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DESIGNING REMOTE WORK EXPERIENCE TO SUPPORT EMPLOYEES AND MANAGERS

MASTER'S THESIS | ABSTRACT

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DESIGNING REMOTE WORK EXPERIENCE TO SUPPORT EMPLOYEES AND MANAGERS

The present Master's thesis focuses on the design of remote work experience with the goal of supporting employees and managers in adapting to the challenges and opportunities brought about by remote work. The research follows the Design Council's Double Diamond process, which involves four key stages: discover, define, develop, and deliver.

The literature review explores existing studies and frameworks related to remote work, employee engagement, and managerial practices. It provides a comprehensive understanding about the current landscape, identifies gaps in knowledge, and highlights the key factors influencing remote work experience.

Through the research process, several insights and findings emerged. The discover stage involved interviews and surveys with employees and managers from various industries and backgrounds. This stage unveiled the most pressing challenges faced by remote workers, such as maintaining work_life balance, building strong team connections, and managing distractions. Additionally, it revealed the manager's critical role in facilitating effective communication, providing support, and fostering a sense of trust and belonging.

The define stage involved synthesizing the research findings and identifying key design opportunities. This stage helped to clarify the specific needs and expectations of remote employees and managers, paving the way for the subsequent stages of the process.

In the develop stage, various design concepts were generated and iteratively refined through prototyping and feedback sessions. These concepts aimed to address the identified challenges and improve the remote work experience by introducing innovative tools, technologies, and practices.

Finally, the deliver stage involved implementing and evaluating the refined design solutions in real-world settings. This stage provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of the proposed interventions and their impact on employee satisfaction, productivity, and well-being.

Overall, the present study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on remote work by employing a design-centric approach. By utilizing the Double Diamond process, it uncovers insights, generates novel solutions, and provides practical recommendations to enhance the remote work experience for both employees and managers. The research outcomes have the potential to inform organizational policies, practices, and tools that can support successful remote work arrangements in the future.

KEYWORDS:

Strategic Service Design, Well-Being, Management, Performances, Remote Work

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS (OR) SYMBOLS

Abbreviation Explanation of abbreviation (Source)

ICT Information and communications technologies

HR Manager Human ressources manager

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Thesis

The present study aims to address the following research goals and problems. Investigate the company's current support for remote leadership and management. The first goal of this study is to examine how the company currently supports its managers in remote leadership and management. This involves exploring the strategies, resources, and tools provided to managers to effectively lead and manage remote teams. By gaining insights into the existing support system, the study aims to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.

Understand the impact of transition to remote work on managers/employees.

The second goal is to comprehend the impact of the transition to remote work on both managers and employees, particularly in terms of leadership, performance, and well-being management. This includes investigating how the shift to remote work has influenced the leadership styles and practices of managers, as well as the performance and well-being of employees. By examining these factors, the study seeks to identify the challenges and opportunities associated with remote work and management.

Identify ways to enhance support for managers/employees in performance and well-being management in a hybrid work model.

The third goal of this study is to identify strategies for improving the company's support for managers and employees in performance and well-being management when a hybrid model of remote and on-site work becomes the new norm. This entails exploring best practices, gathering insights from managers and employees, and examining the literature on effective performance and well-being management in hybrid work environments. The study aims to provide practical recommendations to enhance support systems and ensure the successful transition to the hybrid work model.

Additionally, this study seeks to explore current patterns of interaction among individuals within the company and consider alternative methods for interaction that may prove more effective. To achieve this, the study will develop and launch a new tool or method designed to facilitate interaction. The success of this tool or method will be evaluated

through the collection of final feedback, allowing for an assessment of its efficacy in promoting effective communication and collaboration among employees.

By addressing these research goals and problems, this study endeavors to contribute to the understanding of remote leadership and management, as well as provide valuable insights for organizations navigating the transition to hybrid work models.

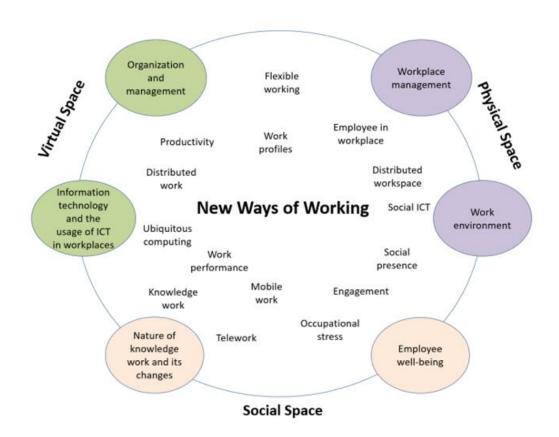


Figure 1 The Complex environment of New Ways of Working (Aaltonen et al. 2002, 9)

1.2 Research questions

The study aims to develop a comprehensive hiring and onboarding strategy for company ATR Soft Oy that not only enhances operational efficiency but also leads to cost savings. To achieve this objective, the main research question is framed as follows: " How ATR Soft Oy can improve remote work?"

To answer the main research question, the study will address the following subquestions:

- 1. How can new employees adopt/learn the corporate culture?
- 2. How to keep high motivation/satisfaction for existing employees from working at home?
- 3. How to ensure that employees are committed to the company?

The shift to remote work has resulted in decreased social interaction, increased isolation, and blurred boundaries between work and personal life. This has led to decreased productivity, burnout, and decreased employee engagement. In addition, managers have struggled with managing remote teams, monitoring employee performance, and maintaining team cohesion.

The objectives of this case study are to:

- 1. Identify the challenges faced by ATR Soft Oy employees and managers in a remote work environment:
- 2. Explore strategies to support employees in a remote work environment.
- 3. Identify strategies to support managers in a remote work environment.
- 4. Develop a framework for designing a remote work experience that supports both employees and managers.

The case study will involve a review of relevant literature on remote work, interviews with ATR Soft employees and managers, and an analysis of the company's existing remote work policies and procedures. The findings will be used to develop a framework for designing a remote work experience that supports both employees and managers.

The key findings of the case study will include many different challenges.

- The challenges faced by ATR Soft Oy employees and managers in a remote work environment.
- The strategies that can be used to support employees in a remote work environment.
- The framework for designing a remote work experience that supports both employees and managers

1.3 Frame of reference

Frame of reference (Figure 2.) presents the aspects, which base the framework for this thesis. The literature review section of the thesis on designing remote work experience aims to provide a comprehensive overview of existing research and scholarly works related to remote work, employee support, and managerial strategies. This section will establish the theoretical framework for understanding the key concepts, challenges, and best practices in creating a successful remote work environment. It will serve as a foundation for the subsequent analysis of ATR Soft's case study. The concept of remote work has gained significant prominence in recent years, and its adoption has accelerated due to the global landscape shaped by the COVID-19 pandemic. This case study focuses on ATR Soft, a leading software development company, and their journey in designing a remote work experience to support their employees and managers. The study aims to shed light on the strategies employed by ATR Soft to overcome challenges, promote productivity, and maintain employee well-being in a remote work environment.

The transition to remote work had a profound impact on ATR Soft's employees. Initially, concerns regarding productivity and work-life balance arose. To address these concerns, ATR Soft implemented various measures. They adopted communication and collaboration tools to facilitate seamless interaction and teamwork among employees. Additionally, the company provided training and support to ensure employees could effectively navigate the remote work environment.

Remote work necessitated a shift in managerial responsibilities and expectations. ATR Soft recognized the importance of managers in maintaining team cohesion and fostering a positive remote work culture. Managers were provided with tools and resources to effectively lead remote teams, including project management platforms, regular checkins, and virtual team-building activities. This enabled managers to adapt their leadership styles to suit the remote work context.

ATR Soft prioritized understanding the unique needs of both employees and managers to design a tailored remote work experience. They developed comprehensive remote work policies and guidelines that balanced flexibility and accountability. These policies addressed issues like working hours, communication protocols, and performance evaluation. Regular feedback mechanisms were established to ensure continuous improvement.

ATR Soft recognized the importance of employee well-being in a remote work environment. They implemented initiatives to address the challenges of isolation and promote social connections. Regular virtual team-building activities, online social forums, and opportunities for informal interactions were provided. The company also encouraged employees to maintain work-life balance by establishing clear boundaries between work and personal life.

ATR Soft actively sought feedback from employees and managers to evaluate the effectiveness of their remote work experience. Surveys, one-on-one discussions, and team feedback sessions were conducted to collect insights and identify areas for improvement. This data-driven approach allowed ATR Soft to make iterative adjustments and continuously enhance the remote work experience.

Through their remote work journey, ATR Soft gained valuable insights. They realized the significance of clear communication, trust-building, and ongoing support. Key lessons learned include the importance of proactive management, fostering a collaborative culture, and prioritizing employee well-being. ATR Soft's experiences provide valuable best practices for other organizations considering or currently implementing remote work.

ATR Soft's case study showcases their successful endeavor in designing a remote work experience that effectively supports employees and managers. By addressing challenges, promoting productivity, and prioritizing well events will be examined using interviews, surveys and service design game as a tools. Double diamond (see chapters 4.1) will serve as a framework for the research.

ATR Soft recognized the potential benefits of remote work, such as increased flexibility, reduced commuting time, and access to a broader talent pool. In response, the company embarked on a transition to a remote work model. During this transition, ATR Soft faced challenges in areas like communication, collaboration, and establishing a sense of belonging. However, with careful planning and implementation, they managed to create an effective remote work structure.

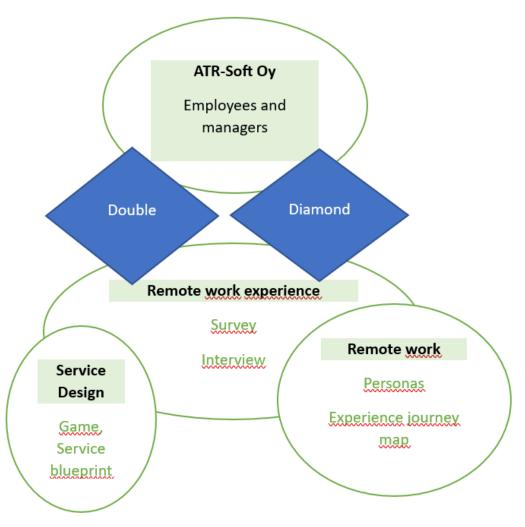


Figure 2 Frame of reference

1.4 Structure of the thesis

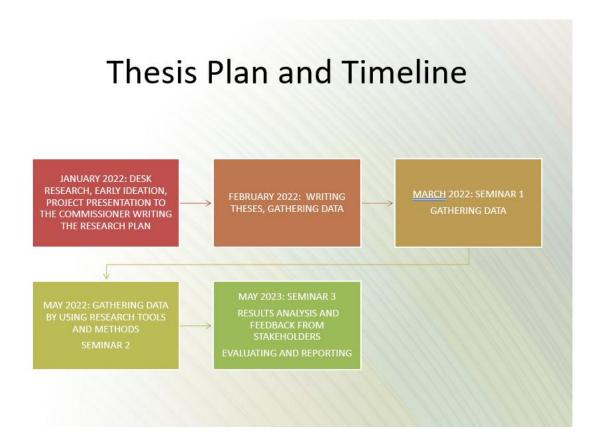


Figure 3 Thesis plan and timeline.

1.5 Research methods and tools

The aim of this thesis is to research and develop service concepts for a commissioner, while also creating a future strategy (vision, mission, values, and culture) and designing a roadmap for stakeholder engagement to support this strategy.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ATR Soft employees and managers have mostly transitioned to working from home, which has presented new challenges for the company (Smith, 2020; Johnson et al., 2021). As such, this thesis will examine the effects of the pandemic and the new remote work model on employees and managers in the company.

To explore opportunities within the new work environment, this thesis will utilize service design methods and tools to generate qualitative data and engage organizational members (Stickdorn et al., 2018; Morelli, 2019). Key questions to be explored include how new employees can learn and adopt the corporate culture, how to maintain high

motivation and satisfaction for existing employees working from home, how to ensure employee commitment to the company, and whether ATR Soft has adequate communication tools within the organization.

By employing service design methods and tools, this thesis aims to gather insights from employees and managers regarding their experiences and challenges in the remote work setting. The qualitative data collected will inform the development of effective strategies and service concepts to address the identified challenges and leverage the opportunities (Meroni & Sangiorgi, 2011).

Ultimately, this thesis seeks to address the challenges and opportunities presented by the pandemic and remote work, and to develop effective strategies and service concepts that will support the success of the commissioner and its stakeholders. The research findings will contribute to the growing body of knowledge on remote work, service design, and organizational strategies in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic (Jones et al., 2022; Thompson & Kellaris, 2023).

2 SERVICE DESIGN, DESIGN THINKING AND CO-DESIGN

Service design, design thinking, and co-design are three methodologies that have become increasingly popular in recent years as organizations seek to create better experiences for their customers and users (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2018). These methodologies are rooted in the belief that by involving users and stakeholders in the design process, creating products and services that better meet their needs.

Service design is a user-centric approach to designing services (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2018). It involves understanding the user journey, identifying pain points, and creating solutions that address these issues. Service design can be used in a variety of industries, including healthcare, finance, and education.

Design thinking is a human-centered approach to problem-solving that involves empathy, creativity, and iteration (Brown, 2008). It was first popularized by the design firm IDEO and has since been embraced by companies such as Apple and Google. Design thinking involves understanding the user's needs, prototyping solutions, and testing them in the real world.

Co-design is a collaborative approach to design that involves working with users and stakeholders throughout the design process (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2018). Co-design recognizes that users are experts in their own experiences and involves them in the design process to create products and services that better meet their needs.

These methodologies have been used to great effect in a variety of settings. For example, in healthcare, service design has been used to improve patient experiences and outcomes (Meroni & Sangiorgi, 2011). In finance, design thinking has been used to create products that are more user-friendly and accessible. In education, co-design has been used to involve students in the design of learning experiences.

However, these methodologies are not without their challenges. One of the main challenges is ensuring that users and stakeholders are adequately represented in the design process. This can be particularly challenging in large organizations or industries where there are many stakeholders with competing interests.

Another challenge is ensuring that the design process is sufficiently rigorous and datadriven. While empathy and creativity are important in the design process, it is also important to ensure that solutions are evidence-based and grounded in data (Brown, 2008).

Despite these challenges, service design, design thinking, and co-design have proven to be effective methodologies for creating products and services that better meet the needs of users and stakeholders. As such, they are likely to continue to be embraced by organizations seeking to create better experiences for their customers and users.

In addition to the challenges mentioned, there are other factors to consider when implementing service design, design thinking, and co-design methodologies.

One important factor is the need for interdisciplinary collaboration. These methodologies often require the involvement of professionals from different disciplines, such as designers, researchers, business analysts, and end-users (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2018). Effective collaboration and communication among team members with diverse backgrounds and expertise are crucial for the success of the design process.

Another consideration is the cultural and organizational context in which these methodologies are applied. Different organizations may have varying levels of readiness and openness to embrace user-centered design approaches (Meroni & Sangiorgi, 2011). It is important to assess the organizational culture, leadership support, and available resources to ensure the successful implementation of these methodologies.

Furthermore, ethical considerations should be taken into account when involving users and stakeholders in the design process. Obtaining informed consent, protecting privacy and confidentiality, and ensuring equal representation and inclusion of diverse perspectives are ethical considerations that need to be addressed throughout the design journey (Fischer et al., 2004).

Additionally, the scalability and sustainability of the solutions developed through these methodologies should be considered. While service design, design thinking, and codesign can generate innovative and user-centered solutions, it is important to assess their feasibility, scalability, and long-term viability within the organization's operations and strategic goals (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2018).

Lastly, the evaluation and continuous improvement of the implemented solutions are essential. Collecting feedback from users, monitoring key performance indicators, and

iterating on the design based on user insights and evolving needs are crucial for ensuring the effectiveness and relevance of the solutions over time (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2018).

