



LEISURE TIME OPTION AND ON ALTERNATIVE WORKING TIME ARRANGEMENTS

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PROJECT & QUESTIONS

➤ Research Team: Michael Soder (AK),
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➤ Project: 2016 – 2017

➤ Main Questions:

„How did companies or employees manage to implement new and reduced working time models“

„What are the subjective experiences of employees with the leisure option“

METHODS & CASES

- **Collective case-study approach** (Creswell et al. 2007; Yin 2003; Baxter & Jack 2008; Luck et al. 2006; Stake 2000)
- **Multiple data sources** (7 companies, 21 interviews, company and union reports)
- **Broad variation in key variables** (firm size, business stage, economic sector)

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|---------|--------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Sector | service | service | service | prod. | prod. | prod. | prod. |
| Business stage | start-up | start-up | growing | mature | mature | mature | mature |
| Employees | < 50 | <50 | <500 | <1000 | <500 | >1000 | >1000 |
| h Reduction | 8.50 h | 2.50 h | | 1.93 h | 3.60 h | 4.10 h | 60 h p.a. |
| Wage compensation | 100% | 0% | 0% | 50% | 50% | 75% | 0% |
| Implem. | 2010 | 2014 | 1983 | 2006 | 2001 | 2005ff | 2014 |

KEY MESSAGES I: STARTING POINTS

- **Recognition of specific administrative or organizational problems**
 - Increasing sick leaves & health problems
 - Growing job dissatisfaction & staff turnover
 - Blurred lines between leisure and work
 - Issues of work-life balance

KEY MESSAGES II: SUPPORTING CONDITIONS

■ **Employee perspective:**

- Desire for higher flexibility and autonomy
- Value Change (subjective valuation leisure time > income)

■ **Firm perspective:**

- Prospects of higher productivity and cost reductions
- Attraction of skilled workers through improved company image
- Creation of positive working atmosphere

■ **Other factors:**

- Powerful works council
- Existence of institutional arrangements

KEY MESSAGES III: A SUCCESSFUL REALISATION

■ **Implementation process:**

- Democratic processes: deliberation, votes
- Provision of information
- Pilot projects with probation periods

■ **„Success factors“:**

- Financial ‚cushioning‘, e.g. (partial) wage compensation
- Experiences during test/pilot phase helped to diffuse resistances

TO SUM-UP PART 1:

- Companies and employees face different conditions (according to business stage, sector, blue- vs. white-collar workers)...
- ... there is no „one-size-fits-all“ approach (Differences between sectors, cluster or companies)
- Investigated company cases can provide some interesting blueprints of “how it can be done”

However, all of the cases are situated in the high income, high-skilled sectors.

EXAMPLE: THE LEISURE OPTION IN THE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT 2013 OF THE ELECTRICS/ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY IN AUSTRIA

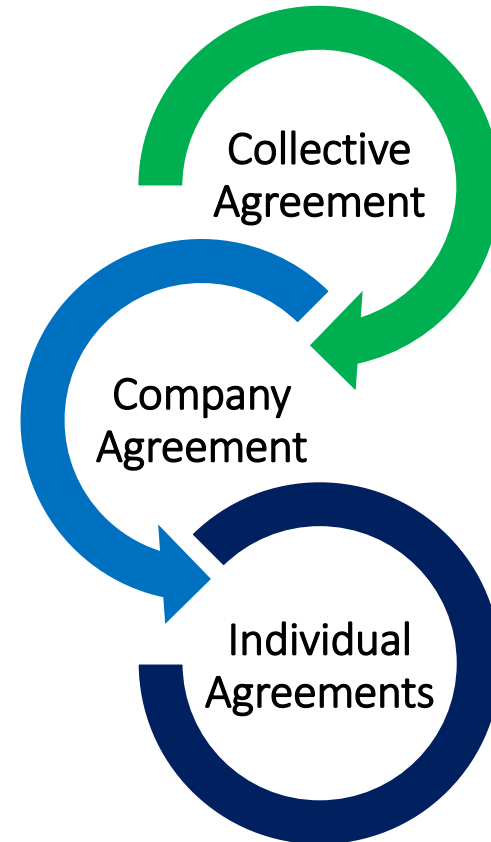


THE LEISURE OPTION: HOW TO?

3% **pay raise** or additional **leisure time**
(approx. 5h/month or 60h/year)

Agreement between **works council**
and **company management**

Agreements between **employees**
and **company management**



THE LEISURE OPTION: FIRST EXPERIENCES I

How do employees use the leisure option?

- Mostly for single days, e.g. long weekends, or combined with regular holidays
- Some accumulate over time (for early retirement or sabbatical)
- Time mostly used for family and children, also for sports, weekend trips, recreation

Implications on well-being and work-life balance

- Positive effects, mostly due to additional autonomy and flexibility in time management, but also due to recreational effects

THE LEISURE OPTION: FIRST EXPERIENCES II

General Experiences:

Well received in the sector and high acceptance among employees

Barriers:

Job security and the leisure option



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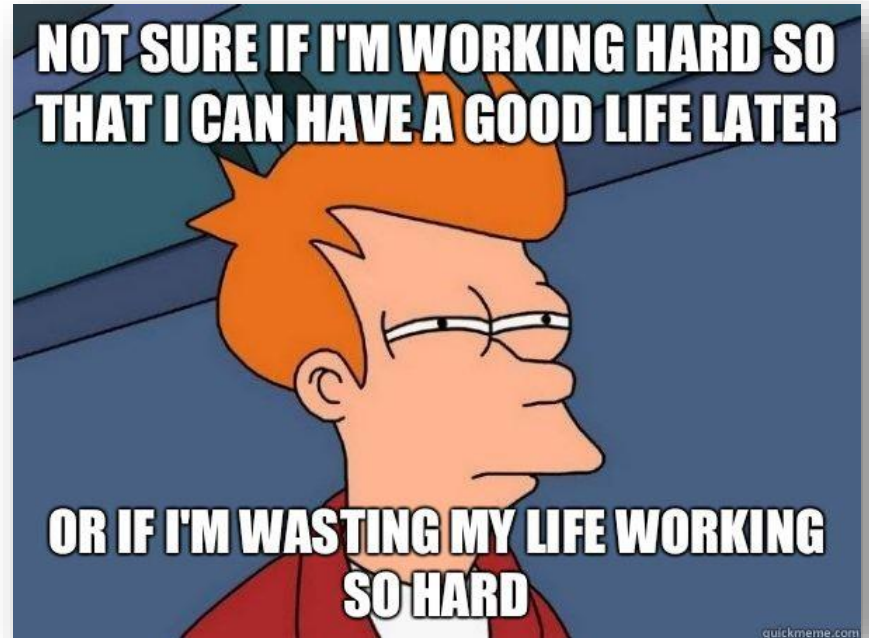
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