thank you to all the participants and the people who have come today to share their experiences. Thank you'.*

The Director of Strategic Projects took the floor again, and thanked the Deputy of Economic Promotion, Tourism and Rural Environment. *'There are just a few things I wanted to say. First, the evaluations of the last session were very positive. However, several issues were raised. First, there is the issue of the different languages. Several participants asked if the presentations could be given in Spanish. This issue that remains unresolved. Another issue that was brought up was the lack of young people. So, in today's session, two young people will be participating. We have tried to increase the presence of young people. And finally, in the session there was discussion of the possibility of connecting online. There would have to be a good reason for connecting online. In other words, unless there is a good justification, connecting online will not be an option. And finally, I would like to thank all of you for participating in this session. I will now hand over to the researcher from Mondragon Unibertsitatea'.*

#### 4. Presentation: individual experiences

The researcher from Mondragon Unibertsitatea took the floor. *'Good afternoon, everyone and thank you to all the participants. We have some guests here today, but before we talk about their experiences, I would like to give a small introduction. I would like to explain where we stand with the companies. So far I think we are doing well. In other words, we are on schedule. However, today's session is not going to be about that; instead we will be focusing on some specific experiences. Specifically, today's session is being attended by two people who have changed career. We will be hearing their experiences and then we will have a chance to reflect on them and discuss them.*



*‘Originally, some other people were going to come to today’s session, but in the end they weren’t available, so two others have come instead: Maite and Abel. I want to thank the two of them. However, some other people have also sent me their experiences and I would just like to briefly talk about them. I have set them out in a table (Appendix A; Slides 8-9). All of these people are engineers; everyone in the table studied engineering at different universities. They are all in their 30s or 40s and have all worked as engineers. However, for various different reasons, they have quit their jobs. Although we won’t have a chance to hear their experiences first-hand, I am going to give you a summary.*

*‘When it comes to autonomy, these people do not see any major failings. They felt they had enough autonomy in their work. There were no major problems there, apparently. When it comes to skills, none of these people appear to have been offered any further training after joining the firm. In their work in the company, they developed skills they had brought with them from their earlier experience. They have had nothing new. In other words, the company did not promote any training.*

*‘In terms of their working relationships, only one person worked as part of a team. All the others worked alone. As for the sense of purpose, we don’t have any information on this area. I don’t think the participants understood this section very well. As for the last section, there are a number of similarities among the ideas put forward by the participants: a decent wage; the work they do should have a positive impact on the planet; stability; working relationships are also important. So we see that the ideas of a decent wage and stability are repeated. My interpretation is as follows: although these people enjoyed a great deal of autonomy in their work, in some ways their conditions were precarious. For example, the lack of a decent wage and the lack of stability. They also stressed the importance of their work having a positive impact. I think that is also important. I would not be prepared to make any more assumptions; I am simply interpreting what these people said.*

*‘Now we’re going to have a chance to hear the experiences of two people. They both worked as engineers, but have changed career. Their experience may be of interest for*



*the reflections in this deliberation group. I want to thank you for coming to today's session and sharing your personal experiences with us. Thank you Maite and Abel'.*

The first person to discuss her experience was Maite. Maite began her presentation. *'Hello everyone. Thank you for giving us this this opportunity to take part. My name is Maite and I am 36 years old. I have a degree in industrial engineering. I worked for ten years in the automotive sector. I worked for four years in France, and I also worked in a company in Bizkaia. However, over those ten years I also spent time in several other countries, including the Czech Republic and Great Britain, for example. So, in my work experience I have seen and known several places. However, there came a point when I decided to give up my job. I realised I didn't want to keep doing that job. I thought: 'I don't know what I'm going to do but I don't want to continue in this job. I don't want to go on living like this.*

*'I had to travel a lot for my job. I often had to get up at 4 am. And I often had to drive. I didn't feel like doing anything else at the weekend; after working all week I was exhausted and had no strength to do anything. I used to spend all weekend resting. I knew that the next week I'd have to work hard all over again. So I just used the weekend as a time to rest. It felt like I was at war, in an endless war. I was under tremendous stress. In addition, the atmosphere in my work area wasn't great. People treated each other badly. People treated me badly, but I also mistreated others. The stress made the working environment worse.*