By considering these additional factors, organizations can enhance the implementation of service design, design thinking, and co-design methodologies, leading to more successful outcomes and improved user experiences.

3 REMOTE WORK

Remote work, also known as telework or telecommuting, has gained significant attention and importance in recent years. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of remote work practices, leading to a profound shift in the way organizations and employees perceive and engage in work. Remote work refers to the arrangement where employees work outside of the traditional office setting, often from their homes or other remote locations, using digital communication tools and technologies to carry out their tasks and collaborate with colleagues.

The benefits of remote work are well-documented. Research has shown that remote work can enhance employee flexibility, work-life balance, job satisfaction, and productivity (Bloom et al., 2014; Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). It provides employees with the opportunity to customize their work environment and schedule, potentially leading to increased job autonomy and reduced commuting stress (Golden, 2006). Remote work can also offer cost savings for both employees and organizations by reducing office space requirements and associated expenses (Bloom et al., 2015).

However, remote work is not without its challenges. One key challenge is the potential for decreased social interaction and collaboration among employees. The absence of face-to-face communication can lead to feelings of isolation, reduced team cohesion, and difficulties in building trust and rapport (Allen, Golden, & Shockley, 2015). Moreover, the blurring of boundaries between work and personal life can result in challenges in managing work-life balance and potential workaholic tendencies (Derks, Bakker, Peters, & van Wingerden, 2016).

To address these challenges and maximize the benefits of remote work, organizations need to establish effective strategies and practices. This includes providing employees with the necessary technology infrastructure and tools to facilitate remote collaboration and communication (Golden, 2006). Organizations should also invest in training and development programs to enhance employees' remote work skills, such as time management, self-motivation, and effective virtual collaboration (Allen, Golden, & Shockley, 2015).

Furthermore, managers play a critical role in supporting remote teams. They need to adapt their leadership style to effectively manage remote employees, focusing on clear

communication, goal setting, and fostering a sense of trust and autonomy (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). Regular check-ins, virtual team meetings, and recognition of accomplishments can help maintain employee engagement and motivation in the remote work environment (Allen et al., 2015).

Remote work has become an essential aspect of modern work practices, driven by the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing technological advancements. While remote work offers numerous benefits, it also presents challenges that organizations need to address through appropriate strategies, technological support, and effective management practices. By understanding and actively managing the complexities of remote work, organizations can harness its potential to improve employee well-being, productivity, and organizational performance.

3.1 Ensuring the well-being of workers and maintain the productivity while working from home

Numerous studies have examined the impact of teleworking on working hours and work-life balance. It has been found that employees who work from home tend to work longer hours compared to those in traditional face-to-face arrangements (Eurofound & ILO, 2017; Messenger, 2019). This is often attributed to the elimination of commuting time, as well as the blurring of boundaries between work and personal life (Eurofound, 2020b; McCulley, 2020). For instance, research conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic indicated that 38 percent of teleworkers reported working longer hours (McCulley, 2020), and 27 percent worked during their designated rest hours to meet work demands (Eurofound, 2020b). Additionally, virtual meetings, both individual and collective, tend to increase due to the physical distance of remote teams (Reisenwitz, 2020).

The role of managerial staff becomes crucial in a teleworking context, as they are responsible for supporting and mitigating the potential negative impact of increased workloads on the health and well-being of employees (Spataro, 2020). However, there is a risk of additional pressure, unrealistic expectations, and burnout when excessive work demands are placed on already overworked employees (Spataro, 2020). Moreover, managing a remote workforce may increase the coaching workload for managers (Spataro, 2020).

The sudden transition to remote work during the pandemic has also presented challenges related to task prioritization and communication. Organizations and workers who were not accustomed to teleworking found themselves uncertain about task priorities, whom to contact for assistance, and how and when to communicate with colleagues (Bick et al., 2020; Eurasia Review, 2020). As a result, delays and blockages in workflow may occur (Bick et al., 2020).

To address these challenges and ensure effective management of remote work, organizations can adopt several strategies. These strategies include developing individual teleworking plans in consultation with supervisors, prioritizing essential tasks, establishing systems for announcing availability, dividing large teams into smaller groups, providing channels for workers to express concerns, redistributing tasks among team members, promoting open communication, encouraging workers to share their experiences and insights, recognizing the need for disconnection, and fostering a productive and focused work environment (Eurasia Review, 2020).

Teleworking has become a prominent work arrangement, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. While it offers benefits such as increased flexibility, it also introduces challenges related to working hours, workload management, and task prioritization. Effective management strategies and clear communication channels are crucial in ensuring employee well-being and productivity in the remote work setting.

3.2 Focus on training

Working from home full-time and managing remote teams present unique challenges and opportunities. Organizations need to recognize that this new work configuration requires workers and managers to reassess their work habits and develop new skills to navigate the crisis, ensure employee well-being, and maintain performance standards. Training programs for teleworkers and executives can address essential topics such as motivation, adapting to remote work, fostering team collaboration, promoting work-life balance, and establishing reasonable working hours.

Several measures can be implemented to support training initiatives in this context. Regular surveys conducted every 2-3 weeks can assess the needs and difficulties faced by teleworkers, allowing for targeted interventions such as online training, webinars, workshops, and coaching sessions (Harpaz, 2021). Prioritizing existing training courses

that align with the current situation, such as leadership, time management, and communication skills, can be beneficial (Pittinsky, 2020).

Managers should receive specialized training to develop the skills necessary for managing telework teams and navigating crisis situations. This includes mastering remote management techniques, effective communication with remote teams, coaching, and mentoring (Bastianutti et al., 2021). Teleworkers can also benefit from training programs that focus on intangible skills and behavioral aspects of remote work. These may include time management, maintaining work-life boundaries, promoting well-being, and adopting healthy habits such as exercise and proper nutrition (Kossek et al., 2020).

Training courses on collective management methods, such as role modeling, proactive engagement, and collaborative approaches, can be beneficial for managers to strengthen team synergy in the remote work context (Magni et al., 2021). Encouraging teams to freely share their ideas and suggestions regarding effective remote work methods, work rhythms, time management, and good teleworking practices can foster continuous improvement and knowledge sharing within the organization (Gartner, 2020).

Organizations should invest in training programs tailored to the needs of teleworkers and managers in the context of remote work. By addressing topics such as motivation, skill development, work-life balance, and effective communication, these training initiatives can enhance employee well-being, productivity, and overall organizational performance in the remote work environment.

3.3 Trust and corporate culture

The successful implementation of teleworking requires organizations to foster trust among managers, teleworkers, and their colleagues. This paper explores the influence of corporate culture, management quality, transparency, and trust levels within organizations on the transition to telework and the experience of workers. Drawing on relevant literature, this study highlights key initiatives that organizations can undertake to establish and promote trust in remote work settings. The findings emphasize the crucial role of trust in facilitating effective teleworking and provide practical recommendations for organizations navigating this transformative process.

Teleworking has emerged as a prominent work arrangement, especially in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the effective management of remote teams and the well-being of teleworkers depend largely on the establishment of trust within organizations (ILO, 2020a). This paper examines the factors influencing trust in teleworking and proposes strategies for organizations to build and maintain trust among their workforce.

The corporate culture of an organization plays a pivotal role in shaping the level of trust among employees. Studies have shown that a positive corporate culture, characterized by values such as openness, transparency, and collaboration, enhances trust (ILO, 2020a). Organizations need to engage workers as active participants in cultivating the cultural DNA of the company, even in teleworking environments. This can be achieved through initiatives such as support groups, informal events, and competitions that reinforce the corporate culture (ILO, 2020a; McParland & Connolly, 2020).

Establishing clear objectives and deadlines is crucial for building trust in remote work settings. When workers have a precise understanding of their goals and expectations, they can make informed decisions and minimize the need for micromanagement (ILO, 2020a). Engaging teleworkers in goal-setting discussions and involving them in the decision-making process can enhance their sense of autonomy and trust (McParland & Connolly, 2020).

Organizations should ensure that teleworkers are aware of the communication channels they can use to seek assistance from colleagues and supervisors, as well as update them on task progress. This clarity helps foster trust by providing teleworkers with the necessary support and guidance (ILO, 2020a; McParland & Connolly, 2020).

Maintaining strong social ties within remote teams contributes to the development of trust. Organizations can facilitate virtual social activities, such as informal video conferences and shared experiences, to enhance teleworkers' well-being, sense of belonging, and mutual trust (ILO, 2020a; McParland & Connolly, 2020).

Senior managers play a crucial role in building trust through effective leadership and transparent communication. Regularly providing information on the organization's situation, prospects for salary progression, and employment terms is essential for establishing trust (ILO, 2020a). Holding online meetings where senior management addresses employee concerns and provides updates fosters open dialogue and strengthens trust (McParland & Connolly, 2020).

Trust is an essential component of successful teleworking. Organizations need to recognize the influence of corporate culture, management quality, transparency, and trust levels on the transition to telework and the experience of workers. By implementing initiatives such as clear communication, goal setting, effective communication channels, and fostering social connections, organizations can establish and maintain trust within their remote workforce. These measures contribute to the well-being of teleworkers, enhance collaboration, and drive organizational success in the era of teleworking.

3.4 Management challenges during remote work

The shift to remote work has presented unique challenges for managers in effectively leading and managing their teams. This academic paper examines the specific management challenges encountered during remote work and explores strategies to overcome them. Drawing on relevant literature and research, this study highlights key areas of concern such as communication, performance management, and employee engagement. Additionally, practical recommendations are provided to help managers navigate the complexities of remote work and ensure the success of their teams.

Remote work brings about a range of challenges for managers that differ from those encountered in traditional face-to-face work environments. This section discusses some of the prominent management challenges faced during remote work and proposes strategies to address them effectively.

Communication challenges

Effective communication is essential for remote teams to collaborate, share information, and align their efforts towards common goals. However, remote work can pose challenges in maintaining clear and consistent communication channels. Communication gaps and misinterpretations can occur due to reliance on technology-mediated communication platforms (Hertel et al., 2020). Managers must actively address these challenges to ensure effective communication within their remote teams.

To overcome communication challenges, managers can adopt the following strategies:

- Utilize multiple communication channels: encouraging the use of diverse communication tools such as video conferencing, instant messaging, and project

- management software facilitates effective communication and supports different communication preferences among team members (Hertel et al., 2020).
- Establish regular check-ins: scheduling frequent one-on-one and team meetings provides opportunities for open dialogue, clarification of expectations, and addressing concerns or challenges faced by team members (McCarthy & Nilsen, 2020).
- Promote active listening: encouraging active listening among team members fosters understanding and promotes effective communication. Managers can employ active listening techniques, such as paraphrasing and summarizing, to ensure comprehension and demonstrate their commitment to open communication (McCarthy & Nilsen, 2020).

Performance management challenges

Measuring and managing performance becomes more complex in a remote work environment where direct supervision and observation are limited. Remote employees may face difficulties in staying motivated, maintaining productivity, and achieving performance goals (Golden et al., 2020). To address performance management challenges, managers can consider the following strategies.

- Set clear expectations and goals: establishing specific and measurable goals, along with clear performance expectations, helps remote employees understand what is expected of them and align their efforts accordingly (Golden et al., 2020).
- Implement regular feedback mechanisms: providing timely and constructive feedback helps remote employees gauge their performance and make necessary improvements. Managers can leverage technology to facilitate feedback exchange, such as through virtual feedback sessions or digital performance management platforms (Golden et al., 2020).
- Encourage autonomy and ownership: empowering remote employees to take ownership of their work and make decisions fosters motivation and accountability.
 Managers can delegate tasks and provide autonomy within defined parameters to cultivate a sense of ownership and responsibility (Golden et al., 2020).

Employee engagement challenges

Maintaining employee engagement and fostering a sense of connection within remote teams can be challenging. Remote work can lead to feelings of isolation and reduced social interactions, potentially affecting employee engagement and overall team

dynamics (Hu et al., 2020). To address employee engagement challenges, managers can consider the following strategies.

- Foster a sense of belonging: encourage virtual team-building activities, social interactions, and informal virtual gatherings to foster a sense of belonging and strengthen team cohesion (Hu et al., 2020).
- Support work-life balance: promote work-life balance by setting clear boundaries, encouraging breaks, and providing flexibility in work schedules

4 RESEARCH PROCESS

4.1 Double Diamond

The Double Diamond design process model was developed at the UK Design Council in 2005. It is a simple diagram that describes design processes' divergent and convergent stages. The process is often called "4 D Model" because the name of each of its' phases start with D: Discover, Define, Develop and Deliver. (Design Council 2015; Tschimmel 2012.)

Double diamond is a model developed by the design council. The double diamond model takes the approach of broad thinking and convergent thinking when creating the design and development stages (Schneider 2015), it places high importance on initially creating many ideas from which the ideas are streamlined to the most effective idea.

Discovery: this is the first stage of the double diamond model, it involves the study of all the variables that affects and influences the problem to be solved. The discovery phase helps to promote a broad range of ideas. It seeks to understand what the challenge is and the different ways it can be solved (Design council 2015). Discovery mostly involves physical interaction can with potential users. Having physical interaction like voice interview and workshops allow the designer to have a detailed knowledge of the problem they are solving and how best they can be solved. In the discovery stage, the designer tries to understand the problem through the eyes of the potential users.

Define: the definition phase is the process of filtering through all the data gotten in the discovery phase which provides insight on the challenge to be solved. The insight derived from the large pool of data is used to create a structure that is to be followed when developing a solution for the challenge. The definition phase is convergent by nature, it is the start of the narrow-minded thinking approach discussed above hence; it concentrates on the most compelling opportunities to pursue (Schneider 2015). The filtered information should be studied inadeptly to identify potential bottlenecks and obscured opportunities (JustinMind 2018). The definition phase seeks to elaborate on the different aspect of a business, it ensures everyone involved in the product development understands the context properly.

Once the challenges have been clearly defined and understood, company should start the search for the best possible solution for all the stakeholders. With a defined vision in place, manager's should explore numerous options and validate them. Initially, focus should be on quantity over quality (Eissa 2019). The development phase is the actual implantation phase, it involves a large amount of different people from unique discipline working together as team they ideate, develop the best possible solution, and test the solution with actual users. This teams differ from technical professionals such as engineers to unskilled workers like cleaners, the main thing to be consider selecting a team member is that they should have the expertise required for the development of the project. The development phases involve various activities which includes the following.

- Ideation / brain storming
- Low fidelity wireframing
- · High fidelity wireframing
- Mind mapping
- User journey creation
- Service blueprint creation
- Tasks flows
- Asset creation
- Product creation
- Product testing

Deliver it is the last stage of the double diamond model which revolves around the final concept (Copenhagen Business School 2013). It includes the final testing, error correction and launching. The delivery phase also includes post-production activities such as pitching and marketing. This phase or any other double diamond model phases is by no means a linear curve hence, they can be iterated at any time of the product design and development if the need arises. In short, user experience design is not a means to an end, it's an iterative long-term process which involves various teams and stakeholders such as the customers, product users, developers, marketers, investors, sales representatives etc. irrespective of the projects are developing needed a high-level

blueprint to follow of which the double diamond model has provided us with an effective and flexible approach to design thinking and problem solving by dividing the model into two main parts which are, designing the right thing and designing the things right (Schicker 2018).

