

Outside point of view



Barbara Hochstrasser is the chief physician at the Privatklinik Meiringen in Switzerland. Photo: private

More energy and greater engagement

Feeling appreciated **reduces stress** among employees.

Employment contracts generally stipulate an employee's wages and additional benefits, as well as the tasks assigned to him or her. However, there is more to it than that. Other things are expected as part of this employee/employer relationship. I like to call it the "psychological employment contract." It involves values such as social inclusion and acceptance, occupational health and safety, the opportunity to develop and grow, and having a personally satisfying job. People always need to establish a balance between the effort they put in to something and the benefit they receive from doing it. This also applies to their job. If these are out of balance, it can lead to anxiety and stress.

I feel that one particular insight is important for employers to keep in mind: You cannot motivate employees, they have to do that themselves. However, an employer can help here by creating attitudes and an atmosphere at the workplace that provides the encouragement employees need. In particular, this involves focusing on what are known as "soft" factors: appreciation, respect, friendliness, transparency, and communication.

Individually tailored management

Positive motivation acts to boost employee engagement in three ways. First, the employees are more active and engaged, meaning that they are more willing to contribute. Second, they work with a sense of purpose, enthusiasm, and pride, and are willing to face challenges. Third, they concentrate fully on their jobs. Employees like these are highly productive and less susceptible to stress.

Problems occur when employees lose motivation and feel out of balance. One sign of this is when a staff member frequently calls in sick. Supervisors must be able to identify the source of the stress and take measures to relieve it. A long-term imbalance between the effort they put in and the benefit this yields can lead to complete exhaustion, or the dreaded "burnout" syndrome.

An individually tailored management style can help supervisors improve this situation. Highly motivated employees define their balance between effort on the job and the benefits they receive in a way that serves both themselves and the company. The important thing is to give employees responsibility and autonomy, and, last but not least, the chance to enjoy their work. Supervisors should strive to be honest, communicate openly, and to lead by example.

Dr. Barbara Hochstrasser specializes in psychiatry and psychotherapy. As chief physician at Meiringen, she **set up a special burnout unit** and works on developing and researching therapeutic techniques. She is also president of the Swiss Experts Network on Burnout.

What are your thoughts about our issue on *networks*?

Write to us, send us an e-mail, or post a comment in the Bosch-Zünder Forum.

Addresses can be found in the **contact details on page 2**



Making life more comfortable

"Is the technology in your home intelligently networked?" We asked you this question in a survey on Bosch-Zünder online. Overall, 13 percent of you answered "yes" (see page 4). Many of the 1,810 people surveyed left comments. Below, you can see a sampling of them from around the world.

Cutting energy costs when rooms aren't in use

For the most part, I use intelligent home technology to control the lights, adjust the blinds, and turn on the heat. The system's combination of motion detectors and timers makes it possible to significantly reduce energy costs when rooms are not in use or when no one is at home.

Marcus Thyssen, Mannheim, Germany

No need to turn on the washing machine by remote control

I never feel the need to operate my washing machine by remote control. However, for home security systems such as cameras or alarms, remote control might be a really good option.

Matus Ilgo, Prague, Czech Republic

Operating cameras and alarm systems with a smartphone

I'm on the road a lot on business, so just being able to adjust my home thermostat using my smartphone is extremely useful and convenient. I also use my smartphone to operate my home security cameras as well as my alarm system.

Preston Spinks, Atlanta, United States

Useful in industrial buildings, office complexes, and shopping centers

Technology for intelligent networking is primarily found in office complexes, shopping centers, as well as industrial buildings, where they promise to generate

significant energy savings. I have yet to see comparable applications developed specifically for residential homes or apartments.

Vinay Lohar, Bangalore, India

One click for more free time

I don't use these networked technologies yet, but I'm convinced that they will be available in every household in the future. It would be very convenient to be able to start the washing machine or turn on the heat via my smartphone before I even get home. The ability to complete everyday and routine tasks with one click means more free time.

Ricardo Xavier, Braga, Portugal

Networked devices are extremely expensive in Brazil

I don't have the money for something like that. I live in Brazil, and networked devices are extremely expensive here. That's why most people here don't bother to learn about them.

Leonardo Scaburi Reinol, Pomerode, Brazil

The dream of controlling your air conditioner or windows from the road

For a long time, I've dreamed of being able to control my air conditioner, my heaters, my lights, or even my windows with my smartphone. That would make life a lot easier for me.

Yang Kong, Wuxi, China

Infrastructure will be one of the greatest obstacles

From what I know, this technology hasn't quite been perfected yet, and at the moment it can only hint at its future potential. One of the greatest obstacles to its wide-scale use will be putting the necessary infrastructure in place.

Daryl Johnson, Worcester, United Kingdom

Snapshot



Marc Schäfer from the Rutesheim office has a soft spot for Africa. The employee of the Emissions Sensors Production Planning project group has visited the continent many times. At the turn of the year, Schäfer traveled through Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda. At a bus stop in

Rwanda, he noticed a Bosch advertisement. Africa is a market with great potential for Bosch, and for this reason, the company is constantly expanding its presence on the continent. Most recently, the regional subsidiary Robert Bosch North Africa was established in Casablanca.