*'I realised that the working environment was very bad. As I was saying, people treated me badly. The customer treated me badly. We treated each other badly at work. There was a general atmosphere of mistreatment. At one point I realised that I was becoming a person I didn't like, so I asked myself a few questions: What is all this for? What is the purpose of all this? What am I doing?.*





*I had plenty of autonomy. I mean, I made all my own decisions. But that wasn't the problem: I couldn't share those decisions with anyone. I had to bear the burden of these decisions alone. I am studying organisational culture now and I can see that what I had was not real autonomy. That is why I think it is necessary to rethink the issue of autonomy. As for relationships, I have to say that relations with my colleagues were generally very good. However, there were a lot of paternalistic attitudes. People with more responsibility often adopt this type of attitude. They actually feel legitimised to be paternalistic. With that paternalism it felt as if I had no rights and no abilities. This is related to the culture of the company. You see an abuse of power in companies. Lots of people use their power to protect their privileges. In that sense, the abuse of power don't only come from the people at the top. Lots of people play power games.*

*'As for training, I have to recognise that I did receive training from the company. I have never had any problems in that regard. However, I felt that people were used as resources. I saw that people weren't treated properly. I think this is due to the corporate and organisational culture. In the Czech Republic, for example, I saw abuse. In a company*

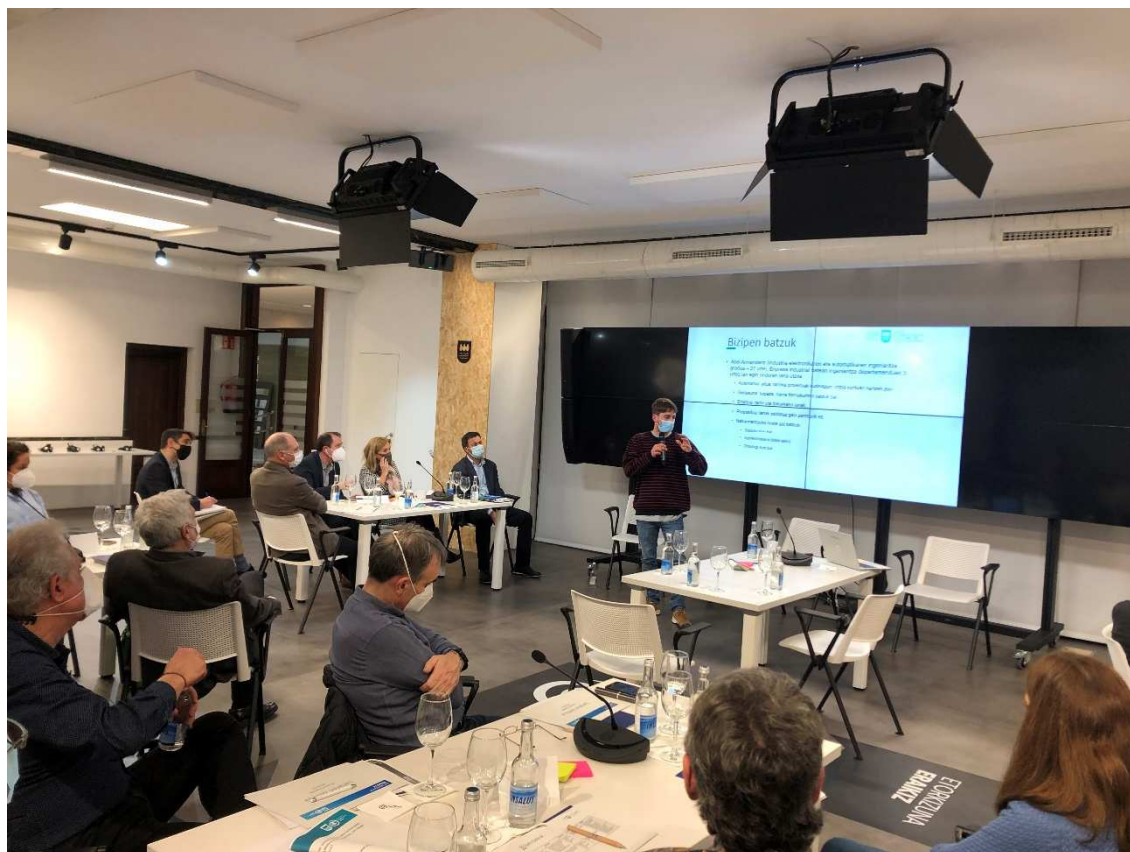


*context, I think, people accept attitudes that would be considered unacceptable in other situations. And to make matter worse, you couldn't talk about all these things. Whenever I talked about this kind of thing, the people around me would say: 'Don't protest about it, don't say anything; they'll fire you. And that is very tough. Because you can't report it to anyone or discuss what is happening to you in the company with anyone. There are also a lot of other gender-related issues. For example: my boss would often ask me to go to his office and I would talk to him there for a long time. We talked about personal things, about issues that had nothing to do with work. These things haven't just happened to me; they are common in the business world. People with more power tend to have this type of attitude. Moreover, in the business context, unlike other contexts, these attitudes are often considered legitimate.*

*'As for the sense of purpose, in the companies where I worked, the only target was economic. In addition, I worked for an automotive company. In other words, I was working in an environmentally harmful industry. The work I was doing didn't match my values. That's what I felt. However, if the working conditions had been better, I think I would still be working there. Or, if the work had had some purpose other than just an economic one, there's more of a chance that I would still be working there. But, in my case, the working conditions weren't good. That's why I asked myself, what is this all for? That's why I decided to quit my job. And that's it. Thank you for listening to me'.*