The Double Diamond process model is a popular design framework that has been widely adopted by businesses and organizations worldwide. Its versatility and effectiveness have made it an essential tool in many industries. Here are some ways to improve and expand upon the previous explanation:

The Double Diamond design process model is widely regarded as one of the most effective frameworks for design thinking. The model is based on a two-stage process that involves divergent thinking and convergent thinking. The first stage (divergent thinking) is characterized by exploring all possible options and ideas related to a problem, while the second stage (convergent thinking) involves refining and selecting the best ideas to achieve specific business goals. The Double Diamond design process model is used to solve complex economic, social, and environmental problems that require innovation to solve. It is used to identify important concepts and design methodologies that companies can use to create meaningful, long-term change. The process also involves problem analysis as the basis for developing solutions, design innovation roadmaps that include external cooperation and user engagement. (Design council, 2005)

The Double Diamond model provides a structured and systematic approach to design thinking that allows businesses to create innovative solutions that meet the needs of their customers. By following the divergent and convergent thinking approach, organizations can create solutions that are both creative and effective. Overall, the Double Diamond design process model is an essential tool for any business looking to innovate and create meaningful change. It is a powerful framework that has helped many organizations solve complex problems and create successful products and services. (Design council, 2005)

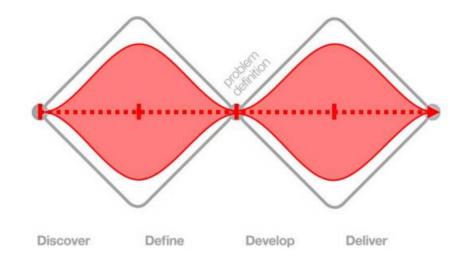


Figure 4 Double Diamond [Design Council 2005], illustrating divergence and convergence along a linear process

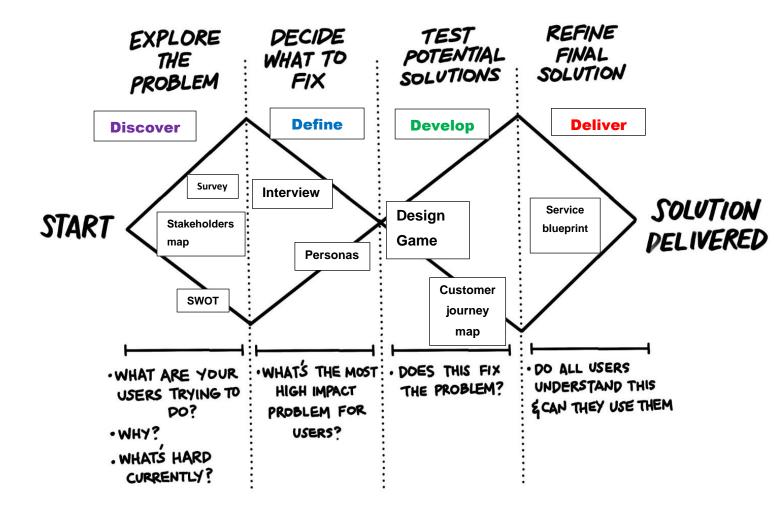


Figure 5 ATR SOFT Double diamond linear process. Understand problems and solutions

4.2 Stakeholders Map

Stakeholder mapping in remote work: understanding perspectives and ensuring project success

This academic paper explores the concept of stakeholder mapping as a valuable tool for understanding the perspectives and interests of various stakeholders involved in remote work initiatives. By conducting stakeholder mapping workshops, project teams can identify potential opportunities and challenges, anticipate roadblocks, and leverage drivers to ensure the success of remote work projects. The principles of Design Thinking, which emphasize empathy, collaboration, and a human-centered approach, align well with stakeholder mapping practices. This paper provides an overview of stakeholder mapping and applies it to the context of remote work, highlighting key stakeholders and their potential concerns.

Stakeholder mapping is an effective technique for understanding the diverse perspectives and interests of stakeholders involved in a project (Liedtka, J). While it may not capture the entire business environment, stakeholder mapping enables teams to identify potential opportunities and challenges throughout a project's development. In the case of remote work initiatives, stakeholder mapping becomes particularly valuable in anticipating and addressing the unique complexities associated with this work arrangement.

Stakeholder mapping, a conceptual overview, stakeholder mapping involves creating a chart or diagram that visualizes the key players or groups with a vested interest in a specific issue or decision. This mapping process allows project teams to gain insights into stakeholders' expectations, influence, and potential impact on project outcomes (Liedtka, J). By identifying and engaging stakeholders, teams can develop strategies to address their concerns and involve them in decision-making processes.

Stakeholders in remote work: a stakeholder map example

When applying stakeholder mapping to remote work initiatives in a hypothetical company called ATRSoft, the following stakeholders emerge:

Senior management	This group comprises executives and	
	high-level decision-makers responsible	
	for setting company strategy and policies	
	related to remote work.	
HR department	The HR department plays a critical role in	
	managing employee-related matters,	
	including hiring, benefits, and training.	
	They are important stakeholders in	
	remote work, as they develop policies and	
	procedures to support remote employees.	
Remote employees	This group consists of employees working	
	from home or other remote locations.	
	Their unique needs and concerns, such	
	as technology access, communication,	
	and work-life balance, should be	
	considered in remote work initiatives.	
Office employees	Although not directly impacted by remote	
	work policies, office employees may have	
	concerns regarding the effects of remote	
	work on their colleagues and the overall	
	company culture.	
IT department	The IT department manages the	
	company's technology infrastructure and	
	plays a vital role in ensuring that remote	
	employees have access to the necessary	
	tools and resources for effective remote	
	work.	
Facilities department	This department oversees the physical	
	office space, including layout, furniture,	
	and equipment. They may need to adapt	
	office spaces to support remote work,	
	such as creating more flexible meeting	
	areas or upgrading technology.	

Table 1 Stakeholder mapping to remote work initiatives

Applying stakeholder mapping to remote work

By creating a stakeholder map specific to remote work in ATRSoft, project teams can better understand the diverse groups impacted by remote work policies and decisions. This understanding enables them to address stakeholders' needs and concerns and align remote work initiatives with the broader organizational context.

Stakeholder mapping is a valuable tool for understanding the perspectives and interests of stakeholders in remote work initiatives. By engaging stakeholders and considering their unique concerns, organizations can navigate the complexities of remote work and ensure project success. Stakeholder mapping, when applied in conjunction with principles of Design Thinking, promotes a human-centered approach to problem-solving and collaboration, leading to effective remote work practices.

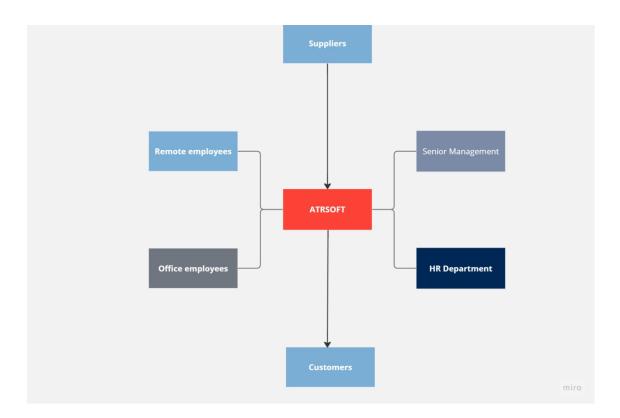


Figure 6 Stakholders map for ATRSoft

4.3 Survey

Surveys are an essential research tool utilized in various fields to gather information from a specific group of individuals. This chapter explores the significance of surveys, highlighting their benefits and considerations in research. Surveys provide researchers with an efficient and cost-effective means of collecting objective data on opinions, experiences, and behaviors. Moreover, their versatility and ease of analysis make surveys a valuable tool for researchers. However, it is crucial to select appropriate survey tools to ensure data validity and reliability.

Benefits of surveys

Surveys allow researchers to collect data from a large number of respondents within a short period. The convenience of online administration and the flexibility for respondents to complete surveys at their own convenience contribute to the efficiency of data collection (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014).

Compared to other research methods such as focus groups or in-depth interviews, surveys are a cost-effective option. They require fewer resources and can reach a larger number of participants, making them an economical choice for data collection (Fowler Jr, 2013).

Surveys provide objective data as respondents answer questions based on their own opinions, experiences, and behaviors. This aspect helps eliminate bias in the data and provides accurate insights into the target population (Groves et al., 2009).

Surveys can be used to collect a wide range of information, including attitudes, opinions, behaviors, demographics, and more. They are adaptable to different research purposes, such as market research, customer satisfaction surveys, employee feedback surveys, and more (Fowler Jr, 2013).

Surveys generate quantitative data that can be easily analyzed using statistical software. This facilitates the identification of trends, patterns, and relationships in the data, empowering researchers to make informed decisions based on the findings (Hair Jr et al., 2019).

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data collected through surveys, it is crucial to choose the right survey tool. Popular survey tools such as SurveyMonkey, Google

Forms, Qualtrics, and SurveyGizmo offer diverse features that support effective survey administration and data management (SurveyMonkey, n.d.; Google Forms, n.d.; Qualtrics, n.d.; SurveyGizmo, n.d.).

Surveys serve as an efficient and cost-effective research tool, providing valuable insights across various research domains. By selecting appropriate survey tools and methodologies, researchers can collect objective data from a defined group of individuals, leading to accurate insights and informed decision-making.

The online survey (Appendix 1) was conducted in Februry 2022 via Google forms. The survey questions and link can be found in appendix 1.

Improving communication regarding goals

In the employees' response, they mention that goal-setting is not a collaborative effort and they establish their own goals individually. However, they note that everyone is satisfied with this arrangement and see no need for communication if no one sets goals for them initially. The employees clarify that they take responsibility for defining their own goals within their work, and they are unaware of any external expectations or goals for their performance. To ensure employee motivation, the employees recommend holding short weekly meetings where goals are briefly outlined. They also find value in conducting "daily" meetings twice a week with their closest team members, as it has proven to be a beneficial practice. The employees stress the importance of having clear goals to achieve. They highlight that the clarity of goals is more crucial to success than whether one is working remotely or in an office setting. They assert that if the project has well-defined goals, it becomes easier to follow them regardless of the work environment. Conversely, working in an office does not enhance productivity if goals are not set clearly.

Effectiveness of remote working

In evaluating the effectiveness of remote working, the individual reports being able to maintain a consistent rhythm and work schedule about 85% of the time. They feel that they are able to establish a productive routine while working remotely. Additionally, the individual states that their productivity level at home is comparable to their productivity level in the office, rating it at about 75%. This suggests that they are able to maintain a similar level of output and efficiency while working from home. Overall, based on their self-assessment, the individual finds remote working to be quite effective in terms of

maintaining a work schedule and achieving productivity levels similar to those experienced in the office.

When asked if there are any missing tools needed for remote work, the responses vary.

Two respondents answer "No" and indicate that they do not require any additional tools. One respondent mentions that they cannot think of any missing tools. Another individual suggests the need for a chair that provides proper ergonomics, highlighting the importance of comfortable seating for long work hours. One person expresses that small improvements to ergonomics would be appreciated but are not essential. The remaining responses state that there are no special tools needed. Overall, the majority of respondents do not feel that there are any missing tools required for remote work. However, one person identifies the need for a suitable ergonomic chair to enhance their work setup.

The respondents share their biggest challenges with working from home. One individual mentions that they miss face-to-face interaction and find video calls unsatisfying in fulfilling their need for socialization, although it is not critical for their well-being. Two respondents state that they do not have any problems with remote work. One person expresses difficulty in finding an environment at home that allows them to focus on work effectively. They feel that there are too many distractions and experience a lack of productivity and happiness when working from home. They believe remote work would be better suited in an office-like or different setting. Two individuals mention a lack of socialization and the desire to have non-work-related conversations with colleagues. One person notes that it requires more effort to have work-related discussions with colleagues remotely. One respondent highlights limited communication with others outside their projects. Another person mentions the challenge of transitioning out of the work mindset after finishing work for the day. One individual states that they have multiple smaller issues with remote work rather than a single significant problem. One respondent shares that they sometimes lose motivation when they don't see their colleagues regularly, but frequent "daily" meetings have improved the situation. One person mentions that while staying at home is not necessarily a problem, it can become monotonous. Lastly, one individual expresses a desire for more collaborative and free discussions during remote work, rather than meetings being focused on specific roles and responsibilities. Overall, the challenges mentioned include the lack of face-to-face interaction, difficulties in finding a focused work environment, limited socialization,

decreased spontaneous collaboration, detachment from the work mindset, and the potential monotony of staying at home.

When asked about improving interactions with their foreperson, the responses include. One respondent states that they cannot think of anything as the dynamic is already working well and improving over time. Another individual mentions that they don't have a specific need for improvement and take responsibility for communication themselves. They feel that if there is not enough interaction, they can initiate contact with their foreperson. One suggestion is to have frequent one-on-one meetings, lunches, and other face-to-face encounters when in the office to enhance communication. One person mentions that communication has not changed since transitioning to remote work, so they do not have any specific needs in relation to remote interactions. One respondent highlights the importance of arranging face-to-face meetings occasionally. Several individuals express that they are content with the current situation and have no need for improvement. Suggestions include scheduling regular meetings, such as every two weeks.

When asked about improving interactions with colleagues, the responses include. One person mentions that going to the office more often has helped them, as live interactions make it easier to reach out to others through other means. Two respondents state that they do not see a need for improvement in this area. One suggestion is to work more together at the office to foster interaction. One individual mentions that there could be more activity in collaboration platforms like Teams. A desire for more opportunities for small talk and informal meetings, such as coffee break meetings, is expressed. One person highlights the limitation of remote work, where interactions with colleagues are now solely focused on work-related issues, unlike before when various non-work topics were discussed. They emphasize the need for more interaction beyond their immediate team. Suggestions include encouraging teams to have regular short daily or weekly meetings to discuss their work and plans, having face-to-face meetings at least bimonthly, and organizing remote coffee meetings with team members to foster a sense of camaraderie. It is suggested to have frequent remote coffee meetings company-wide to allow for informal discussions and enhance team spirit, but with a lower frequency than the current daily invitations. Other suggestions include weekly meetings, utilizing team channels, and finding easy and informal ways to meet colleagues online to get to know them better, especially for those not already familiar with each other. Overall, the feedback highlights the importance of fostering more social interactions and informal communication channels to enhance teamwork, build relationships, and strengthen team spirit.

When asked about improving communication in the company, the responses include One suggestion is to encourage more communication among employees, but with a focus on reducing excessive one-on-one discussions that can lead to information loss and inefficiency. Instead, advocating for group discussions is recommended. Another suggestion is to be more inspiring and inject fun into the work environment, demonstrating that it can be enjoyable to accomplish tasks together. One individual suggests arranging a specific day for people to come to the office, potentially to facilitate face-to-face communication and collaboration. A recommendation is made to stick to one communication channel, such as using Teams exclusively, to streamline communication and avoid information fragmentation. One person shares their experience of ad hoc onboarding and suggests improving the process by providing comprehensive information about company benefits and expanding the buddy system for new employees. A suggestion is made to create a Confluence page or a similar platform for official information, while using Teams posts to refer to that page. This would provide a centralized location for up-to-date information and improve organization and accessibility. A respondent notes that there has been a decrease in communication about general matters, raising potential concerns about information sharing. One person emphasizes that these communication issues are not specific to remote work but rather stem from general ways of working and project-based communication practices Overall, the feedback highlights the need for more effective and inclusive communication practices, including group discussions, inspiring and enjoyable communication approaches, improved onboarding processes, streamlined communication channels, centralized information sources, and addressing potential issues with overall communication within the company.

When asked about improving communication of company expectations, the responses include. One suggestion is to provide concrete goals with measurable targets and specific timelines for individuals, allowing for better tracking of progress. Another respondent emphasizes the importance of clear and concrete expectations, and the desire to see how the company is progressing, particularly in terms of growth. One suggestion is to arrange company meetings from the office instead of remotely, allowing people to gather and interact with each other in person. This could include dedicated time for relaxation and team-building activities. The idea of bringing up company

expectations in company meetings and documenting them in steering group minutes is mentioned. A recommendation is made to have monthly company meetings and ensure that all employees attend, with the belief that if someone cannot allocate an hour each month, there may be underlying issues. One person expresses confusion about the question and provides the same answer as mentioned above. Repetition of company expectations in company meetings and other communication channels is mentioned as a way to reinforce understanding. One respondent suggests the need for a more systematic approach to working on projects. Overall, the feedback emphasizes the importance of setting clear and measurable goals, tracking progress, arranging in-person company meetings for team bonding and communication, ensuring attendance, and adopting a systematic approach to project work to better communicate and meet company expectations.

