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2 INTRODUCTION

In our book, we will address the phenomenon of working style that allows professionals to work outside of a traditional work environment. Of course, we do not have in mind professions characterized by mobility (such as taxi drivers, etc.). We have in mind professions that, according to the traditional concept, work in factories, schools and offices.

This working style has different names like: “remote work”, “remote working”, teleworking”, “working from home”, etc.

For each name, of course, we can find different definitions.

Remote work[1] (also known as work from home [WFH] or telecommuting) is a type of flexible working arrangement that allows an employee to work from remote location outside of corporate offices.

Remote working[2] mean the practice of an employee working at their home, or in some other place that is not an organization's usual place of business.

When we study different names and definitions, we can see similarities or differences. There may also be inconsistencies in different definitions.

However, it is basically the same thing. It is work from outside of a traditional work environment. Instead of in an office, factory, or classroom, employees have to do the same job somewhere else.

On the 12 of March 2020, the Republic of Slovenia declared a COVID-19 epidemic. During the epidemic, more than 25% of people in employment worked remotely instead of at their employer’s premises. The situation was similar elsewhere in the world.

This book aims to answer two questions:

1. How did remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic affect human resources management (HRM) in organisations?
2. What segments of organisations and organising were affected by remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Our work was undertaken within the larger context of research into management and business functions in circumstances of remote work. To put it more precisely: we were interested in human resources as one of business functions and in

[1] Source: https://www.gartner.com/en/information-technology/glossary/remote-work
[2] Source: https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/remote-working

organising as one of management process functions, both within the context of remote work.
Our initial aim was to assess the nature of changes in the functions of human resources and organising, caused by remote work during the COVID-19 epidemic. More specifically, we were trying to determine whether the resulting changes were governed by a common set of rules, which is why our research encompassed disparate organisations: public institutions, such as primary schools and nurseries, state and local administration, and manufacturing and service companies.
The study looked at following HRM aspects:

- principles and processes of HRM;
- organisational behaviour, job satisfaction, and organisational climate;
- work engagement;
- organisational culture;
- organisational identity.

The organisation and organising aspects included:

- organisational design;
- legal framework for remote working in the EU;
- employee’s rights and obligations and employer's rights and obligations;
- formal and informal organisation;
- organisational identity;
- remote working and attributes of a learning organisation.

We employed two research methods:

- a telephone survey;
- structured interviews.

Our study wished to go beyond the restrictions of an online opinion survey. We wanted to approach the respondents individually, since we were not only interested in their survey responses but also in their personal experience or perception of remote work.
We believe that this was a correct approach: survey results provide us with data points, but the reality of the situation generally tends to be quite dynamic.

3 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

3.1 PRINCIPLES AND PROCESSES OF HRM

3.1.1 Basic procedures of recruitment, selection, and compensation

Human beings cannot survive without interconnectedness. Since the dawn of humanity, people have thus lived in communities. The earliest examples of such communities were hordes or tribes, led by their chieftains. Rotich (2015) notes that the selection of tribal leaders was the first instance of a human activity known today as *the selection process*.

Apart from selecting their leaders, it was important for communities to also find enough people to pursue organised activities, such as food gathering, military campaigns, or construction projects. Illig and Löhner (1993) tried to determine how many people it took to build the Pyramid of Cheops; their results show that the transport of a single stone block from the quarry to the construction site required the effort of at least 200 people.

It was not only important to find an adequate number of people, but also to choose effective individuals capable of survival. Literature and historical sources attest to numerous cases where wars were decided by single, most capable soldiers from opposing sides, rather than whole armies. The result of the confrontation was also considered the result of the entire war. The Bible thus brings us the story of David and Goliath, and from the Trojan War we are familiar with the duel between Paris, the Trojan prince, and Menelaus, the king of Sparta.

In more recent times, the methods of army recruitment served as the basis for the development of selection processes in companies. Even before the First World War, the US Army, for example, already employed psychological tests to examine their recruits. Sir Francis Galton (1822–1911) is generally considered the author of the first psychometric tests. The psychological tests used by the US Army prior to World War I were developed by Robert Mearns Yerkes (1876–1956). Of course, things have changed considerably since those early beginnings. Since the 1990s, selection interviews have thus also been conducted with the aid of personal computers (*Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing*-CAPI).[3] Mareschal and

[3] More about beginnings of CAPI see: Couper, Burt, 1994.

