

THINK TANK

Deliberation process on the Work of the Future: Working Document No. 14

THE MEANING OF WORK: EXPERIMENTS IN COMPANIES

(25 November 2021)

Introduction

In September 2021, a session on the Meaning of Work was held in the deliberation group. That meeting was attended for the first time by the companies that will be participating in the experimentation phase (IZT, Fagor Industrial, Sutargi, Zorrotz, Lazpiur and Oribay). Because they were new to the deliberation group, the September session focused on the conceptualisation of the Meaning of Work. The sessions addressed the meaning of work and the different lines of work that may exist within it.

This September meeting was still concerned with conceptual aspects. This November session will try to set out the experiments to be carried out in each company. In other words, it will seek to move from a conceptual level to specific experimentation. The session will be used to gather inputs and/or recommendations from the deliberation group.

Experiments on the Meaning of Work

More details on the experiments presented in each company are included in the session report. Nevertheless, there were some noteworthy findings, in particular:

- 1) Where we are. The deliberation group was reminded of the current stage of the experimentation projects, specifically in the process of definition; detailing what areas the experiments will address in each company, how this will be done, and what knowledge will be generated. This is what will be presented at this session.
- 2) Developments in the conceptual framework since September. The conceptual framework presented in September was still quite general. At this November meeting, a brief space was given over to presenting the conceptual framework in greater detail. In general, four key variables were identified: 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. This explanation helped when it came to presenting the experimentation to be carried out in each company.
- 3) Experimentation at IZT: will be limited to the programming area. In the case of new staff, the aim is to increase the meaningfulness of work. To this end, over 2022 a sense of autonomy and purpose will be developed. Trends in the sense of meaningfulness of work among these new recruits will be monitored over time.
- 4) Fagor Industrial: two experiments will be carried out. The first is to analyse the impact that the digitalisation process can have on how meaningful the work is for personnel. This experiment will be carried out in the Ovens and Cleaning

divisions. In the second experiment, we will examine the impact of implementing the Takt-time lean manufacturing system on individual's sense of the meaning of work. This second experiment will be carried out in the Ovens division.

- 5) Zorrotz: autonomy, information and purpose will be addressed in two areas (in the Blade and Guide divisions). Evolution in the meaning of work will be measured through the development of these variables.
- 6) Sutargi: In this case, the experiments will focus on the impact generated by the processes of staff training on the meaningfulness of work. The experiments will be carried out with people who are being trained in the Landuz and Paifil programs.
- 7) Oribay: the experimentation will take place in the Powder Metallurgy area. It will analyse the impact on the meaning of work of implementing an HIW system. This type of system develops information, autonomy and capacity.
- 8) Lazpiur: in this case, the issue to be addressed will be the purpose. The experiments will analyse the impact that developing a sense of purpose has on the meaningfulness of work.

Following the presentation, the deliberation group was asked whether they felt any types of experiments were lacking or whether there were any variables that had not been addressed. The following topics emerged from the group's reflections.

- 1) Each person will have different responses to the development of these variables ... and experimentation should take this into account. There may be different responses depending on demographic variables (gender, age, etc.) and this should also be taken into account.
- 2) The need to ensure that the staff's perspective is included in the experiments. These are very production-oriented experimentations and perhaps other areas are missing.
- 3) There is no analysis of the impact automation can have on the meaning of work. Other variables such as changes in leadership and the influence of the company name (brand) are also lacking.
- 4) It is important to engage management in order to do the experiments properly, but the staff's responses should also be analysed. The experiments should be carried out in an environment of trust.

Summing up, in this November working session, the deliberation group reflected on the experiments to be carried out. This is an initial reflection. The issue will need to be addressed further during execution of the experiments throughout 2022.