When asked about improving the remote working experience, the responses include. One person enjoys occasional remote work and finds it beneficial for certain tasks, but suggests having more office days to satisfy the need for social interaction. A recommendation is made to offer remote working spaces outside of the home, as some individuals prefer to separate their living and working environments. One respondent emphasizes the importance of allowing remote work to be done fully without forcing employees to come to the office. Ensuring that employees do not spend the entire day indoors without going outside for non-work-related activities is mentioned as an important aspect of improving the remote working experience. Several individuals express satisfaction with the current remote working arrangement and suggest continuing to allow them to work remotely. Regular contact with the foreperson is highlighted as an improvement in the remote working experience, while acknowledging limitations such as the provided laptop affecting the ability to change working locations for improved ergonomics. One person mentions that the remote working experience has already improved significantly compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic, with more information available and the absence of an assumption that everyone is in the office. The suggestion of agenda-free meetings, such as painting sessions, is mentioned to enhance the remote working experience. Overall, the feedback indicates a positive attitude towards remote work and a desire to maintain flexibility in choosing the work location.

Based on the responses, the three main improvements to sustain remote work in the company are. Clear Goal Setting and Communication: Establishing clear goals and

ensuring effective communication about them promotes autonomy and clarity for remote workers. This helps employees stay aligned with company objectives. Enhanced communication and collaboration: encouraging and facilitating communication within remote groups is crucial. This can be achieved through various means, such as regular team meetings, virtual collaboration tools, and fostering a sense of community and connection among employees. Support for remote employees: providing support and resources to remote employees is essential for sustaining remote work. This includes improving home office environments, offering flexibility for hybrid work arrangements, ensuring new employees are properly onboarded and supported, and addressing any feelings of loneliness or isolation. Additionally, there were some specific suggestions related to the COVID-19 situation, such as increasing cultural/sports vouchers to encourage employees to get out of their homes, transitioning to a hybrid work model to maintain corporate culture, and addressing the challenges of new employees joining the company during this time. Overall, the focus is on effective communication, support, and creating a sense of community and connection in the remote work environment.

4.4 SWOT Analysis, a strategic tool for evaluating organizational positioning

This academic paper provides an in-depth understanding of SWOT analysis as a strategic planning tool used to assess an organization's internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats. The SWOT framework is described, highlighting its simplicity and effectiveness in evaluating a company's strategic position. The paper emphasizes the significance of strengths and weaknesses in the internal environment and opportunities and threats in the external environment, and discusses the broad applicability of SWOT analysis across different business contexts. SWOT analysis is a widely recognized strategic planning tool that helps organizations assess their internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats. This section introduces the concept of SWOT analysis and its relevance in evaluating an organization's overall strategic position. (Albright, T. L., & Winston, W. L. 2015)

Strengths refer to the positive attributes and advantages within an organization's internal environment. They encompass valuable resources, capabilities, and competitive advantages that contribute to the organization's success. Identifying and leveraging strengths are crucial for maintaining a competitive edge. Weaknesses represent the

areas of vulnerability or limitations within an organization. These could include inadequate resources, lack of expertise, or ineffective processes. Understanding weaknesses is vital for organizations to address shortcomings and enhance overall performance. Opportunities are external factors that organizations can capitalize on to enhance their growth and performance. They may arise from emerging market trends, technological advancements, new customer segments, or changes in consumer preferences. Identifying and exploiting opportunities enable organizations to expand their market reach and competitiveness. Threats are external factors that pose risks and challenges to an organization's business operations. These could include new entrants in the market, changing regulations, economic downturns, or evolving customer demands. Recognizing threats allows organizations to develop strategies to mitigate potential risks and sustain their competitive position. SWOT analysis provides valuable insights for strategic planning, market research, and risk assessment. By conducting a comprehensive SWOT analysis, organizations gain a holistic understanding of their current position, identify areas for improvement, and formulate effective strategies to capitalize on opportunities and mitigate threats. SWOT analysis is a valuable strategic planning tool that facilitates a comprehensive evaluation of an organization's internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats. By leveraging strengths, addressing weaknesses, capitalizing on opportunities, and mitigating threats, organizations can enhance their overall strategic positioning and achieve sustainable growth and success. (Kotler, Keller, & Sivaramakrishnan, 2019)



Figure 7 ATR Soft SWOT Analysis, what are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

4.5 Personas

Personas respond to two major paradoxes in ergonomics. First, apprehend a large number of users who possibly do not yet exist. Indeed, ergonomic psychology today faces two major new challenges: designing for millions of geographically dispersed users and anticipating user needs that emerge alongside the development of new

technologies. Ergonomic psychologists must therefore complement traditional methods, such as the analysis of tasks and activities, with relevant and innovative methods in understanding these new contexts. Personas, as a prospective methodology, meet this need and support the evolution of ergonomics towards a prospective dimension, oriented towards the study of possible futures (Robert, Brangier, 2009; Brangier, Robert, 2010).

Second, to design a product, a service or means of production adapted to unobservable situations. Here, it is the prediction of uses that represents a central question, because it is supposed to promote anticipation and innovation. To these ends, three conceptions have followed (Béguin, Cerf, 2004; Falzon, 2005), which testify to different perspectives on the methods of intervention of the ergonomic psychologist. Integrating business anticipation into design strategies. It can be carried out, for example, on the basis of characteristic action situations (SAC) which, as determinants of the structuring of the activity (Garrigou, Daniellou, Carballeda, Ruaud, 1995), can be transposed to situations futures and build scenarios. The principle is not to foresee future activity, but to envisage certain possible forms of future activity. Simulations can also be implemented, based on ergonomic experimentation, activity modeling or "language simulations", based, for example, on scenarios intended to anticipate the future use of the product (Rosson, Caroll, 2002; Beguin, 2004).

The study by adaptable or adaptive systems. Given that users will update new uses (Brangier, Bastien, 2006; Béguin, Rabardel, 2000), it is a question, precisely, of making possible these future activities, to allow the realization of operating modes compatible with, by example, the health and safety of employees (Daniellou, 2004).

The developmental or constructivist perspective. This approach consists of promoting the development of use during the design process, during which designers and operators jointly develop the product, on the basis of organized exchanges and mutual learning. Béguin (2004) nevertheless has an important reservation in the context of product ergonomics: users must be representative of the target population, otherwise their learning does not represent that of future users. As such, personas aim to define prospective users of future uses associated with a product or service. At the level of usage forecasting, personas are therefore part of the work that makes it possible to anticipate, adapt, develop and/or build future situations, products and services. They constitute a response in cases where the diversity, disparity and volatility of users does not allow direct access to stabilized and reliable knowledge on future uses.

In this case study, personas will be used as main game actors for ATR Soft.

Personas are fictional characters that are created to represent a group of users who share similar goals, needs, and behaviors. They are used in the field of user experience (UX) design to understand the target audience and create products and services that meet their specific needs. Personas are created based on data gathered through user research, such as surveys, interviews, and observations. The use of personas helps designers and developers to empathize with the users, make informed design decisions, and ultimately create a better user experience.

The use of personas in UX design is well-established and has been shown to be effective in improving the user-centeredness of products and services (Cooper, 2014). They are particularly useful in situations where the user base is diverse or complex, making it difficult to create a one-size-fits-all design.

Four personas were made in partnership with the commissioner. The goal was to get one persona that work independently and like remote work, one persona that work independently and like hybrid work, one persona that work from to the office and like to see others and one work from home with many years of experiences and do not leave in Turku.

These personas were sent to the commissioner in October 2022 to get opinions on the relevance of the research project. The commissioner were satisfied and persona are ready for the service design game.

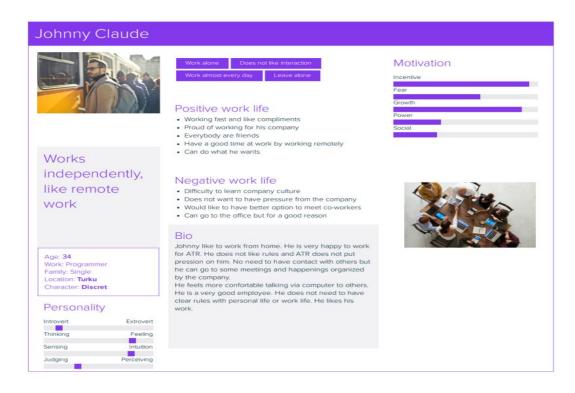


Figure 8 Persona 1, Works independently, like remote work.

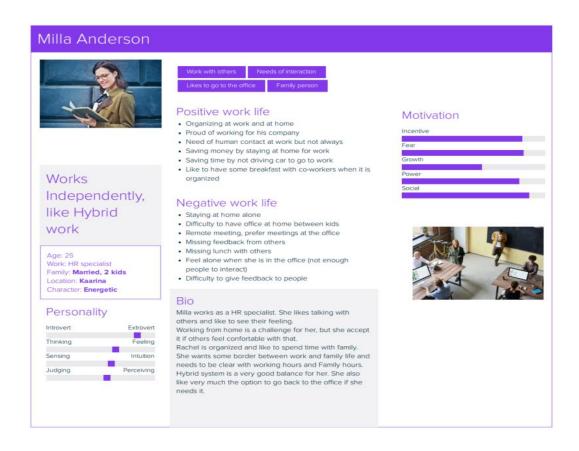


Figure 9 Persona 2 Works independently, like hybrid work.



Figure 10 Persona 3 Works from the office, needs to see others

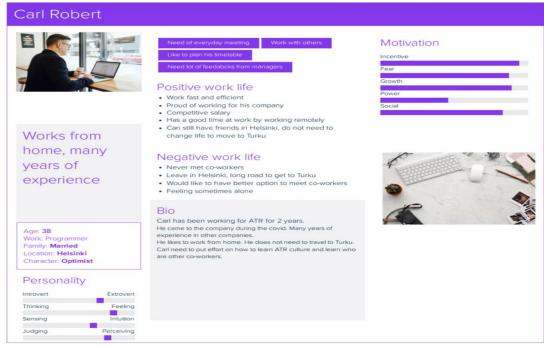


Figure 11 Persona 4 Works from home, leave in Helsinki

4.6 Focus group interview

Focus on group interview as a qualitative research method for gathering insights into various topics and understanding group dynamics. The paper discusses the characteristics of focus group interviews, the advantages they offer in terms of data collection, and their significance in analyzing group interactions and individual behavior within a social context. Focus group interviews are a qualitative research method that involves interviewing a group of individuals to gain insights into specific topics. This section provides an overview of focus group interviews and their relevance in capturing rich qualitative data. Focus group interviews typically involve a group size ranging from four to eight participants. It is important to keep the group small enough to ensure active participation and equal contribution from all members, preventing dominance by a few individuals. (Krueger, R. A. 1998)

The interactive nature of focus group interviews facilitates dynamic discussions among participants. This format allows for the exploration of multiple perspectives, ideas, and experiences within a group setting. Focus group interviews generate a wealth of qualitative data for researchers to analyze. Alongside narrative data, such as participants' thoughts and opinions, focus group interviews also provide observational data, including non-verbal cues, body language, and facial expressions. This multifaceted data enriches researchers' understanding of group dynamics and individual behavior in a social context. Focus group interviews offer valuable insights into group dynamics, revealing how individuals interact, communicate, and reconcile their thoughts and perceptions within a group setting. Researchers can analyze the patterns of interaction, power dynamics, and the influence of social factors on individual viewpoints. Focus group interviews find application in various research domains, including market research, social science, and healthcare. They are particularly useful for exploring complex topics, understanding diverse perspectives, and uncovering shared experiences and meanings. The insights gained from focus group interviews inform decision-making, program development, and policy formulation. (Krueger, R. A. 1998)

Focus group interviews are a valuable qualitative research method that provides rich data for understanding group dynamics and individual behavior within a social context. By facilitating interactive discussions and capturing diverse perspectives, focus group interviews offer unique insights that contribute to a comprehensive understanding of complex topics. (Krueger, R. A. 1998)

The interview conducted for the purpose of gathering data for the service design game was carried out with the commissioner (Appendix 2). The main focus of the interview revolved around three distinct aspects, namely people and communication tools and methods, analyzing organizational culture, and assessing people's motivation and satisfaction levels. The interviews were conducted online using Microsoft Teams in October 2022, involving a total of six employees. It is important to note that the interview process ensured anonymity, with no names being visible during the interview and no names being reported in any subsequent documentation or reports.

In this scenario, people within a company are using various communication tools and methods, but the company primarily relies on Microsoft Teams software. However, one team within the company is not satisfied with the functionalities of Teams and has opted to use a different tool for their communication needs. Despite this, work discussions are progressing well, but individuals feel a lack of informal conversations or "everyday talk" that typically occurs in an office setting. Nevertheless, they can easily interact with each other through chat or calls. Feedback is being provided adequately, and there is no requirement for additional face-to-face meetings. However, everyone agrees that occasional office visits, such as morning breakfast gatherings, are enjoyable. Overall, working from home has become easy and comfortable, and the idea of returning to the office feels strange.

When analyzing the organizational culture of ATR, there is a general difficulty for everyone to answer the question of what the culture is. However, there are no communication problems within the organization, whether in English or Finnish, although there is a slight preference for using Finnish. The challenge arises when discussions start in Finnish and then transition to English, as switching between languages can be difficult for some individuals.

The relationships between colleagues are good, and each team uses their own communication tools. There are no issues with having discussions or contacting others while working remotely. Using tools like Microsoft Teams makes communication easier, as it helps in remembering previous discussions and following presentations. In terms of people's motivation and satisfaction, everyone at ATR Soft is happy to work for the company. The freedom provided by ATR Soft is highly valued, with minimal strict rules and the ability for individuals to choose what they want to do. ATR Soft is seen as an attractive company, and employees express their desire for the company to grow and

expand. There is a strong sense of wanting to be a part of ATR Soft's growth and actively contribute to it.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, there are more opportunities for employees to choose their preferred company, as remote work has expanded possibilities beyond the limited scope of Turku. However, when individuals go to the office, they often feel uncomfortable due to its emptiness. This feeling arises when only a few people are present in a space designed for a larger workforce. To address this, one team has decided to go to the office once a week to have face-to-face discussions, which is viewed as valuable.

When it comes to increasing motivation and job satisfaction, there is difficulty in providing a clear answer. Despite the positive aspects mentioned earlier, identifying specific measures or factors that can enhance motivation and satisfaction proves challenging.

4.7 Service design game

Design games as a research tool

Habraken and Gross (1987) are perhaps the first well-known researchers, who adapted the game metaphor into the field of design, inspired by Wittgenstein's concept of language-game. They saw the potential of games as a research tool in the context of architecture. According to them, design games allow studying design actions in a manipulable and well-bounded environment that gives rise to design situations resembling those in real-life; in both, players' moves are limited by the existing rules, conventions and principles. The authors refer to their approach as concept design games, since the aim is to improve researchers' understanding of the concepts that designers (i.e. architects) have. The overall research question is: "How do designers negotiate, come to agreements and follow conventions". The players were fellow researchers from MIT, and the games involved always more than one player, to stress the social aspects of design. Concept design games are board games, meaning that game pieces are moved on a flat surface according to specific rules. The focus is on the moves people make on the board while playing the game. The moves are then analysed in the discussion that follows. In most concept design games, verbal communication is not allowed until the game is over.

Design games for building design competence

Iversen and Buur (2002) build on Habraken's and Gross' concept design games presented above but apply the idea in an educational setting in the course organised around the notion of "design is a game". They propose that creating, playing and reflecting game playing can be an effective way of learning how to establish social interaction between stakeholders in the participatory design process. According to them "game frame encourages participants to pay attention to the social and communicative processes of design" which is essential in participatory design to create and maintain collaboration between participants.