The second person to speak about his experiences was Abel. *'Hi, everyone. Thank you for giving me this chance to talk about my experience. My name is Abel and I am 26 years old. I studied Industrial Electronics and Automation Engineering in San Sebastian. After completing my studies, I started working in a company. I was working there for three years. And I have to say that I am glad I decided to leave. I am going to talk about my experience.*





*'I had a great deal of autonomy in my work. I had a lot of freedom in most projects. Sometimes we worked in teams, but most of the time I worked alone. In terms of training, we received everything we wanted from the company. For example, they gave me the opportunity to do a master's degree. So from that point of view, I can't complain. They behaved very well towards me. As for the relationships within the company, I have to say they were very good. There were fourteen people in the company, three of whom were older. In general, there was a very good relationship. The relationship between bosses and employees was good. In terms of the sense of purpose, the company's primary purpose was economic. We were involved in all kinds of projects. Sometimes we were involved in renewable energy projects, but sometimes we worked for other types of company. Some of these companies were highly polluting. In general, I would say that our company was pursuing an economic objective.*

*Most of the things I have mentioned are positive. So why did I give up working? It was not for those reasons. First of all, the salary was mediocre. I wasn't earning enough to live on my own. I had no stability in my job and I had to travel a lot. I spent an average*



*of four months working away, and when I was away I had to work more than 8 hours a day. We often worked 10, 12 or 14 hours. We also had a lot of pressure in the work we were doing. There were a lot of nights when I couldn't sleep. So I missed having more job stability and a decent salary. So those were the reasons I decided to quit. I am now working as a vocational training teacher. To be honest, I am really enjoying it. I help students prepare for the world of work. The working conditions are much better and I believe that the work has other purposes apart from the purely economic one. So I'm very comfortable with the change I've made. That was my experience. Thank you for listening to me. If you've any questions, please feel free to ask'.*

ECO25 then took the floor. *'I want to ask Maite a question. Actually, Maite's experience really touched me. I think your experience was very emotional. Everything you said was emotionally and psychologically charged, but, in your opinion, does this experience apply more generally? It would really scare me if it did'.*

Maite took the floor. *'I think the issues I talked about are widespread. These are not things that have only happened to me. I believe the attitudes I talked about are very normalised; they are not just personal issues. This system places economic values above all else. There are many people who are not capable of escaping from these situations. They cannot leave their jobs. In that regard, I was very lucky. I am privileged. Moreover, many people are unable to report such situations. I have seen a lot of suffering, but in the company context, people are used to it and they end up accepting these situations'.*

ECO25 said he did not quite understand what she meant.