Rudin (2010) conducted a survey of the management apparatus of 50 federal states and 50 largest companies in the USA. They found out that all of the surveyed companies relied on online applications for the recruitment of new employees. At the time of the survey, only 18 federal states did not use such applications.

As we can see, human resources in organisations have a specific history and characteristic contents. Today, human resources are seen as part of organisational business functions, and are guided by the principles of scientific management. The originators of scientific management are Henri Fayol (1841–1925) and Frederick Winslow Taylor (1856–1915).

In organisations, business functions entail the following:

- procurement;
- human resources;
- process of transforming inputs into outputs;
- sales;
- finance and accounts.

Human resources carry out the following tasks:

- calculating the necessary staffing levels;
- identifying the talent pool, recruiting, selection, and final choice of staff;
- employment (and dismissal);
- induction, education and training;
- managing payroll;
- ensuring health and safety at work.

Organisations pursue the tasks listed above in keeping with the principles of scientific management, which entails the following:

- planning the time, tools, and the persons needed to execute tasks;
- execution of tasks is organised, which includes division of labour and adhering to rules;
- tasks are supervised in terms of their execution, deadlines, and the use of resources;
- there is a hierarchy in place, i.e. there is a manager in charge.

The above mentioned tasks – calculating the necessary staffing levels; recruiting, selection, and final choice of staff; induction, education and training; managing payroll; ensuring health and safety at work – are not the only HRM duties, however. They are usually subsumed under the umbrella term »**personnel management**«.

Another important aspect of HRM includes »**personnel administration«.** A personnel administrator will usually be charged with the task of keeping employee files up to date.

HRM duties thus cover the fields of:

- personnel management;
- personnel administration;
- employee motivation, engagement, and satisfaction;
- customer or user satisfaction;
- expectations of owners or founders;
- expectation of wider society.

3.1.2 Personnel management

Personnel management is a key element of HRM; it includes the tasks listed above (calculating the necessary staffing levels, selection of staff, employment etc.). Oftentimes these are technical, administrative or bureaucratic procedures. As we have already mentioned before, these processes make up the "skeleton" or structure of an organisation. This is why it is not unimportant how we pursue them. After all, these are the procedures which determine the life of an organisation. In fact, any related errors (for instance, during the selection process) may, in certain circumstances, contribute to an organisation's downfall.

To illustrate this we can look to our history and the previously mentioned example of Ancient Egypt. Vila (1994) describes an ancient Egyptian account of an expedition tasked with quarrying stone for the statue of the Egyptian god Amon. The expedition was supposed to have included 8,369 people: the head of expedition, 110 officers, 50 civilians and priests, 130 master stonemasons, 2 master painters, 4 engravers, 5,000 soldiers, who were also in charge of transport, 200 members of the court, 800 Barbarians, 2,000 temple servants and some other staff.

The expedition was thus organised on the basis of calculations of necessary staff and entailed the recruitment and selection of qualified specialists in needed areas of expertise. Of course, nowadays we are no longer talking about building pyramids but rather, in our particular case, about remote work. Just like the Egyptians who wanted to build a pyramid, modern-day HR procedures first need to determine what it is they want to achieve. The starting point of all HRM tasks is clarifying the organisation's mission. We therefore need to understand:

- what our main activity is;
- the environment in which it will take place;
- who our partners are;
- who it is intended for;
- the criteria of success.

When it comes to working from home, we need to keep in mind all of the above. Fundamentally, we first need to know the reason for remote work.

CALCULATING NECESSARY STAFF

When calculating the necessary staff, we need to determine whether remote work requires us to use more people, fewer people, or the same number of people to perform a specific task. In normal circumstances, remote work may optimise work, and we will thus require fewer employees. During the COVID-19 epidemic many organisations, particularly those in critical infrastructure, assigned a segment of their employees to work from home to eliminate the risk of contracting the virus at work. It soon became apparent that this type of work requires more people.