Design games for empowering users

Around the same time as Habraken and Gross, Ehn and Sjögren (1991) worked with design projects aimed at supporting the democratization of workplaces. Active user participation was seen as a key factor and design games as a potential approach for that by allowing a productive dialogue, where users could articulate their demands and wishes in a concrete way. The need for a new approach came after noticing that users did not understand the system descriptions made by the designers. Design games, along with various mock-ups, provided hands-on tools for establishing a common language between designers and users, and involved users in the discussions on existing and future work and technology. (ibid.) Illustratively, Ehn and Sjögren call their approach designing-by-playing and the developed methods as organizational games.

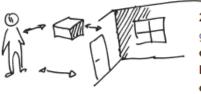
Many companies and organizations seek to bring out cross-cutting subjects (innovation, data, customer experience, etc.) as a culture rather than as a department within the company. The objective is to get these subjects out of compartmentalized expert departments to make them understood by as many people as possible in order to make all employees actors of change. These are big challenges for which companies need concrete tools.

The issues surrounding awareness are multiple. Company want to make the teams aware of many cross-cutting subjects: digital transformation, innovation, security... collaborators. The advantages identified below show that gambling is a good solution to achieve these objectives.

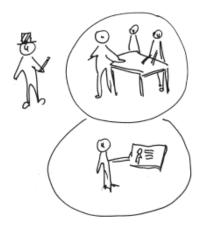


1) Capturing thoughts behind design proposals.

Documenting the process of co-design so that it illustrates the link between created artefacts and its relevance to the people who created it.



- **2) How to introduce contextual information** for design gathering? By understanding relations between
- a) people (who are involved)
- **b) materials** (what materials are introduced and how)
- c) setting (where the co-design is set)



3) Roles and facilitation in co-design:

Who is the designer?
Who are desirable design partners?
Leads into the notions of:

direct user involvement and indirect user involvement

Figure 12 Design Games as a tool, a mindset and a structure (Kirsikka Vaajakallio). Give some ideas on why using service design game in business world.

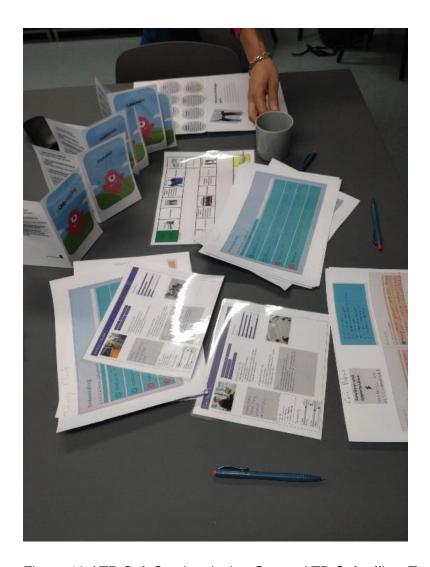


Figure 13 ATR Soft Service design Game, ATR Soft office, Turku, 26.1.2023

The game session involved six individuals who were carefully chosen by the HR manager based on their skills and experience (Appendix 3). The participants were divided into two teams, with two individuals per team, ensuring a balanced and collaborative environment. Throughout the session, the discussions held were highly pertinent and relevant to the objectives of the game. The teams seamlessly kicked off the game and demonstrated excellent adherence to the rules, showcasing their strong understanding and commitment. They actively participated in surveys and exercises, providing valuable insights and feedback. The engaging game session lasted for approximately two hours, allowing sufficient time for comprehensive exploration of the tasks and challenges.

At the conclusion of the game, the HR manager reconvened with the participants to discuss the results. The manager carefully listened to each team's findings, analyzing the data collected during the session. This data included metrics such as completion rates, accuracy, and team dynamics, providing valuable information for evaluation and further decision-making. Overall, the game session proved to be a highly productive and engaging experience, enabling the HR manager to gather meaningful data while fostering teamwork and collaboration among the participants.

4.8 Experience journey map

Experience journey maps are a visual representation of the steps a customer takes when engaging with a product, service, or organization. It is a powerful tool that provides insight into the customer's experience, including their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors at each touchpoint. By mapping out the customer's journey, organizations can identify pain points, gaps in the customer experience, and areas for improvement. In this essay, the discussion of the benefits of experience journey maps and how organizations can use them to improve their customer experience. One of the main benefits of experience journey maps is that they provide a holistic view of the customer experience. By mapping out the customer's journey from start to finish, organizations can identify pain points and areas for improvement at each touchpoint. This allows organizations to make informed decisions about where to focus their resources to improve the customer experience. By understanding the customer's needs and preferences at each touchpoint, organizations can design a more seamless and enjoyable experience for their customers (Dewar, 2019).

Another benefit of experience journey maps is that they provide a shared understanding of the customer experience across different departments within an organization. By visualizing the customer's journey, organizations can communicate the customer's needs and preferences to different departments, such as marketing, product development, and customer service. This ensures that all departments are aligned in their efforts to improve the customer experience and provides a more consistent experience for the customer (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2011).

Moreover, experience journey maps serve as a valuable tool for identifying moments of truth in the customer journey. These moments are critical touchpoints where the customer's experience can make or break their perception of the organization. By

pinpointing these moments, organizations can prioritize efforts to enhance those key interactions and create positive experiences that leave a lasting impression (Gupta & Vajic, 2000). In conclusion, experience journey maps are a valuable tool for organizations to gain a comprehensive understanding of the customer experience and identify areas for improvement. By mapping the customer journey, organizations can align their efforts, prioritize resources, and design customer-centric experiences that enhance satisfaction and loyalty.

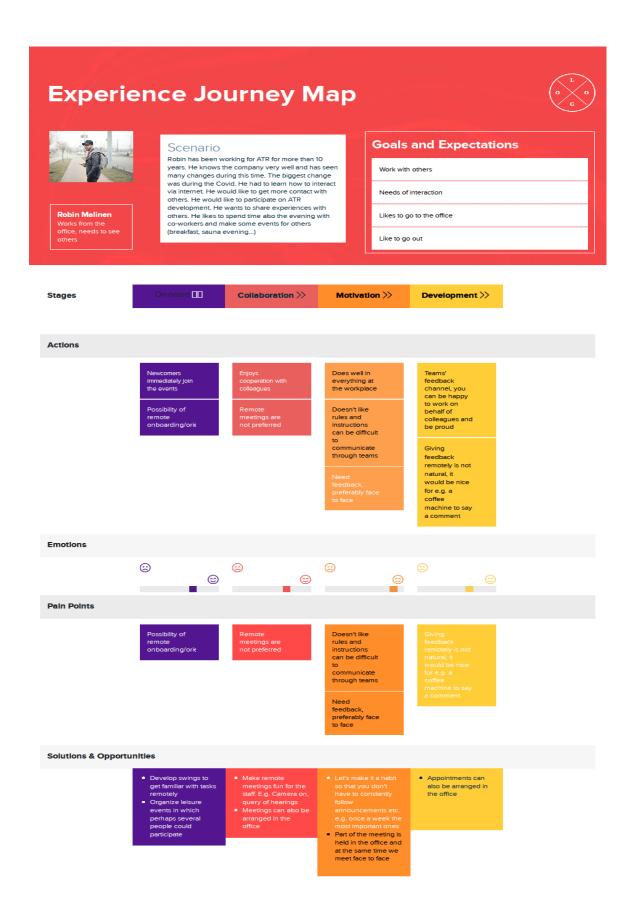


Figure 14 Experience Journey Map 1, Persona analysing and solutions

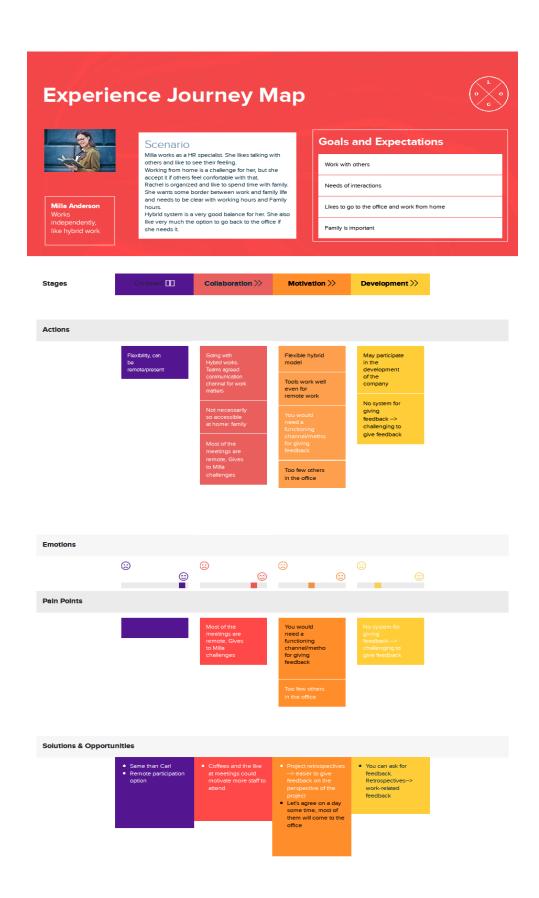


Figure 15 Experience Journey 2 Persona analysing and solutions

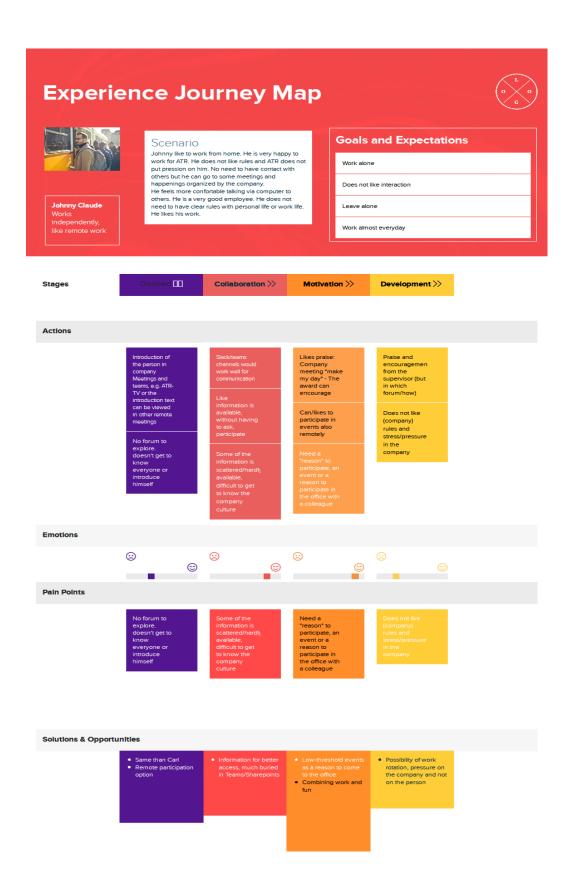


Figure 16 Experience Journey Map 3 Persona analysing and solutions

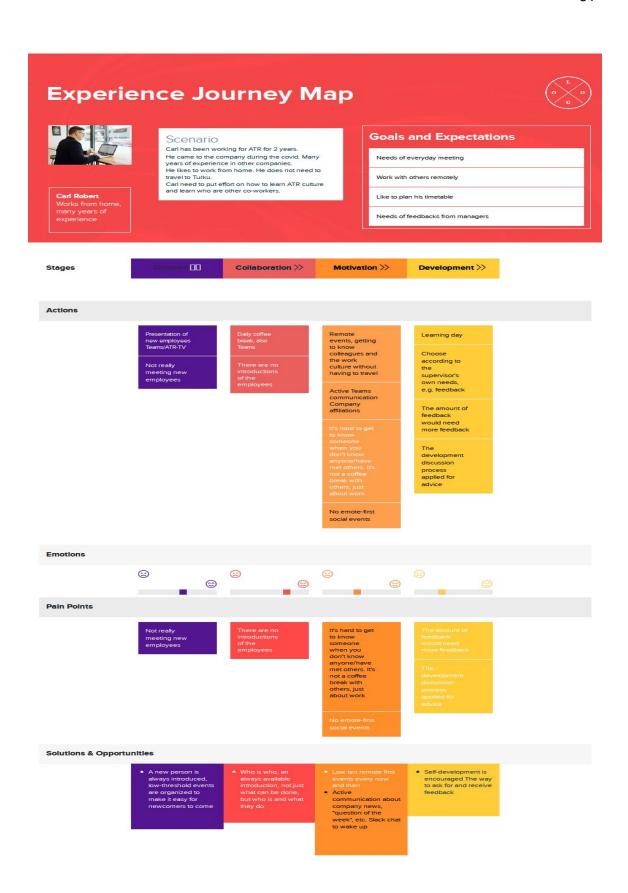


Figure 17 Experience Journey 4 Persona analysing and solutions

5 FINDINGS AND DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Service blueprint: understanding and enhancing customer service

Providing excellent customer service is the cornerstone of any successful business. Service blueprinting is a tool used to understand, improve, and manage the customer experience. Service blueprinting is a visual representation of the steps a customer takes when engaging with a business, from start to finish. It identifies the different touchpoints and interactions that occur along the customer journey, providing insights into how to improve the overall customer experience. A service blueprint is a visual tool used to map out the customer journey and identify the different touchpoints along the way. It is a diagram that shows the flow of service delivery, from the customer's perspective, and is typically divided into several stages. Each stage shows the different interactions between the customer and the business, and the different steps that are taken to deliver the service. These steps may include actions taken by employees, digital or physical elements, and interactions between the customer and the service provider. Service blueprinting has several benefits for businesses looking to improve their customer service. Identification of Pain Points: By mapping out the customer journey, service blueprinting can help identify pain points in the service delivery process. This can help businesses focus their efforts on areas that need improvement, leading to a better overall customer experience. Improved Customer Satisfaction: Service blueprinting can lead to improved customer satisfaction by identifying areas where the customer experience can be enhanced. This can include improving communication with customers, providing more personalized service, or streamlining the service delivery process. Increased Efficiency: Service blueprinting can help businesses identify areas where the service delivery process can be streamlined, leading to increased efficiency and cost savings. (Shostack, 1984)

Better employee training: service blueprinting can help businesses identify areas where employee training can be improved. By understanding the different touchpoints along the customer journey, businesses can train employees to provide better service and improve the overall customer experience. Service blueprinting is a valuable tool for businesses looking to improve their customer service. By mapping out the customer journey and identifying pain points, businesses can focus their efforts on areas that need

improvement, leading to increased customer satisfaction and efficiency. With the insights provided by service blueprinting, businesses can provide a better overall customer experience and stay ahead of the competition. (Shostack, 1984)

The service blueprint in Figure 17 outlines four stages (discovery, design, development and delivery) in the existing company ATR Soft's.

It depicts the actions the new hires took and the emotional journey the applicant went through during the hiring and onboarding process. It also describes the channels utilized in the process and the coordination between the front and backstage departments.

Delivering solutions experiences depends on the supporting infrastructure, which involves utilizing platforms, software, people, time, etc., for every phase. Based on literature reviews, research results, interviews, and online surveys, improvement suggestions are recommended. Recommendations are listed under each stage to enhance employee experience, productivity, and retention and foster successful employment.