"Expect to hear a lot more from me"

The RAPutation song contest gives young musicians a political stage and the chance to be heard by politicians

Up-and-coming rapper Drob Dynamic still can't believe that he won the "RAPutation" competition. His response: "Man! Praise the Lord! Unreal!" Drob Dynamic will now have the chance to produce his own track, with the help of renowned rap producers like 7inch and Melbeatz and rap heavyweight Fard. It's an opportunity that might launch his career. "Thank you so much! You're going to hear a lot more from me," he promises.

Berliner Robert Andjelkovic, a.k.a. Drob Dynamic, has been dreaming of becoming a successful rapper since his early 20s. And he not only has the voice for the job, but he also has a message. "It's a real honor for me that so many people like my lyrics, and it would be great if a few people would take a closer look at what I have to say about the government and politics."

"Message to Merkel"

RAPutation looks for the best political rappers in Germany to give them the chance to promote their art, their creativity and their lyrics. The competition is part of the Robert Bosch Stiftung's "You have the power" competition, which uses modern methods to get young people interested in political

issues. The film production company UFA was put in charge of organizing the event. This year, RAPutation was honored with Europe's CIVIS media prize.

A total of 250 applications were submitted, and the ten best were assigned a series of musical tasks. A "Message to Merkel" was the first task, followed by "Put your finger on the pulse of history" and "Your election campaign ad for 2013!" The jury included Fard, an Iranian-German rapper who stormed to second place on the German charts with his album "Bellum et pax." Fard knows that to create a rap hit it takes flow, a style all your own, good technique, and extreme content - that's what really scores points. In addition to the jury, people were allowed to vote online for the rapper they felt best fit these criteria. The videos received well over 300,000 hits on YouTube.

Drob Dynamic submitted his track "Wir alle sind es leid" ("Sick and Tired"), which



Drob Dynamic fires up the audience in Berlin. Photos: Anita Back

The video on YouTube:



"Kreuzberg was crying out as the rents kept getting higher and higher, big shot investors bought our homes and flipped them to outsiders, just to make a little dough."

blames Berlin's politicians for not doing anything to stop the gentrification in his native Berlin district of Kreuzberg. The spike in rents drove Drob Dynamic out of Kreuzberg and into nearby Neukölln. The video shows him on the streets of his old neighborhood: "Ladies and gentlemen, may I present: gentrification (...) See how the man has set his sights on us/For if you ain't got the cash, time to pack and dash."

Politicians are impressed

Drob Dynamic won the jury over with his performance and his lyrics. Fard gave it a thumbs-up, but said he'd like to see the rapper "be a little more aggressive." The young musicians performed their songs for German politicians, including former Bundestag President Wolfgang Thierse and Hans-Gert Pötering, the former president of the European Parliament. "The politicians were impressed with the artistic features and political content of the songs," says Anna Moll, managing editor of "You have the power." "Meeting face-to-face helped break down barriers on both sides," she added. Some politicians offered the young artists an internship at the Bundestag or the opportunity to work on their next election campaign. *ku*

When entire schools are facing burnout

The Robert Bosch Stiftung is sponsoring ten schools in Berlin's disadvantaged areas

Sometimes, it all just gets to be too much. Stress at work and at home, feeling overwhelmed - suddenly, you can no longer function. When burnout is on the horizon, pulling the emergency brake is the only solution. Then comes therapy and rest. But what can be done when an entire school is on the brink of burning out?

Increasing numbers of schools in big cities are reaching the limits of their abilities to cope. Many students are lacking the necessary language skills and have no prospects for the future. Their families can't provide them with the support they need, and that has an effect on schools. Teachers are overwhelmed and are often absent from work. The school finally reaches a point where it simply can no longer function.

Therapy for these schools comes in the form of "School Turnaround." For the first

time, the Robert Bosch Stiftung and the Berlin Senate's Department of Education, Youth, and Science are sponsoring ten schools in some of Berlin's most disadvantaged areas that can no longer fulfill their educational mandate. The elementary and secondary schools have all the warning signs of schools in trouble. Enrollment is down at the schools, students are often absent, there are many dropouts, student performance is poor, and not enough of the students graduate.

Proven internationally

School Turnaround provides coaching teams to offer advice, a school network to promote an exchange of ideas, and targeted approaches for each school. The concept of individual support is already a proven success, since in New York City, England, and the Netherlands schools have



School Turnaround puts the focus on students. Photo: T. Geißler

used this method to get back on the right track. Employees of the Robert Bosch Stiftung and the Berlin Senate visited inner city schools in New York, where the School Turnaround concept is being rolled out on a large scale. The Berliners, now armed with the experience of their New York City Board of Education colleagues and a number of new ideas, are hoping for a turnaround of their own.

The initiative will receive €1 million over the next two years. Berlin Education Senator Sandra Scheeres has a clear goal in mind: "I believe the aim should be for noticeable improvement in the relevant quality benchmarks - such as teaching and learning processes, school management, school culture and performance results - at the participating schools by 2015." Students and teachers should enjoy working and learning at their schools. *ar*