

Soft Skill Management In Academic Environment in the Service of Enhancing Well-being

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Abstract: Having gained experience in technical higher education and institutional research – also as professional consultants – and recognizing the need for student and researcher satisfaction and skill development, the focus of the research area became crucial for examining the existing engineering-research competence and enhancing the related basic abilities, soft skills. The main goal is to contribute and make suggestions for the retention and improvement of the well-being of students and young researchers in higher education

and research institute with the active participation of the management, which strengthens their commitment, enhances their mental and spiritual health, and their research performance with regard to the social acceptance of the research. As an empirical approach, relevant research-engineering soft skill sessions are organized and conducted in line with the external and internal expectations of engineering education and research mainly along the following topics: increasing the cohesion of student and research group, insights into the specifics of human relationships experienced in everyday work activities with self-knowledge perceptions in private life as well, special attention to the prominent role of time, the importance and management of stress, identification of goals and motivation

Keywords: well-being, engineering, research, soft skill, labour market

1 Introduction

Important question can be why we are dealing with well-being. Because it is a chain reaction. If you are well, you are satisfied, then you stay, where you are, it means that your commitment is strengthened, you can be more creative, constructive and healthy in a holistic way. Main essential non-material factors of being well consist of community with quality offline social relations and mental health including the supporting physical health. In general, the goal is prevention and promotion at the same time. Prevention on the way to burnout and promotion of skills using them even better. [5]

As an empirical approach, relevant research-engineering soft skill sessions are organized and conducted in line with the external and internal expectations of engineering education and research parallel to the labour market mainly along the following topics: increasing the cohesion of student and research group, insights into the specifics of human relationships experienced in everyday work activities with self-knowledge perceptions in private life as well, special attention to the prominent role of time, the importance and management of stress, identification of goals and motivation.

2 Method

The engineering curriculum at Obuda University Bánki Donát Faculty of Mechanical and Safety Engineering (OE BGK) makes it possible that during the first three semesters students take part in engineering skill improvement. These programs are integrated into dedicated mandatory subjects like Learning Methodology and Creative Thinking, Student Tutoring Preparation, Student Tutoring.

The prephase of the semester is the Welcome Festival at the Faculty at the beginning of September during the registration week. The event is organized specifically for first-year students arriving at the university, and its goal is to create an opportunity for new students to establish initial social connections and establish their commitment to the university.

More trainings of the Learning Methodology course take place in the first half of the fall semester. Students of security technology, cyber, mechatronics and mechanical, energetical engineering participated in the half-day training in the afternoon. Around four hundred students participated in the programs. The goal is to become familiar with the basics of time management, various learning techniques, and to explore the background of procrastination. During the trainings, each student receive a handout package that can help the students develop regular study habits and plan their time before the test period, as well as provide support in overcoming procrastination, in time and stress management.

This program and basically the three-semester engineering skill development curriculum is hosted by the Well-being Center at the Faculty. Motivated and fascinating university lecturers, professionals, mental hygienic experts are committed to this determining field. There's a strong newly formed cooperation within the university about to share experience, be coherent outlook for the future in order to keep and provide this opportunity for every newcomer student independently from changing management or any other circumstances.

We are keen on compose some basic principles which are inevitable to keep the results and also to expand to those who choose other forms of being university student e.g. correspondence training.

Many of us have different and precious experience in human resource area. So it is guaranteed that we have a common denominator which makes cooperation more efficient.

The main question is who we are mainly dealing with? They were mainly born between 2005 and six. It's a relatively new generation, but what is even more important that they are still secondary school students they know that role better. It's not a second that they become university student so we provide the interface in building a bridge between high school life and university life.

Although there's a big flexibility for students in deciding what and where and when to study it is still a big responsibility for them in terms of time what they spend this precious resource for.