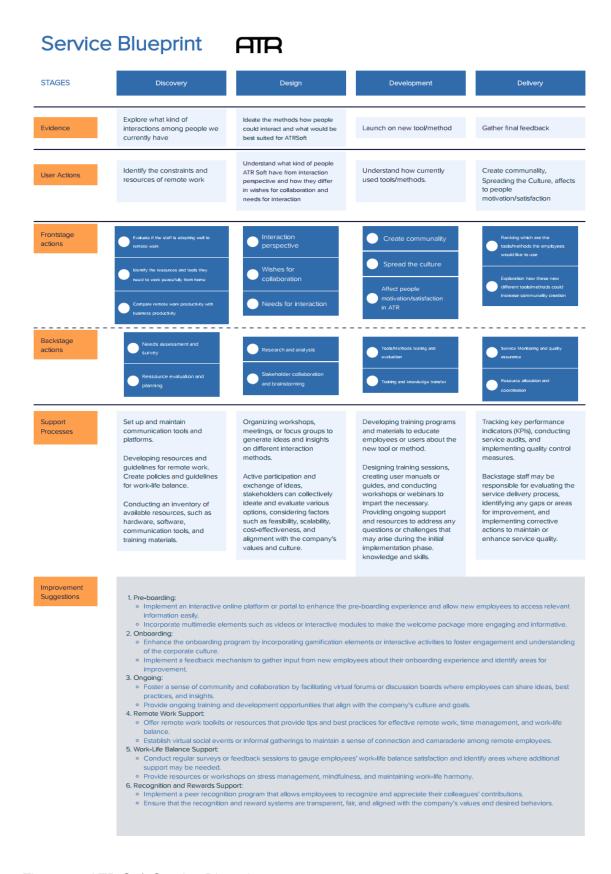


Figure 18 ATR Soft Service Blueprint

6 SUMMARY

In conclusion, this thesis has explored the design of a remote work experience to support employees and managers, using ATR Soft as a case study. The research has highlighted the importance of designing remote work experiences that meet the needs of both employees and managers, and has identified several key factors that contribute to a successful remote work environment, such as effective communication, technology support, and work-life balance.

The study has also utilized service design, design thinking, and co-design methodologies to create a service blueprint that maps out the remote work experience at ATR Soft, identifying pain points and opportunities for improvement. The service blueprint provides a valuable tool for organizations looking to design or improve their remote work experience, by identifying key touchpoints and areas for intervention.

To answer the main research question, three research sub-questions were identified to guide the research:

- 1. How can new employees adopt/learn the corporate culture?
- 2. How to keep high motivation/satisfaction for existing employees from working at home?
- 3. How to ensure that employees are committed to the company?

The research process followed a structured approach known as the double diamond procedure. The initial phase began with an extensive literature review, focusing on remote work, service design, co-design, design thinking, and their roles in fostering open innovation, co-creation, and facilitation. This review provided a solid foundation for understanding the theoretical concepts and frameworks relevant to the study. Following the literature review, the empirical phase of the research commenced. Multiple interview methods were employed to gather rich qualitative data, forming the basis for the analysis. The interviews allowed for in-depth exploration of participants' experiences, perspectives, and insights regarding remote work and its relationship with service design, co-design, and design thinking.

Upon completion of the data collection, a thorough analysis of the results was conducted. This analysis involved identifying recurring themes, patterns, and emerging insights from the interview data. Based on these findings, practical suggestions and recommendations were formulated to address the research objectives and enhance the remote work experience. To provide a visual representation of the research outcomes, a service blueprint was developed, as illustrated in Figure 18. This blueprint presents a comprehensive overview of the suggested improvements and interventions derived from the research findings. It outlines the various touchpoints, processes, and stakeholders involved in the remote work experience, offering a visual roadmap for implementing the proposed changes.

The research process involved a comprehensive literature review, followed by qualitative data collection through interviews. The analysis of the results led to the formulation of actionable suggestions and recommendations, culminating in the creation of a service blueprint to visually represent the proposed enhancements for the remote work experience.

The first sub-question aimed to determine new employees onboarding process. To helping answering this question, the focus group interviews was powerfull method to get answers.

Orientation and onboarding	Companies usually have an orientation or
	onboarding process for new employees.
	This is the first opportunity for new hires
	to get acquainted with the company's
	culture. They will receive information
	about the company's mission, values, and
	expectations. Pay attention to the
	materials provided and actively
	participate in any orientation activities.
Observing and listening	Take the time to observe and listen to
	colleagues and supervisors. Paying
	attention to how they communicate,
	dress, and behave. Observing the
	interactions and dynamics within the
	workplace. This will help to understand

	the informal rules and norms that shape
	the corporate culture.
Seeking clarification	Asking questions and seek clarification
	when unsuring about certain aspects of
	the corporate culture. Reach out to your
	manager, mentor, or colleagues for
	guidance. They can provide insights and
	help to understand the cultural nuances
	better.
Connection with colleagues	Build relationships with colleagues and try
	to establish connections with people from
	different departments or teams. Engage
	in conversations and participate in team-
	building activities. These interactions will
	help to understand the values and
	behaviors that are important within the
	organization.
Embracing core values	Identify the core values of the company
	and align actions and decisions with them.
	Companies often have a set of guiding
	principles or values that define their
	culture. Incorporating these values into
	your work and interactions with others.
Adapting communication style	Paying attention to the communication
	style preferred within the organization.
	Adapt the communication style
	accordingly to fit in with the company's
	culture.
Attending training and development	Take advantage of any training and
programs	development programs offered by the
	company. These programs often provide
	insights into the corporate culture and can
	help to develop the skills necessary to
	succeed within the organization.

Demonstration of flexibility and open-	Being open to new ideas and being willing
mindedness	to adapt to changes. Corporate culture
	can evolve over time, and it's essential to
	demonstrate flexibility and a willingness to
	embrace new ways of doing things.
Leading by example	Once having gained a better
	understanding of the corporate culture,
	leading by example. Upholding the values
	and behaviors that align with the
	company's culture.
Seeking feedbacks	Regularly seekring feedback from
	managers, peers, and other colleagues.
	Asking them how well they are adapting to
	the corporate culture and if there are any
	areas for improvement. Feedback will
	help to fine-tune the approach and ensure
	that tehre are aligning well with the
	organization's values and norms.

Table 2 How can new employees adopt/learn the corporate culture?

The second sub-question aimed to determine motivation and satisfaction. During this research, it was clear that ATR Soft employees were happy to work in the company and some points were clarify and solutions found during the Service design game.

Clear communication	Foster open and transparent
	communication channels with
	employees. Regularlying provide
	updates, clarifying expectations, and
	addressing any concerns they may have.
	Using video calls, team meetings, and
	instant messaging tools to stay connected
	and maintain a sense of collaboration.
Setting clear goals and expectations	Clearly defining goals, deadlines, and
	performance expectations for the remote
	employees. When employees have a

	clear understanding of what is expected of
	them, they can stay motivated and
	focused on their work. Regularly discuss
	progress, provide feedback, and
	recognize achievements. Every
	employees gived the feedbacks that they
	know what are the exptations of their
	work.
Providing autonomy and flexibility	Trusting employees and empowering
	them to manage their work independently.
	Allow for flexible working hours, where
	feasible, and provide autonomy in
	decision-making. When employees have
	a sense of control over their work, it can
	enhance their motivation and job
	satisfaction.
Recognizing and rewarding	Acknowledging and appreciating the
achievements	accomplishments of the remote
	employees. Implementing recognition
	programs or creating opportunities for
	peer recognition. Considering virtual
	celebrations or rewards to make
	employees feel valued and motivated.
Fostering a sense of belonging	Helping remote employees feel
	connected to the organization and their
	colleagues. Encouraging virtual team-
	building activities, social events, and
	informal chats. Using online collaboration
	tools to create opportunities for virtual
	interactions and encouraging employees
	to share personal experiences and
	interests.
Supporting well-being	Prioritizing employee well-being and
	creating a supportive work environment.
	Encouraging work-life balance and

	promoting self-care practices. Providing
	resources for managing stress,
	maintaining physical health, and dealing
	with the challenges of remote work.
Maintaining a positive work culture	Encouraging a positive and inclusiving
	work culture even in a remote setting.
	Fostering a supportive and respectful
	environment where employees feel
	comfortable sharing ideas, asking
	questions, and seeking support. Leading
	by example and promoting positive
	interactions among team members.
Soliciting feedback and acting on it	Regularlying seek feedback from the
	remote employees to understand their
	needs and challenges. Implementing
	changes based on their suggestions to
	improve the remote work experience.
	Showing that their opinions are valued
	can enhance employee satisfaction and
	engagement.
Promoting social connections	Facilitating virtual social interactions
	among employees. Considering
	organizing virtual coffee breaks, team
	lunches, or online games to encourage
	informal conversations and social
	bonding. These interactions help build
	relationships and strengthen the sense of
	belonging. In the other hand, stay
	connected to the office. People need a
	place where they can meet if the want it.

Table 3 How to keep high motivation/satisfaction for existing employees from working at home?

The last sub-question gives the opportunity to the commissioner to get new ideas on what kind of methods/tools the company should invest to ensure that employees are committed to the company.

Unifieding communication	Fostering effective and inclusive
	communication channels that connect
	both remote and in-office employees.
	Utilizing video conferencing, instant
	messaging platforms, and project
	management tools to ensure everyone is
	connected and can collaborate
	seamlessly. Avoiding creating
	communication gaps or excluding remote
	employees from important discussions.
Team building	Organizing regular team-building
	activities that involve both remote and in-
	office employees. This can include virtual
	team lunches, online games, or social
	events. These activities help foster
	relationships, build rapport, and create a
	sense of unity among team members.
Recognition and rewards	Implementing a recognition and rewards
	program that acknowledges the
	achievements of all employees,
	regardless of their location. Ensuring that
	remote employees receive the same level
	of recognition as their in-office
	counterparts. Considering using virtual
	recognition platforms or public forums to
	celebrate and appreciate employee
	accomplishments.
Transparent performance evaluation	Conducting fair and transparent
	performance evaluations for all
	employees, regardless of their work
	location. Seting clear performance

	expectations, provide timely feedback,
	and assessing performance based on
	objective criteria. Using video
	conferencing or virtual meetings for
	performance discussions with remote
	employees.
Flexibility and support	Offering flexibility to both remote and in-
	office employees. Allowing for flexible
	work hours, remote work options, and
	support for work-life balance. Providing
	resources and assistance to remote
	employees to overcome any challenges
	they may face due to their location.
	Ensuring that all employees have access
	to the necessary tools and technology to
	perform their roles effectively.
Collaboration tools and platforms	Utilizing collaboration tools and platforms
	that facilitate seamless collaboration
	between remote and in-office employees.
	This can include project management
	tools, document sharing platforms, and
	virtual whiteboards. These tools enable
	efficient collaboration and ensure that
	remote employees can actively contribute
	to projects.
Regularing check-Ins	Schedule regular check-ins and one-on-
	one meetings with both remote and in-
	office employees. Using these meetings
	to discuss goals, address concerns, and
	provide support. These check-ins
	demonstrate commitment to each
	employee's growth and well-being,
	regardless of their work location.
	Employees were very attracted to join the
	meetings in the office if for exemple was

organize some breakfast or lunch
together. Company just needs to uploads
the events that not become a routine and
people get tired to go to the office.
Reinforcing the company's culture and
values through consistent messaging and
actions. Sharing success stories,
employee testimonials, and examples of
how the company's values are being
upheld. Ensuring that all employees,
regardless of their location, feel
connected to the company's culture and
understand how their work aligns with it.
Soliciting feedback from both remote and
in-office employees on their experience
working in their respective settings.
Actively seeking suggestions for
improvement and implement changes
based on their feedback. Showing that
their opinions are valued and that the
company is committed to creating an
inclusive and supportive work
environment for all employees.

Table 4 How to ensure that employees are committed to the company?

The main research question, how ATR Soft Oy can improve remote work? ATR Soft can enhance remote work by establishing clear communication channels, setting clear expectations and goals, providing adequate technological infrastructure, promoting work-life balance, and fostering virtual collaboration and team building. By ensuring effective communication, defining expectations, and providing the necessary tools and resources, remote employees can stay connected and productive. Encouraging work-life balance and facilitating virtual team interactions helps maintain employee well-being and a sense of belonging. ATR Soft can create a supportive remote work environment that maximizes productivity and engagement while prioritizing the overall well-being of its employees. The findings of this thesis suggest that designing a remote work experience

that supports employees and managers requires a holistic and collaborative approach that takes into account the unique needs and perspectives of all stakeholders involved. By adopting a service design mindset and utilizing tools such as the service blueprint, organizations can create remote work experiences that are more engaging, effective, and fulfilling for everyone involved.

Teleworking, facilitated by advancements in information and communication technologies, has gained prominence in recent years. However, several aspects of this work arrangement remain underexplored. This research proposes several avenues for future investigation, including psychological and social factors, managerial strategies, technological infrastructure, organizational culture and policies, performance and productivity, work-life balance and well-being, as well as legal and ethical considerations. By delving into these areas, researchers can contribute to a deeper understanding of teleworking and provide valuable insights to enhance its implementation and impact.

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Appendix 1 Identify the constraints and resources of remote work, survey and results

Identify the constraints and resources of remote work

Congratulations! You have been working remotely for your company for several months! Now it's time to see how it goes! For many employees, clocking in at work from the kitchen table is a big novelty.

Some will nd it di cult not to see their leaders in person. Others may not be aware of best practices for cybersecurity and remote working. The best way to realize the reality of the situation is to distribute a work survey that asks the right questions, in order to generate the information necessary for the company and the well-being of the employees.

What are the objectives of this questionnaire?

- Evaluate if the staff is adapting well to remote work
- Identify the resources and tools they need to work peacefully from home
- Compare remote work productivity with business productivity

This questionnaire is completely anonymous!

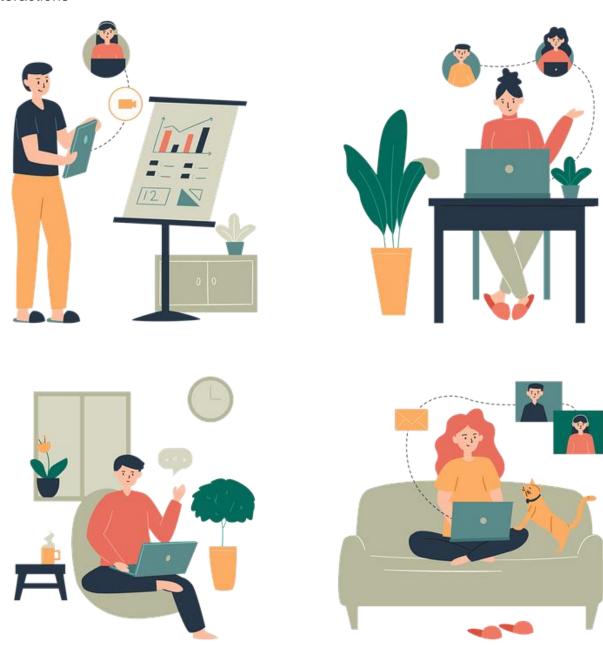


- 1. Evaluate autonomy in remote work Mark only one oval.
 - I know my goals for the week
 - I do not know my goals
- 2. How can we improve communication regarding goals?

2	Evaluate the effectiveness of your remote working
э.	Evaluate the effectiveness of your remote working
	Tick all that apply.
	am able to keep a rhythm/work schedule
	Our communication tools (eg VPN, online access, communications tools) do not interfere with my work.
	I am as productive at home as in the o ce
	Tam as productive at nome as in the o
4.	Are there any tools I need that are missing?
5.	What is your biggest problem with working from home?

Assess the volume and quality of remote interactions with forepersons
Tick all that apply.
 I feel like I get enough help from my foreperson I feel as comfortable with my foreperson as during our face-to-face interactions I am satis ed with the frequency with which I am in contact with my foreperson
How can we improve your interactions with your foreperson?

Interactions



8. Assess the quantity and quality of remote interactions between colleagues

Tick all that apply.

I feel like I can contact my colleagues easily
I feel that my colleagues keep me informed
I am satis ed with the frequency with which I interact with my colleagues

9. How can we improve interactions with your colleagues?

	aluate the quality of remote communication between colleagues in note work
Tick	all that apply.
	I have the impression that the instructions and rules for online meetings are clear
	I know what is expected of me every day
	Our company communicates effectively
Wh	at can we do to improve communication in the company?

12. What can we do to better communicate company expectations?

. Eval	uate the degree of well-being of employees working from home
Tick a	ll that apply.
	I am able to put a clear boundary between work and homel am happy to be able to work from home
. How	can we improve your remote working experience?