Maite took the floor again. *'I told you about my experience, but I think the experience I discussed reflects that of many other people. I don't think I'm saying anything very new. Many of the attitudes I think are seen as legitimate in the business world would not be accepted outside that world. It is true that the company is built on profit. The company's objective is to make a profit. But that can't be all there is; there must be other goals'.*



ECO2 then took the floor. *'I believe we need humanistic companies. We need sustainable businesses. To achieve that, we need to improve interpersonal relationships. Intangible elements are very important in companies. We have to work on them. Companies need to realise that the attitudes Maite was referring to do not work in today's world. These attitudes have to change. They are unsustainable'.*

ECO27 then took the floor. *'I want to ask Maite a question. I agree with everything you said about organisational culture. This organisational culture is unsustainable. You mentioned power relations. You also mentioned false autonomy. I agree with all of that. But what can we do to improve it all? I think change has to be viewed systemically. It's not enough to change just one thing. So, what systemic changes do you propose? That is my question. Nowadays it seems like everyone wants to be a teacher'.*

Maite took the floor. *'I am a teacher, but by accident. To answer your question, I think we have to realise the importance of organisational culture. In fact, we do not consciously adopt many of our attitudes. These are attitudes or forms of behaviour that we have normalised. So, we have to bring the importance of organisational culture to the discussion. I think if we examine our consciences, we will see that the current model does not work. We will realise that we have to change. In short, I would begin with a reflection on culture. We need an awareness-raising exercise. I think that will make a difference'.*

ECO27 then took the floor. *'I also believe that organisational culture is very important. It is essential to reflect on this. We should also reflect on purpose. Profit is important, it is essential for the company to operate, but clearly it is not enough. It is necessary to go further'.*

The researcher from Mondragon Unibertsitatea took the floor. *'I would like to make a couple of comments. First of all, I am amazed at the number of engineers who are moving into the education sector. It is not one or two isolated cases. There are lots of them. I am surprised. I think that's something we have to reflect on. On the other hand, I think companies need to ask themselves: what do we offer the employee apart from the*



*salary? Should the purpose be purely monetary? Do people always want more money? Is that enough for employees? What is all this for? I think it is necessary to look at companies' purpose. On the other hand, there is also the issue of salary. This is a topic that rarely gets talked about, but the fact is that engineers are paid very little. Conditions are better in education. And there is less responsibility and less stress. On top of that, it is very easy to see the purpose in education. This is something we need to reflect on'.*

*Abel took the floor. 'It's something I've seen a lot too. Many engineers I know have moved into education. Why is this happening? First of all, it's a quick turnaround. It's relatively simple and quick to do a one-year master's degree and then make the leap into education. The work is very secure and the conditions are much better than in the business world. It is true that many people are looking for other things in the business world: power, hierarchy, etc. But for those who are not looking for those things, the road into to education is an easy one'.*

*The researcher from Mondragon Unibertsitatea took the floor. 'Abel, I would like to ask you a question: how much did you make as an engineer? Did you earn less than you do in education?'*

*Abel took the floor. 'I earn more now than when I was an engineer. Quite a bit more, actually'.*

*The researcher from Mondragon Unibertsitatea took the floor. 'Thank you Maite and Abel for sharing your experiences here. Thank you for your courage and for giving us your time. Thank you'.*

*ECO2 then took the floor. 'I would like to ask Maite another question: What kind of leadership do you think is needed today?'*

*Maite took the floor. 'I think new leadership is needed, and it has to be facilitative. It must be based on mentoring. There is no doubt that dialogue needs to be strengthened.*