SELECTION PROCESS

If we are planning on organising remote work, we should determine whether the job candidates possess the competencies for working remotely and asses some additional circumstances. Remote work often entails the use of specific hardware and software. Furthermore, the individual's own understanding of remote work is also highly significant. There are people who are conscientious, hard-working and reliable regardless of whether they are working at home or in the office. Unfortunately, there are also cases of employees who consider remote work as the perfect opportunity to go to a coffee shop, restaurant, or the beach.

PROCESS OF EMPLOYMENT

It is necessary to correctly define the relationship between the employer and the employee in case of remote work. Work from home can be formalised with a separate employment contract, an annex to the existing contract, order allocating work from home, or in some other way.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

Dismissals and terminations of employment contracts are a relatively common occurrence. However, there is little experience with terminations of employment contracts for remote work. We need to be aware of this possibility, which is why the mutual obligations and rights of the employer and the employee need to be specified in one way or another.

INDUCTION, EDUCATION, AND TRAINING

Induction, education, and training of employees working remotely differ from their regular alternatives. This is true both in terms of content and methodology. With regard to content, induction of remote work differs significantly. In case of factory workers, for example, classic elements of induction include showing the location of the wardrobe, letting the worker know whom to contact in case of absence or sick leave, and so on. With remote work, the content of induction is mostly related to the use of ICT technologies and a different way of keeping log sheets. Remote work completely changes the nature of interaction between members of an organisation and their environment. This is why special emphasis should be given to maintaining the identity of the organisation, ensuring customer satisfaction, and building the company's reputation.

COMPENSATION

Employee salaries are usually based on one or more formal foundations, i.e. legislation, collective agreement, employment contract, internal rules, etc. Because of these formal foundations, remote work may also bring about financial effects for the employer. In cases where the employer pays for employees' travel costs, this is no longer necessary. On the other hand, the employer may be obliged to reimburse the employee for the use of their own equipment. Further obligations need to be determined on a case-by-case basis.

ENSURING HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK
Even with remote work, there are still duties and obligations concerning health and safety at work. The employer is obliged to ensure that the employee works in a safe and healthy work environment. In view of the fact that remote work generally takes place at the employee's home rather than office headquarters, these rules and obligations are fulfilled in a different manner than otherwise. This manner has to be formally specified.

3.1.3 Personnel administration

A personnel administrator will usually be charged with the task of keeping employee files up-to-date.
Traditionally, an employment relationship contains the following attributes:

- a contract or obligation between the employer and the employee;
- the existence of two contractual partners, i.e. the employer and the employee;
- time component;
- job content;
- location where the job will be performed;
- employer's responsibilities;
- employee's responsibilities.

Even non-typical job relationships (e.g. student work, copyright work) generally include at least some attributes of an employment relationship. With remote work, its only distinguishing feature is that it is pursued elsewhere than at employer's premises (generally at the employee's home).

If a person is working remotely, the relationship between the employer and the employee is bound by the same rights and responsibilities as when they are working at office headquarters. The employer and the employee have mutual rights and obligations stemming from an employment relationship. Furthermore, employees possess rights stipulated by the law (e.g. the right to social and health insurance, the right to sick leave, pension rights).

This is why it is necessary to keep appropriate work records. Remote work is no exception. The minimal standards for keeping records are set by the national legislation. A good example of this is the *Labour and Social Security Registers*

Act (Zakon o evidencah na področju dela in socialne varnosti (ZEPDSV), Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, no. 40/06). The Act determines the types and content of records in the field of labour and social security, the manner of data collection, the manner of keeping and linking records, the manner of transmitting data for the needs of state bodies, local communities and public authorities and other users who need this data for the performance of statutory tasks or for the management of databases on individuals and for the purposes of conducting statistical, socio-economic and other surveys with a legal basis.

The following records are kept in connection to labour and social security:

- records of employees;
- records of labour costs;
- records on the use of working time;
- records on the forms of resolving collective labor disputes with the employer
- records of unemployed persons;
- records of the need for workers;
- records on citizens of the European Union and citizens equated with them who are employed and work in the territory of the Republic of Slovenia;
- records on third-country nationals who are employed and work in the territory of the Republic of Slovenia;
- records on insured persons and beneficiaries of rights from compulsory health insurance;
- records on family members of citizens of the Republic of Slovenia on temporary work abroad – beneficiaries of health care;
- records on insured persons and beneficiaries of pension and disability insurance rights;
- records of social benefits;
- records of family benefits;
- records of parental benefits;
- records on beneficiaries of rights from the protection of war invalids, war veterans and victims of war violence;
- records in the field of safety and health at work.