Back to the office?



http://youtube.com/watch?

v=mU9VYcQWSOc

•	ployee?
Tick o	all that apply.
emp	No bene t Reduction of stress and fatigue Increased employee autonomy and responsibility A better work/life balance The possibility of reconciling work and health problems More exible work organization our opinion, what can be the disadvantages of remote work fooloyees?
	No downside Feeling lonely Remote management Less recognition A heavier workload The over ow of work time into personal life Other:

17. Are you for remote work?
Mark only one oval.
Yes No
18. If no, why?
19. Have you received remote management training from your company?
Mark only one oval.
Yes
No
20. If No, would you find it useful?
21. What would be the 3 main improvements to be made to sustain remote work in your company?

You are done! Congratulation!



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Google Forms

Identify the constraints and resources of remote work

20 responses

Publish analytics



How can we improve communication regarding goals?

8 responses

We do not set the goals together. I came up with my goals by myself and everyone set happy about them. If no one sets me goals in the first place, no need to communicate them I guess?

Just a note: I form goals for myself, there is no frequent goal setting outside of my worksomeone else has expectations/goals for my work, I do not know those.

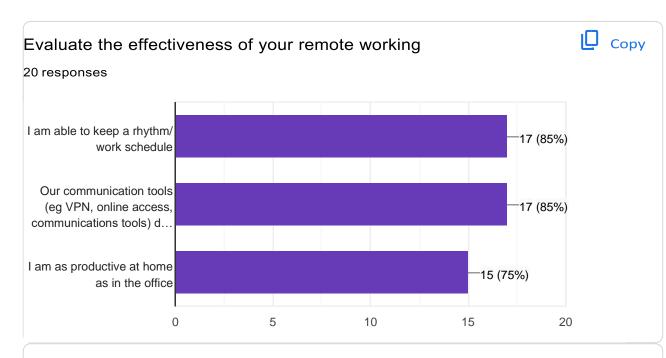
Make sure that employees remains motivated.

Have short weekly meetings where the goals are briefly outlined

'Daily' meeting twice a week with closest team members has been a helpful practice.

Clear goals to achieve

It depends more on the project than the remote work: if the project has set clear goals, easy to follow them whether in the office or working remote. And vice versa, working in office does not help if the goals are not set clearly.



Are there any tools I need that are missing?

10 responses

No

_

Non I can think of.

A chair that provides proper ergonomics.

Small improvements to ergonomics would be nice, but not necessary.

Nothing special

What is your biggest problem with working from home?

14 responses

I enjoy face-to-face interaction, video-calls do not satisfy that need. It is not critical for wellbeing but does play a part in it.

I don't have any problems.

Environment that let's me focus on work and the kind of "mental landscape " to focus a which I get easily at the office. Way too many distractions at home, even if I am alone. unfocused, unproductive and unhappy when working from home. Remote work should be from a "office like" environment or basically anywhere else than my home.

No problems

Lack of socialization.

Missing to meet people face to face. If we have a meeting/call it is only to discuss ab Before we used to speak about hobbies, family, and other non work related topic.

It takes more effort to have even small work-related discussions with colleagues.

Not much communication with other ATR Softers outside my projects

Detaching myself from the "at-work-mindset" after I stop working for the day.

I don't have any single problem, more likely multiple smaller issues with remote work.

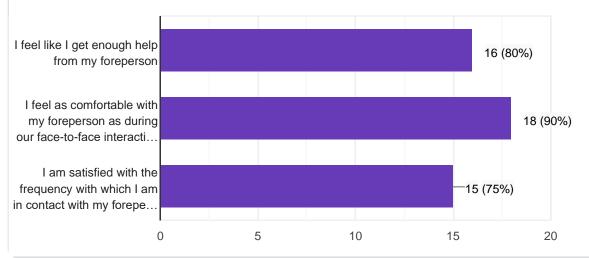
Sometimes loosing motivation when not seeing colleagues. But after we started the prof frequent 'daily' meetings the situation has been a lot better. I can recommend that to as well.

Not really an issue, but staying home all the time.

Sometimes it would be nice to collaborate in same "space" together. In remote work the usually someone who arrange the meeting, someone to present something, agenda, et roles/responsibilities without free discussion/collaboration.

Bad ergonomy

Assess the volume and quality of remote interactions with foreperson Copy 20 responses



How can we improve your interactions with your foreperson?

12 responses

Cannot think of anything. I find the dynamic working well and improving with time.

I don't have need for that. I consider having responsible for communication myself also needs two persons. If there isn't enough interaction, I can contact my foreperson.

Frequent 1-on-1 meetings at the office, lunches and similar face to face encounters

Communication has not changed as compared to office workwhen we started remote no specific needs regarding remote

It would be important to arrange face to face meeting time to time.

I'm fine with the current situation

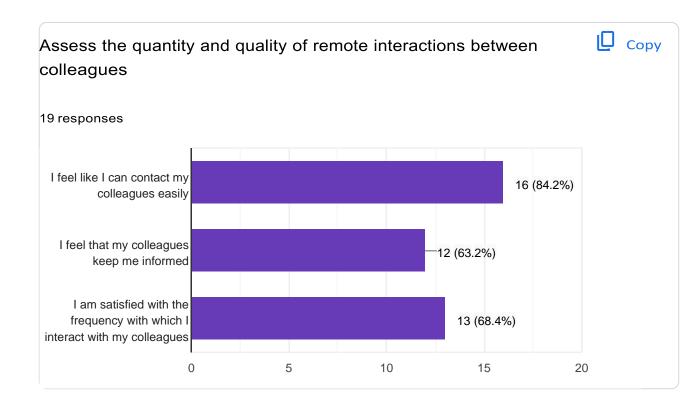
It might be useful to schedule meeting regularly. Like once in two weeks or once per m

Currently no need for improvement. We decided on frequent discussions with my forep after some time of all-remote working. That has been helpful.

Creating more time.

planned meetings in constant intervals, also without strict agenda (tavoitekeskustelut,

I have been actively seeking for interaction and I have enough of it.



How can we improve interactions with your colleagues?

11 responses

Cannot think of anything good. I've been going more to the office and that has helped. Having some live interaction also makes it easier to contact people by other means.

No need for this.

Work more together at the office

There could be more activity in Teams

Some more possibilities for small-talk might be good (coffee break meetings etc.)

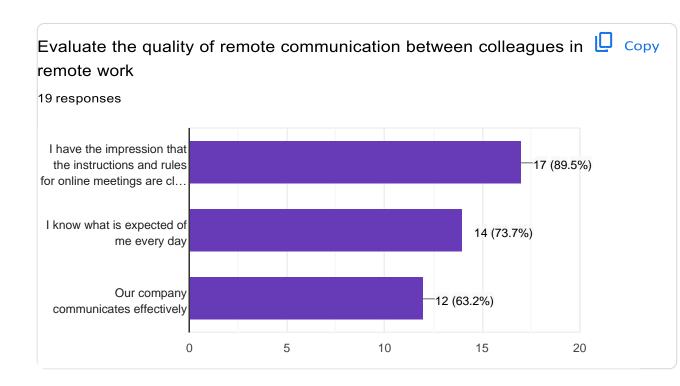
As mentioned earlier due to remote work, interaction with colleagues is only limited to work related issues. Earlier we used to discuss various topic (non work related) now that is over. Remote work has some clear benefits but also negative aspects. We are working with people in our team only, for me I only discuss with 5-6 people (Max) we are 65 people. Everyone has his/her own island

Encourage teams to have regular short dailies or weeklies. People could discuss what they have been working, what they are currently working on and what do they plan to work on.

I feel like we need at least bi-monthly meetings face to face. It is easier to communicate remotely with a person that you also see in person, even if very rarely.

We could have a frequent remote 'coffee' meeting with all team members (once a month or something), to just chat and keep up with how others are doing. Now we just have strictly business meetings and that affects team spirit. Also company-wide it could be nice. We have company-wide remote-coffee-meeting-invitation every day but I don't want to do it every day and it's only a few people who seem to be there. If it was only once a week or once a month, I'm sure more people would be interested. Company meeting is too formal for free discussion. weekly meetings, teams-channels, etc

It is more difficult to interact with colleagues, that I am not already familiar with. Some easy and informal way of "meeting" colleagues online would help with getting to know people better.



What can we do to improve communication in the company?

9 responses

Encourage people to communicate more. One big thing is that there is way too much 1-on-1 discussion which actually affect the whole group. It is highly inefficient and information gets lost when these discussions are not done as a group

Be more inspiring, be more fun sometimes, show that it is fun to get work done together

-

Arrange a day when people would come to office.

Stick to one communication channel: Teams in our case.

Personally I felt that my on-boarding was very ad hoc, and two years later I still learn about company benefits that I have previously complained about not being available for employees. I think the current approach with being handed a word-document and being told "read this" is not effective. We also have (had?) a buddy system that was basically in effect for less than a day in my case. Maybe this could be expanded upon?

Teams is used as communication channel and I like it, but sometimes it's difficult to know where to find the latest information on things. When there are new posts, older ones get 'lost' quite quickly, and things get a bit messy really easily. Maybe we should have a Confluence page for official information, and Team posts would just refer to that page? 'Hey all, we updated the remote work recommendations, go check it out... link here> " Then you would always get the latest information when checking the page. Something like that. There could be own page for IT, happenings, etc. a little bit like the old intranet, but now Teams-messages would also help to notice and find things easier.

I think that there has been notably less communication about general things than before. Quantity is not better than quality, but it comes to mind, that there might be issues with something.

Again, these issues relate much more to the general ways of working than remote work. Even if we all were in the office, it depends on the project, whether I am well informed of expectation set for me or other company communication.

What can we do to better communicate company expectations?

9 responses

Main thing we are missing are concrete goals for people. Measurable goals attached t schedule

Concrete expectations, and it would be good to see how we are progressing e.g. on gr

-

We should arrange company meeting from office instead of remote. Then people could and meet each other. It could be that we have the company meeting and then some relatogether where we can laugh, play,... TOGETHER. Even bring some food to office.

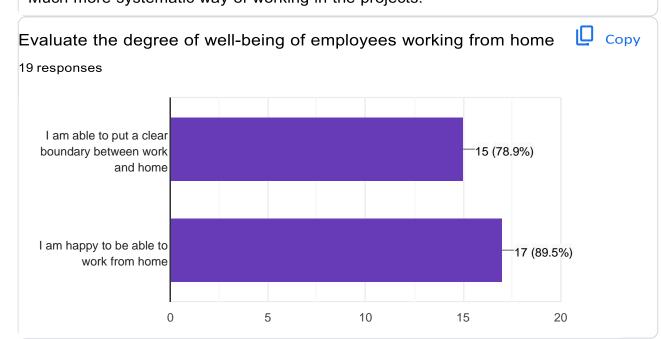
It's enough to bring them up in company meetings and in steering group minutes.

Monthly company meetings and making sure everyone attends. If a consultant is unabmake an hour available each month something is seriously wrong.

Same answer as above. I'm not sure what the question means.

repetition in company meetings etc

Much more systematic way of working in the projects.



How can we improve your remote working experience?

10 responses

I like occasionally working remotely, some tasks are easier to do in peace at home. Remote working has gone well and I do not see need for improvement. Just more office days, with hopefully several others in the office to scratch that social itch.

Offer a remote working space that is not at my home ⑤ I live in my home, I work somewhere else

Just allow it to be done 100 %, do not force to go to office

Ensure that employees do not stay all day long at home without going outside (e.g. for non related work). Get away from home is important.

Keep allowing me to work remotely

Regular contact with my foreperson has improved my remote working experience. My current laptop is too unwieldy for me to actively change working locations and positions, which could improve ergonomics, but this is provided by the client so not much that ATR can do about that.

I used to work mostly remote already before Covid. I can tell that my remote working experience has already improved significantly, compared to before Covid. It's no longer assumed that everyone is at the office, so there's much more information available.

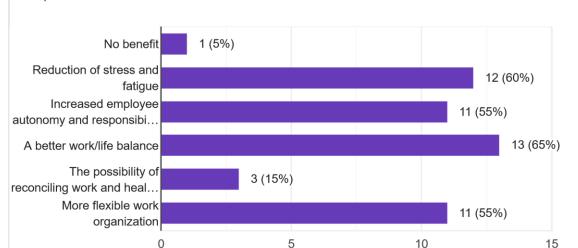
painting sessions etc agenda-free meetings

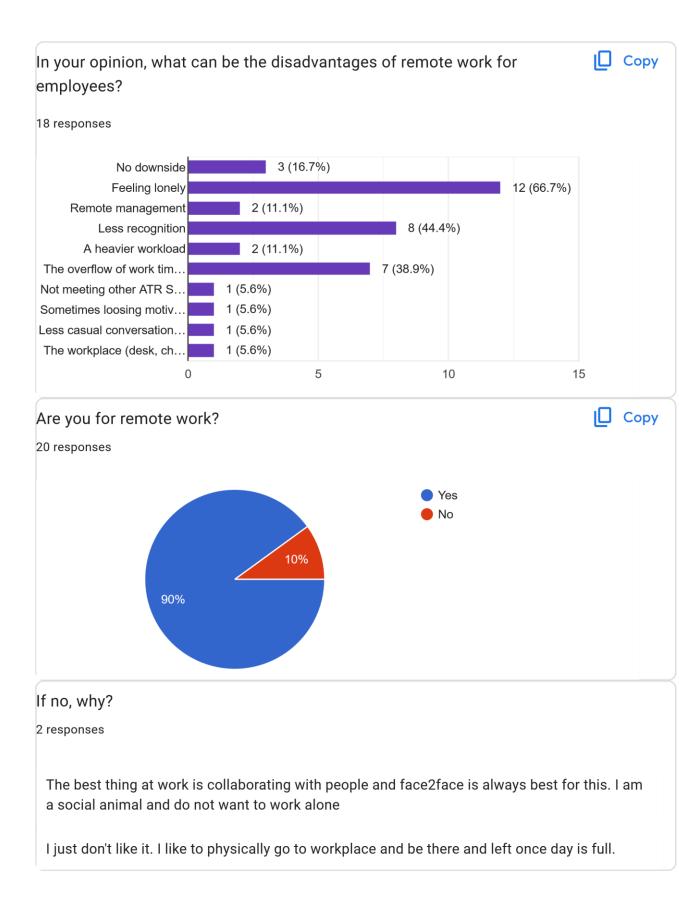
I am quite happy working from home (or where ever I happen to be)

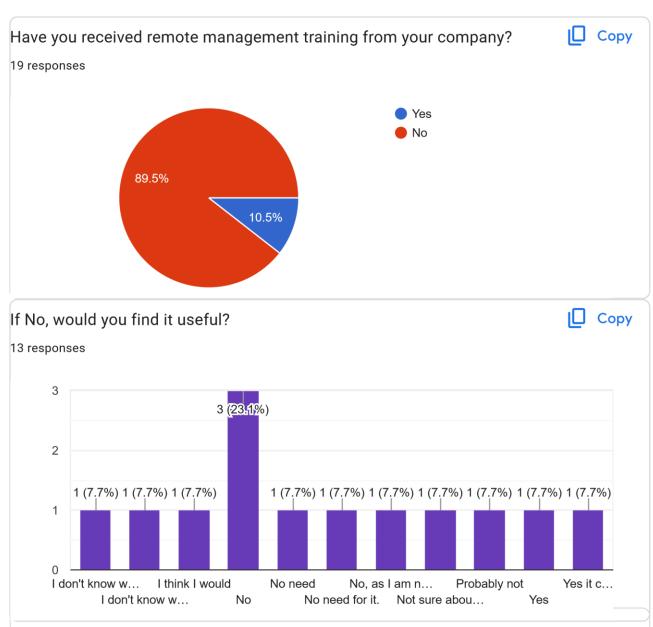
In your opinion, what are the advantages of remote work for the employee?



20 responses







What would be the 3 main improvements to be made to sustain remote work in your company?

9 responses

Agree some common office day(s). Then you could really scratch that social itch at the office and enjoy peaceful working at home when working remotely. Cannot think of anything else.