*Solutions should not be imposed. Solutions should be emergent; they must come from dialogue. That's what I would say'.*

ECO2 took the floor again. *'Thank you. I would also like to ask Abel one last question: What objective would you like your job to have? Do you think you have that objective in your current job?'*

Abel took the floor. *'In my first job I would have liked to have had an environmental objective. Or, at least, I would have liked the work I was doing to be more environmentally friendly. In my current job, I help students prepare for the world of work. The aim is to prepare students for life. I enjoy it'.*

The Deputy for Economic Promotion, Tourism and Rural Environment took the floor. *'I want to start by thanking Maite and Abel. Thank you very much. I don't know if you are aware of the purpose of this deliberation group, but for us the competitiveness of SMEs in Gipuzkoa is very important. Small and medium-sized enterprises need to be able to understand the issues you have raised today. Because if they don't understand these issues, they will have problems achieving competitiveness. They have to adapt to the current situation. So, this deliberation group is very important. Indeed, in this group, we want to create a tool for companies to learn about these issues'.*

The Deputy for Economic Promotion, Tourism and Rural Environment continued speaking. *'I would like to go back over some of the phrases or ideas that came up in the session. For example, we've heard phrases such as: 'I had no strength left for my personal life; my surroundings were alien to me; I was becoming a person I didn't like'. I think Maite and Abel have shown great maturity. They raised economic issues and stability. They talked about pressure and stress, not having enough time for their private life. I think the issues discussed are very important. I think there needs to be a major change in attitudes. There are a lot of things that need to be improved. So I would like to thank you for the effort you have made. Thank you so much'.*



The Director of Strategic Projects took the floor. *‘Thank you to everyone. We will now move on to the group dynamic. You will find the questions you have to answer as a group on the pages we have left on the table. This will be a 30-minute group dynamic. Then, as always, we will have a plenary session. Thank you’.*

## 5. Group dynamic

Once the group dynamic had been completed, the Director of Strategic Projects took the floor. *‘Now I would like to ask the spokesperson for each group to speak’.*

### First group:

The spokesperson for the first group was ECO20. *‘There was a lot of debate in our team. We discussed several issues that came up in the presentations. However, we did not achieve a consensus on all issues. One of our conclusions was that of the four variables we used, for engineers, the situation with regard to autonomy and skills are OK. We have seen more shortcomings in the area of purpose and relationships. We talked about these ideas. Another issue that was noted was: Are these variables sufficient? We don’t think they are. For example, today we talked about organisational culture. But this aspect is not included in our model. Moreover, we need to take into account the relationships and interactions between the variables. Finally, our group mentioned the issue of salary. We believe that wages, in and of themselves, are meaningless. However, it is a necessary basis because without a decent wage, employees become demotivated. So it’s something that has to be taken into account. In one way or another, these were the issues that were mentioned in our group: organisational culture, the relationships between the different elements and salary. Thank you’.*





## Second group:

The spokesperson for the second group was ECO29. *'There was also a lot of debate in our group. One of the things that was raised was that the sample was very specific. Today we have heard from engineers. They occupy a specific position in the employment world. So, how might we study the meaning of work in a more general framework? Our group mentioned the importance of purpose. We need to focus on the objective. We have also seen shortcomings in training. We need to extend the issues we address here to companies. Spaces for reflection need to be created in companies. At the same time, we believe there has to be a change of culture. The organisational culture has to change. In that regard, we need to take responsibility, to address these challenges together. There was also mention of false autonomy and the harm it can cause. We think this may be due to a lack of leadership. In addition, the issue of trust is also very important. Finally, the lack of a work/life balance can be very detrimental in the long run. We believe it is necessary to strike the right balance. Those are the issues we discussed in our team. Thank you'.*



## Third group:

The spokesperson for the third group was ECO31. *'Similar issues were raised in our group. Our group's answer to the first question was: purpose and relationship. At the same time, we believe that the work-life balance is very important. This balance cannot be broken, there must be compatibility. The team mentioned Maite and Abel's courage. It takes courage to make a change like that. We also think it is necessary for companies to have values. And that's all. Thank you'.*