Records referred to in points *a*, *b*, *c*, and *d* of the previous article are kept by employers in accordance with the provisions of the Act for the purposes of exercising rights from the social insurance and social protection system, for the purpose of providing statistical monitoring, and for inspection. Records referred to in point *p* are kept by employers on the basis of the law governing safety and health at work. All other records are kept by other bodies and institutions.

3.1.4 Bureaucratic procedures related to remote working

Both personnel management and personnel administration are characterised by administrative or mechanistic nature. In simplified terms, it is the role of personnel management to ensure that the labour force is "physically present" in an organisation; on the other hand, personnel administration is in charge of keeping records and documentation related to this presence. The nature of this segment of HRM requires it to be bureaucratically organised. This type of organisation prevents any possibility of arbitrariness.

Personnel administration is thus generally organised as a typical bureaucracy:

- Administrative procedures are based on rules.
- The tasks performed by the employees are based on specialisation, division of labour and hierarchy.
- Each employee works in accordance with the rules and within their purview.
- It issues written documents, e.g. contracts, acts, decisions, etc.
- All the administrative documents need to be archived.

Personnel management also follows the principles of a bureaucratic organisation, albeit with some specific features. The main difference lies in the very nature of procedures, whose content and purpose differ significantly from rigid administration. They are thus often related to substantive decisions (such as, for example, the selection process) and are dissimilar from the mechanistic keeping of records. These processes consequently often entail a mixture of attributes of bureaucratic organisations and professional organisations: procedures are generally rule-based, but substantive decisions are generally taken autonomously and in keeping with expert principles.

In order for an organisation to function, however, it is not enough to calculate the necessary staff numbers, find and recruit people, pay them their monthly salaries and keep all the corresponding records. Alongside rules, all of the above merely constitutes an organisation's framework. In itself, this is not enough. An organisation needs to come to life. The task of HRM is to perform all the necessary activities which enable enthusiastic, motivated and content employees to bring an organisation to life, which is in keeping with societal norms and which ensures customer satisfaction and meets the expectations of owners or founders.

Let us return to the specific topic of our study, i.e. remote work. In relation to employees working remotely, it is the task of HRM to ensure that the life of an organisation meets the same levels of quality it would if they were working at the employer's office. For example, there are organisations with headquarters located in the US, but the workers work remotely from the US, Europe, and New Zealand, while their clients are located all over the world. In order to do this, it is vital to ensure:

- employee satisfaction, with the employees doing the things which they are interested in, in return for fair pay;
- customer satisfaction, with the customers buying high quality products at a fair price;
- satisfaction of the local environment, since the company is socially and environmentally responsible;
- satisfaction of the state, since the company is run in accordance with the law and pays taxes;
- satisfaction of the owners, since they are able to make a profit, while the value of their company is increasing.

An HRM framework or a skeleton thus needs to be strong enough to withstand pressure, but at same time flexible enough to be able to adapt to time and environment. Skeletons are animated by brains and soft tissue. They are brought to life by being endowed with a human, social character. This means that people are physically present in mutual interaction, that they interact with their environment and are fully aware of what is at stake. In other words, they are able to think and act in a manner which is satisfying to themselves, their clients, and their owners. It is quite irrelevant whether someone is working in Slovenia and another person in New Zealand, i.e. if the two employees are separated by a 12-hour time difference or 20,000 km.

3.2 ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR

3.2.1 Group behaviour: classic workplace vs remote working

Between 1924 in 1933, the company *Western Electric* in Hawthorne, near Chicago, was the site of a series of studies which involved 300 volunteers and aimed to determine the impact of physical work environment (lighting) on productivity. The research was led by a group of scientists from Harvard Business School. The group conducted as many as 21,000 interviews with the factory workers. It eventually showed that the group of 300 volunteers, which was part of the study of the effect of lighting, was more effective than the rest of the 21,000 factor workers, regardless of the lighting conditions in their workplace.