1) Set goals and communicate about them clearly, this promotes autonomy. 2) encourage and even "force" people to communicate in remote groups. 3) make sure forepersons have frequent 1-on-1 meetings (weekly or monthly)

1. Share more understanding what everyone is doing, 2. ensure no-one is working totally alone, 3. Inspiring future of ATR

-

- 1. Increase Cultural/Sports voucher to make sure that employees do not stay at home all daylong.
- It would be important to move into the hybrid mode (Home/Office) so that we can keep thecompany's corporate culture and the ATR Spirit. The danger of being at home is that on the long term we could lose more employees, we have already lost many of them recently.
- 3. Make sure that new employees are not left alone. I can see it as a very big challenge foranyone joining our company now.
 - 1. Make sure no one is feeling lonely, left alone with their problems or that they feel their workis unappreciated.
 - 2. Keep allowing flexible meetings: people could come to the office or participate remotely.
 - 3. Improve the sense of community

More contact, support employees home office environments, show and tell at least between foreperson and employee if the foreperson is not in the same team

It all goes around covid-19 and getting back into normal social situation. I think that it is really hard to think of any while the situation is still what it is.

Encouringing people more to attend to informal communication online, providing better work facitilies at home, putting much effort on creating a firm "ATR way of working" in the projects and stronger project management in general

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Appendix 2 Group interview, interactions with ATR SOFT



Interactions with ATR

ATR meeting and questions 17.10 14.00-15.00

How do you feel today?

Ice breaker

 https://docs.google.com/forms/d /e/1FAIpQLSdEl 5dAEzP8botZQG Qg49eMH99Kx0CovWpSvrYpyHN GxyebQ/viewform?usp=sf_link



On the menu today....

Analysing Organizational culture

People and communication tools and methods

People motivation and satisfaction

Pay and Benefits

Oriented

Oriented

Profile

Oriented

Oriented

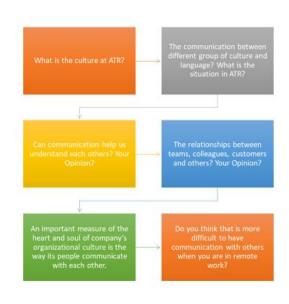
Strategy

Responsibility

Advancement

Advancement





People and communication tools/methods

How do you interact with other colleagues/foreperson?

Tell us what are the best tools/methods that you are using for the communication.

Tell us what are the most annoys tools/methods that you must use.

How often do you interact with others? Do you talk only about work?

Do you have enough feedbacks from your foreman?

Do you need more face to face contact?

How is the relation with customers/suppliers? Is it easy to build? Do you have enough tools/methods to take/keep contact?

People motivation and satisfaction How do you define recognition?

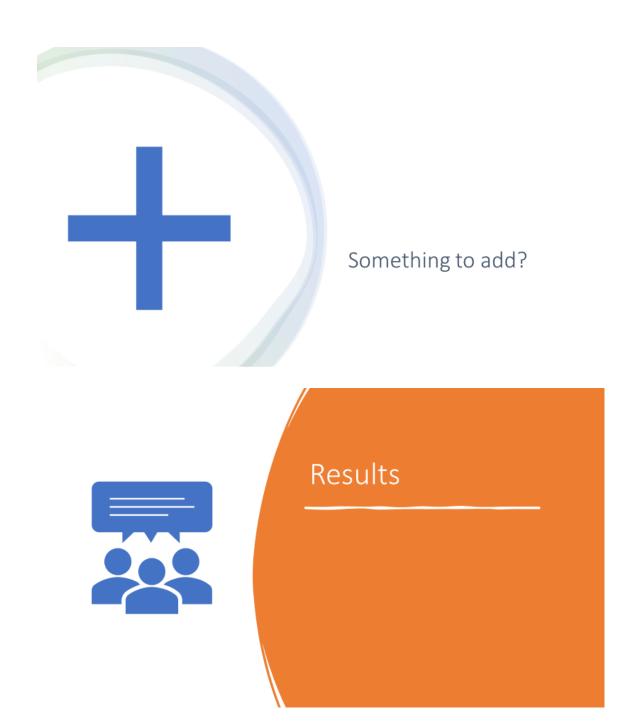
How do you feel as an ATR employee?

Do you think that ATR is an attractive company for recruitment?

What things you value in ATR and that makes you stay in ATR?

What should change in your regular workday that would increase your satisfaction/motivation?

Do you feel as a driver or a follower regarding the development of the company?



Analysing Organizational culture

Difficulty for everybody to answer the question what is the

No communication problem, in English or Finnish. But a small preference for Finnish. Also, some difficulty to switch languages when discussion start in Finnish and then English.

The relation between colleagues are good. Each team is using there own tools to communicate.

No problem to have discussion or contact with others vie remote work. It sounds easier to communicate via Teams. For example to remember the discussion and follow the presentation.

People and communication tools/methods

Different tools in the teams but Teams software is the one that company is using.

One team is using a specific tool to communicate and were not happy with the functions of Microsoft team.

Work discussion are going well but people were missing unformal discussion (Everyday talk) but in the other hand, they can easily interact via chat or calls.

Everyone got enough feedbacks.

No need on more face to face but everybody agree that it is nice to come sometimes to the office (morning breakfast)

It is easy to work from home and now it is strange to go to the office.

People motivation and satisfaction Everybody is happy to work for ATR.

The freedom of everyone was very positive. No big rules and the possibility to choose what people want to do is the best in ATR.

It seems that ATR is an attractive company but everybody wish that the company grow up and become bigger.

Everybody wants be a part of it and participate on that.

We observe also that after Corona, there is more possibilities for employee to choose company, before limited in Turku but because of remote work, can work in Helsinki for ex.

People don't feel well when they go to the office because it looks empty. If 60 persons can go and 10 are in the office, feel that why I am there?

One team decide to go once per week to the office, nice to have face to face discussion

Difficulty to answer on the question, what can increase the motivation and job satisfaction.

What's next?

Be a part of! What Some different communication are the goals of ATR? aspects can be Tools for everyone, which one? good to develop Arrange some Possibility of more ATR bigger company, goals? meetings/events at adapted and useful the office. office? How ATR can give Explore the culture See the real situation on to be of ATR. Do the and define message go until attractive company. motivation. employees? ATR has changed a lot but in which way?

Appendix 3 Service design game, ATR Soft The dream game

Welcome to ATR Design game!

The aim is to develop communication in ATR and develop collaboration and interaction between each others, spread the company culture, work motivation/satisfaction. What makes a good communication strategy? What are some of the biggest communication barriers, and how to overcome them? These are just a few questions we will be covering in this game.

YOU will decide what is next!

Dreaming, waiting, and talking about it is great to validate an idea. It's a test to see if you're actually going to go get it. Because if you're actually going to go get it, you're going to have to take the next small step towards it. Break down big leaps into small action items, check them off, show off what you've done so far, and clear the way for what you're going to do next.

The impact of communication on the overall business success is bigger than ever before. It impacts the organization's reputation, employees' engagement, and the overall business continuity.

COMMUNICATION AND BUSINESS CULTURE, THE STRATEGY FOR ATR

Communication culture in the workplace can be defined as a **way your organization engages** with the people, shares information, drives conversations, and encourages employees' share of voice. The communication culture defines how employees communicate with each other, as well as the ways managers communicate with their teams.

Why Communication and company culture are important?

Internal communication, however, can be much more complex and have many different goals such as:

- Improve employee engagement
- Align team members with strategic business goals
- Drive successful change management and digital transformation projects
- Keep employees safe and secure
- Facilitate knowledge sharing



1. General Administrative Details

- The game can accommodate 2 to 100 players.
- The game duration is estimated to be between 1 to 3 hours.

2. Introduction

- The aim of the game is to foster effective communication and collaboration within the company, while also promoting the company culture and improving work motivation and satisfaction.
- The game serves as a platform to explore what makes a good communication strategy, identify common communication barriers, and discuss strategies to overcome them.
- ATRSoft, the dream project, is designed to provide an engaging and enjoyable workshop experience for company employees, enabling them to focus on real-life scenarios and make informed decisions.

3. Summary of the Game System and Objectives

- Players form teams, and each team is assigned a persona.
- The objective is for teams to thoroughly understand their assigned persona and answer questions related to that persona.
- Players move their persona on the board game and respond to the prompts on the dream cards, which cover four different categories: motivation, onboarding, collaboration, and development.

- Each team must identify two positive points and two pain points for each category.
- Help cards are available to provide additional ideas and inspiration.
- Once the team reaches their goal, they must brainstorm ways to transform pain points into positive points.
- The primary focus is to enhance interaction and foster a strong company culture among the participants.

4. Components of the Game

The game includes:

- 1 game board
- 1 pawn
- 1 dice
- 8 help cards
- 4 dream cards (one for each category)
- 4 persona cards
- 4 solution and opportunities cards

5. Set-Up

- Form teams with a minimum of two players per team.
- Distribute the persona cards to each team and begin the game.
- When the pawn lands on a specific category (e.g., motivation), the team must fill out the corresponding dream card, identifying two positive points and two pain points related to that category.
- Continue playing and follow the instructions on the game board.

6. Specific Game Structure

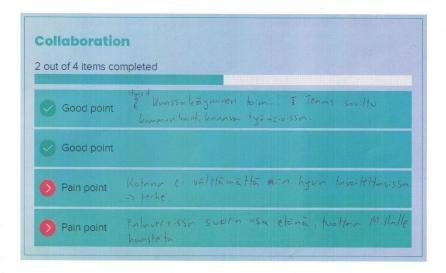
- Encourage frequent discussions among team members during the game. The objective is to facilitate dialogue about real-life company situations and generate creative ideas through conversation.

7. Ending the Game

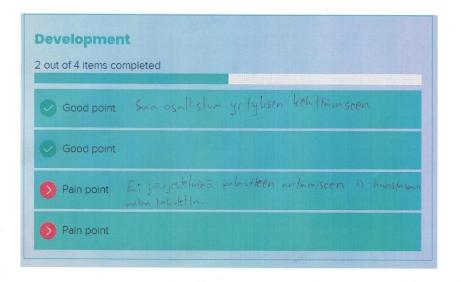
- The game concludes when all the dream cards have been completed and each team has presented their strategies for transforming pain points into positive points. This allows teams to share their findings and insights with others.

These revised rules provide clearer instructions and objectives for the game, ensuring a more engaging and productive experience for the participants.

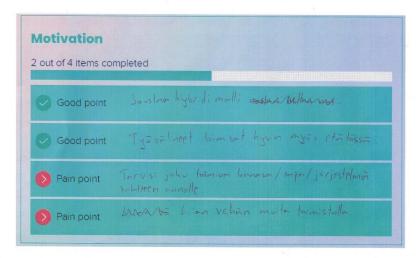
Pilla Anderson



Nilla Anderson

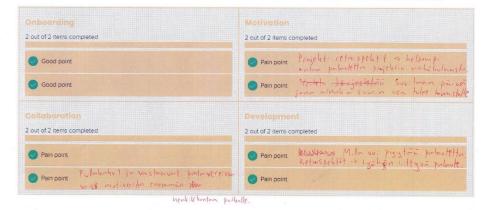


Mille Hastrion

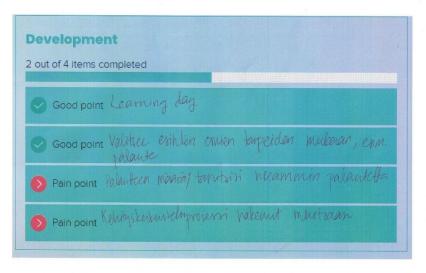




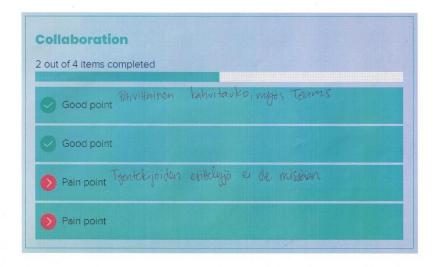
What is the problem?
Why is the problem important?
When did the problem arise and when does it need to be solved?
How did the problem happen?
Where is the problem occurring?
Who does the problem affect?



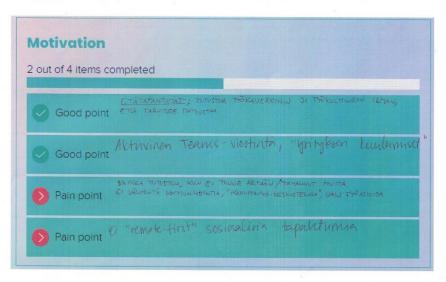
Corl Robert



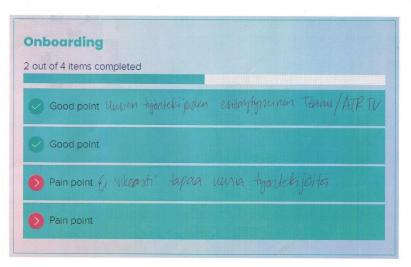
Corl Robert



Corl Robert

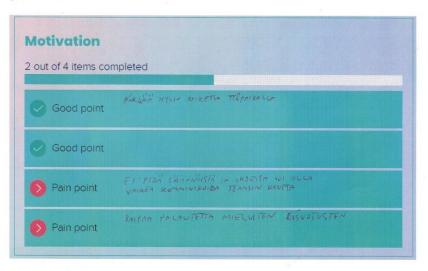


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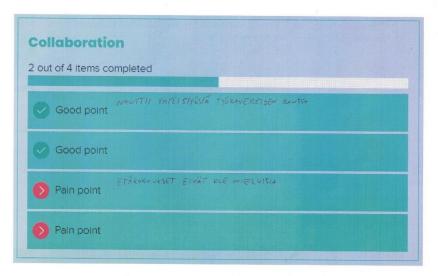




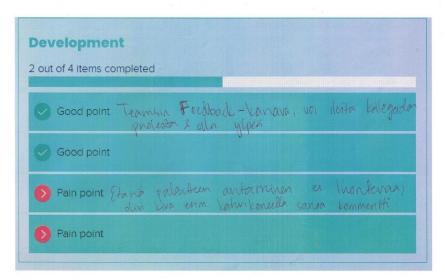
Robin Nolinen



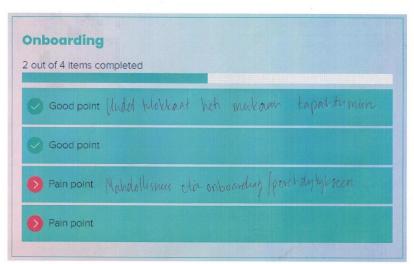
Robin Polinen



Robin Nalinen

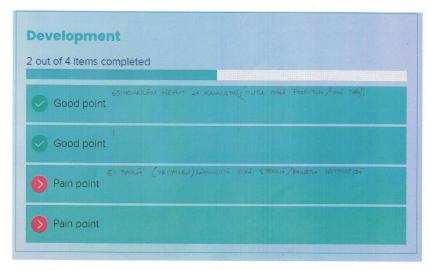


Rohin Rolinen

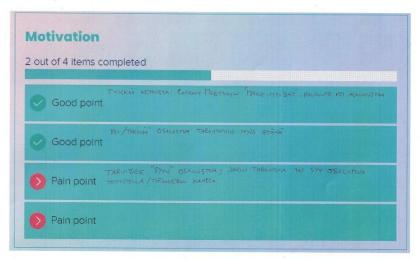




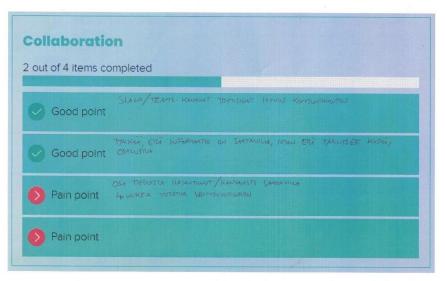
Johnny Claude



Johnny Monde



Johnny Claule



Johnny Cloude