## Fourth group:

The spokesperson for the fourth group was DFG7. *'Our group felt that the most glaring lack was in the area of purpose. However, we believe that there are two types of purpose or objective. On the one hand, there is the company's purpose. And, on the other hand, the individual's sense of purpose. What we need to do is try to ensure that the company and the individuals share a common purpose. We need to find that point where the two sense of purpose meet. The element that was not mentioned in our model, and which came up a lot in the session, is business organisation. Business culture is a variable which we think is very important. We believe that in many companies, over time bad habits have taken root. So we have to change those habits, because there is a dissociation between what young people are asking for and what companies are offering. Values are important in the business world. Something needs to be done about this dissociation. These changes need to be taken seriously. In the past, companies focused on the customer. Today they should also focus on their personnel; they should realise that times have changed. These were the topics we discussed in our group. Thank you'.*

The Director of Strategic Projects took the floor, thanking the spokespersons. *'Today's session revolved around experiences. We have had two young people here. As you know, in these sessions we try to combine theory and practice. I would like to wind up by giving the floor to Maite and Abel'.*



Abel took the floor. *'Thank you for giving me the chance to participate here. It has been a pleasure. Thank you'.*

Maite took the floor. *'I don't have anything else to say. It was tough discussing these things. The researcher from Mondragon Unibertsitatea told me this was a safe space, but it was still tough. I suspect that not everyone empathised with me. And that's all I have to say'.*

## 6. End of session

The Director of Strategic Projects took the floor. *'Thank you very much to everyone who participated in today's session. And above all to our guests for coming. I will now hand over to the Deputy for Economic Promotion, Tourism and Rural Affairs to close the session. Thank you to everyone. Please remember to fill out the evaluation forms. We'll see you at the next session'.*

The Deputy for Economic Promotion, Tourism and Rural Environment took the floor. *'For my part I can only say thank you to everyone. And especially to Maite and Abel. I think that every session enriches us. On the one hand, in this space we share reflections. But I think today has been especially powerful. Sharing the experiences of these two people has been very enriching. You have shown great generosity in sharing your experiences with us here, I think that is very valuable. In addition, the presentations made were very well prepared. So thank you. The work we are doing has great value. We will build on this. Thank you everyone, we will see you at the next session'.*



## 7. Appendices

### a. Presentation used during the session

# The Meaning(fulness) of Work

Individual Experiences

17/02/2022

## Contents

- What stage are we at with the experimentation with companies?
- The meaning of work in the experiences of specific individuals
- Group dynamic



The meaning of work and competitiveness: an important issue for the Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa



## Evaluations and other items

- Positive evaluations
- Several issues:
  - Presence of young people
  - Slides in both languages?
  - Possibility of online connection



What stage are we at with the experimentation with companies?

## Planning over time

- Designing experiments

	Project development time											
	2021 (4 quarters)				2022 (4 quarters)				2023 (4 quarters)			
PHASE 1: Diagnosis and planning												
PHASE 2: Reflections on direction												
PHASE 3: Definition of objectives and plans												
PHASE 4: Development of experimentation												
PHASE 5: Analysis of results												
PHASE 6: Knowledge to be disseminated in the territory												
PHASE 7: Experimental laboratories												



## Individual experiences

### Some examples

### Some experiences

	Autonomy	Competence	Relationship	Purpose	Gains
<b>Iñaki</b> (33 years old); Mechanical Engineer; Quit his job.	My daily task was set by my leader.	I only received it when I started my job, until I learned my duties	Worked alone	I had little relationship with the company, I did not know what my work was used for	My work has a positive impact on the planet
<b>Eider</b> (34 years old) Mechanical engineer. Quit her job.	Job based on self-management; My opinion was taken into account	I never received training from the company	Worked alone	Not asked	Teamwork. A living wage.
<b>Mikel</b> (37 years old) Previously: Mechanical Engineer. Now: High school teacher	A job based on self-management.	I only received it when I started my job, until I learned my duties	Worked in a team.	Not asked	Stability, because before I was always traveling. A living wage.
<b>Tamara</b> (38 years old) Previously: Engineer (PhD). Now: Teacher at Lanbide.	My daily task was set by my leader. I was doing repetitive work. My opinion was not taken into account.	I never received training from the company	Worked alone	Not asked	Good relationship with co-workers. Work on doctoral topics. Being respected in work