Beside at training sessions, where teams are built upon friendly relations, there is a rule which means almost nothing is compulsory, however, one thing cannot be saved: deep internal work of the student that can be enhanced by personal life coaching - it is an optional individual opportunity for the student.

From more directions students can be supported in increasing their resiliency and improving coping strategies which can be even harder for foreign students come to Hungary, moreover, if they get into a brand new culture far away from their home and beloved family. If they have common interests, that's the main focus then they can relate to each other and this can fundamentally establish their well-being - being catalyzed by us.

3 Results

After a survey among the newcomer students the following first insight was generated shown in Fig. 1.:

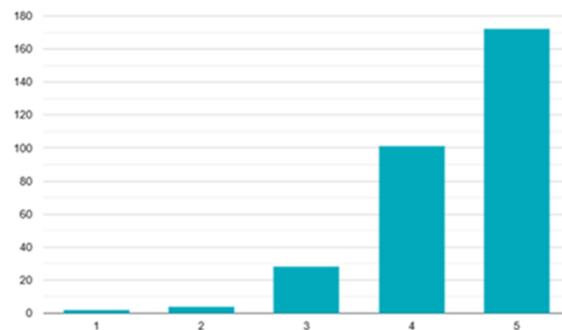


Figure 1
Usefulness of the Welcome Festival – 89% satisfaction (4 and 5)

Parallel to university student skill management at HUN-REN SZTAKI Institute for Computer Science and Control a lab with young researchers take part in similar skill development sessions mainly studying in technical higher education as well like MSc and PhD courses. There are different challenges at the same time since the research institute is a workplace for them. Regarding also the specific generation traits the claim for being well is getting higher and higher composed by many elements. As an example Fig. 2. shows a ratio of expected taking advantage life coaching opportunity at the research institute life coaching opportunity at this lab of the research institute among those who took part in these sessions focusing on skill development.

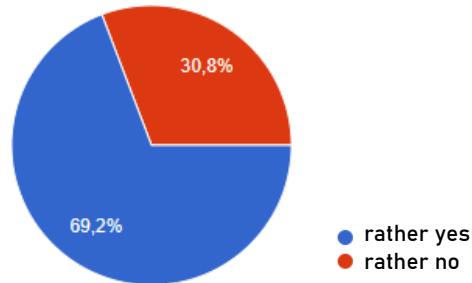


Figure 2

If individual life coach supported by your workplace were available, would you take advantage of the opportunity?

These occasions make the participant recognize and cope with difficulties enhancing their resiliency which is supported by more events and opportunities available on the spot where they spend around one third of their lifetime.

Some evidence based statements based on international studies: According to WHO, a company health program reduces absenteeism by 27% in three years. A 20% decrease in psychological well-being measures leads to a 10% decrease in performance. 62% of managers believe that productivity is influenced by the well-being and health of employees. Where there is no wellness program, they are four times more likely to lose their best employees in the next twelve months.

Those employees who realize that their employer takes care about their health and well-being will be more committed by 38% than those who do not realize this, and by a 28% more probability they recommend the company for friends and relatives, moreover, taking extra work load with plus 18% probability. [4]

Conclusions

Taken also the expectations of the labour market into account the values of professional knowledge, active participation in teamwork and self-awareness or the closely related emotional intelligence (EQ) show that companies consider both soft and hard skills to be important factors in terms of employability. [1, 2, 3]

According to labour experience relation between motivation and knowledge show that however, you got the knowledge, but you're not motivated that much the overall holistic performance will be lower as motivation gives an added value to the work. You are satisfied after doing it. In another aspect when you don't have the knowledge as a whole, but you've got a big motivation. That's when you get wings and also the universities and labor market seek for those people.

When employees are satisfied fluctuation and absenteeism decrease, while productivity increases. The efficient (even informal) social net helps to catalyze information flow, which is a key factor in not feeling like an outsider.

Well, being well makes you satisfied. Check yourself: how satisfied are you at this moment? And in general?

Acknowledgement

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