## Some experiences



	Autonomy	Competence	Relationship	Purpose	Gains
<b>Joanes</b> (34 years old) Mechanical Engineer Has gone to another company.	A job based on self-management. They took my opinion into account. However, I didn't feel I was a part of the company: 'I was a collaborator'	I never received training from the company	Worked alone	Not asked	The work I did in the company has a meaning A living wage. Returning home after being abroad for some time.
<b>Guille</b> (35 years old) Electronics Engineer On sick leave due to anxiety His aim: to be a teacher	A job based on self-management. They take my opinion into account.	I never received training from the company	Worked alone	Not asked	A living wage. To have challenges. Using creativity. Feeling fulfilled in my work.



## Some experiences

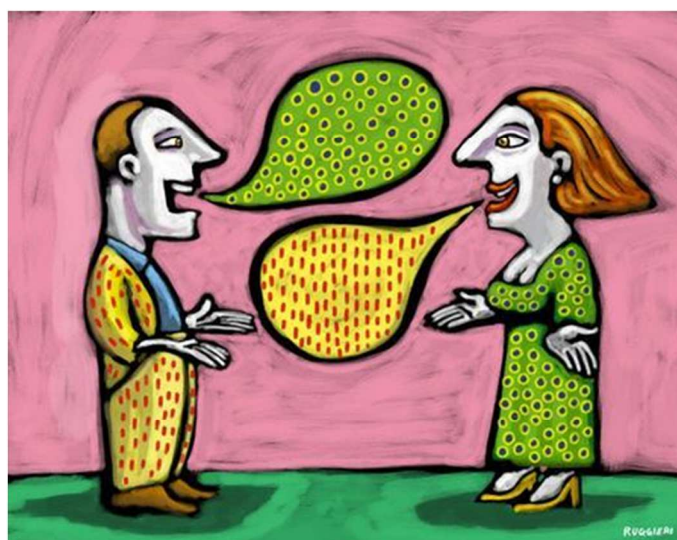
- **Maite Zaitegi** (Industrial Engineer - 34 years old). Gave up her job after working in the engineering departments of two industrial companies.
  - Autonomy: high; Project management.
  - Competence: good; no problems; little training from the company.
  - Relationship: worked in a team.
  - Purpose: the work is not meaningful.
  - Other important aspects:
    - Very short-term management
    - Economic result only at the end of the year
    - Every year, we have to do a little more, but for what?



## Some experiences

- Abel Armendariz (Degree in Industrial Electronics and Automation Engineering - 27 years old). Quit after 3 years working in the engineering department of an industrial company.
  - Autonomy: high; occasionally managing projects; his opinion was taken into account.
  - Competence: capable; some in-house training.
  - Relationship: group and individual assignments.
  - Purpose: work not meaningful beyond the salary.
  - Other important aspects:
    - A living wage
    - Stability (lots of travelling)
    - Decent working hours

## Questions and Answers





# Group dynamic

## Group dynamic

- 1) *Based on these experiences: Of the four variables (autonomy, competence, relationship, purpose) that have been emphasised to promote the meaning of work, which variable is most lacking in the case of engineering?*
- 2) *Has any variable been mentioned that is not included in our model?*
- 3) *What would you summarise from the experiences?*



## Evaluation and next session



Please complete the evaluation form. It is of great help to us in preparing the following sessions



The next session will be on 24 March and will address how collaborative governance has been implemented in Industry 4.0



## b. Working Document No. 16

## THINK TANK

Deliberation process on the Work of the Future: Working Document No. 16

## THE MEANING OF WORK: PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCES

(17 February 2022)

**Introduction**

At the November 2021 deliberation session, the conceptual framework was presented in greater detail. Four key variables were highlighted: autonomy, competence, relationship with others and purpose. If a person can see these issues in their work, it will make their work more meaningful and thus increase their well-being and motivation. After presenting this conceptual framework, the experiments to be worked on in each company were discussed. At IZT, it was decided to restrict it to the programming area, in order to work on experimentation, autonomy and purpose. It was also decided that in the area of the meaning of work at Fagor Industrial, they would study the possible impact of digitalisation. At Zorrotz, autonomy, purpose and influence of information would be studied in the blade and guide departments. At Sutargi, an analysis would be conducted of the way in which the process of training people influences the meaning of work. At Oribay, it was decided to experiment on the development of autonomy in the powder metallurgy section in order to later analyse its impact on the meaning of work. Finally, at Lazpiur it was decided to work on purpose. Once the conceptual framework had been defined and the experimentation processes launched in each company, the aim of the February session was to bring certain individuals' experiences to the discussion group. The session was intended to analyse the case of some individuals who quit their employment voluntarily and looked for another job. After the presentations, the deliberative team had time to reflect and decide whether there was anything missing from the conceptual framework and/or the experiments.



## People's experiences

A more detailed account of the experiments presented can be found in the report on the session. The presentations were divided into three sections:

- The cases of six engineers who were not present, all aged between 33 and 39, were presented. All had left their jobs (in an industrial company) and wanted to work in organisations in another sector (e.g. in education).
- The experience of Maite Zaitegi (aged 36) in two automotive companies (engineering departments). In her case, she twice left her job and steered her professional career in another direction (research and education).
- Finally, the case of Abel Armendariz (aged 27). After working in a small industrial company, he left his job to move into the world of education (vocational training).

All the examples set out involved engineers. After these presentations, the discussion group was asked whether these experiences in any way alter the conceptual framework defined so far; and whether they saw any new variables. The following topics emerged from the group's reflections.

- 1) Doubts arose as to the extent to which these cases represent society, given that they only represent the experiences of engineers.
- 2) In almost all cases they have a high degree of autonomy and skill. The variables that are lacking are relationships with people (absence of a group relationship) and/or absence of purpose. The lacks faced by a person working in production may be related more to autonomy, but in the cases of engineers, they may be more in the field of relationship and purpose.
- 3) The issue of salary was also mentioned. It is not a variable that gives meaning to work, but the lack of a decent salary could lead to demotivation. It was mentioned that engineers have relatively low salaries (in many cases less than in the education sector).
- 4) The conceptual framework set out so far establishes specific variables to address and promote the meaning of work, but does not contain any reference to organisational culture. This issue may be important (as a shortcoming).
- 5) It was also mentioned that work-life balance is important. This topic is not specifically mentioned in the conceptual framework.
- 6) In our conceptual framework we address the organisation's purpose, but not so much the purpose of individuals and harmonisation between the two. There is currently a mismatch between what the company asks for and what the employee wants. Perhaps this is another issue to be considered.

To sum up, this working session, which was held in February, made new proposals with regard to the current conceptual framework. The existing framework contains four easy-to-understand and easy-to-remember variables, but there may perhaps be some other



important variables that should be taken into account: culture, personal purpose, salary, etc.



## c. Session programme

### THINK TANK

#### DELIBERATION GROUP ON THE WORK OF THE FUTURE FACE-TO-FACE SESSION (GUNEAK), 17 February 2022, 4:00 pm

##### CENTRAL THEME OF THE SESSION

The previous session discussed governance, developing on the role of the university and vocational training. In this session we will again work on meaning of work. At the beginning of the process, the group mentioned the importance of placing the individual at the centre of the process. So in this session we will analyse personal experiences, exploring further the meaning of work from the perspective of specific individuals

##### AGENDA FOR THE SESSION

- Introduction
- Experiences on the meaning of work
- Group contributions for including this perspective in the framework on the meaning of work
- Close