The psychologist George Elton Mayo (1880–1949) was key in interpreting these results. Mayo (1933) claimed that the volunteers' increased productivity was the result of the effect of the group on the individual, and also other working conditions, specifically group relations. This gave rise to the idea of organisational behaviour, the leading paradigm of HRM almost until the end of the 20th century. Its key findings, as determined by Elton Mayo, included the following:

- Even in individuals with high potential, productivity is to a large extent affected by social factors.
- Group norms (e.g. working hours) affect productivity.
- Productivity is also affected by informal organisation.
- Every organisation also possesses an informal component.
- Productivity is affected by levels of control.

Over the next decades, these findings inspired a series of studies and theories on motivation and motivating, informal organisations, working hours, etc., among them:

- The first satisfaction report was published by Richard Stephen Uhrbrock in 1934 (published in 1934; sent in for peer review on 13 September 1933).
- In 1943, Abraham H. Maslow (1908 – 1970) published his theory of motivation, known as the "hierarchy of needs".

- Between 1959 and 1964, Frederick Irving Herzberg (1923–2000) published a series of articles on motivation; in 1968, he complemented this with his well-known two-factor theory of motivation.
- Between 1950 and 1960, Chris Argyris (1923–2013) researched the effects exerted on individuals by organisations.
- In 1968, Renato Tagiuri (1919–2011) originated the notion of an "organisational climate".
- The first index of job satisfaction was published in 1951 by Arthur Brayfield and Harold Rothe.
- Charles Redding (1914–1994) was the first to study organisational communication. In 1972, he originated the idea of "communication climate".

Even at the time, however, Mayo's ideas were not accepted unequivocally. Uhrbrock (1934), for instance, was of the opinion that workers are primarily motivated by three basic fears:
- fear of job loss;
- fear of being unable to work due to illness or injury;
- fear of remaining without means of subsistence in old age.

The Hawthorne studies have been and remain the subject of numerous analyses. Some authors believe that subsequent analyses of the collected documentation prove that the description of lighting experiments presented in textbooks and other sources paints a distorted or, indeed, false image. In reality they should be attributed to academic folklore. In this opinion, the studies merely prove that lightning did not affect productivity (which, from today's perspective, seems contradictory).

In 1974, Parsons embarked on an investigation of what truly happened in Hawthorne. He determined that the increased productivity was more likely the result of a combination of feedback (for example, by technologists) and financial stimulus given to the workers. Furthermore, Parsons argued that experimental studies may be adversely affected by the experimental process itself. He called this the *Hawthorne effect***.** It describes a situation in which the behaviour of participants is modified because of their awareness they are part of an experiment.

In 1978, Franke and Kaul conducted research conceptualised similarly to the Western Electric study. However, they swapped out two workers, which significantly affected the productivity of the group.
Mannuevo (2018), on the other hand, claims that the spaces used for the Western Electric study were specifically designed with the experiments in mind and that the workers were supported by a group of engineers and industrial researchers. They were also given daily wages and worked shorter hours.

Izawa, French and Hedge (2011) conducted a precise statistical analysis of the existing study documentation. The statistical analysis of the three lighting experiments conducted at Hawthorne Works show erroneous correlations between lighting and productivity. In all, remnant study documentation and modern analyses strongly indicate that the study came to erroneous conclusions.

Despite the criticism and its many weaknesses, organisational behaviour persisted as the leading HRM paradigm throughout most of the 20th century. In relation to remote work, the paradigm as a whole needs to be considered with certain caveats:

- Nowadays, the results of the study are generally considered problematic.
- The paradigm of organisational behaviour is based on a study of volunteer factory workers; remote work, however, is not factory work.
- Organisational behaviour is interested in how to increase productivity – it does not look at issues significant to remote work, such as quality, innovation, and intercultural co-operation.
- The key finding of the Hawthorne studies was that individuals are affected by groups; remote work, however, takes place in groups which are different in nature from the ones formed during factory work.

On the other hand, organisational behaviour opened up questions still relevant today in connection to remote work, among them the issue of:

- human needs;
- job satisfaction or dissatisfaction;
- organisational climate;
- organisational culture.

3.2.2 Human needs: classic workplace vs remote working

Contemporary study of human needs in workplace stems from the paradigm of organisational behaviour. Obviously, over time authors have employed various research approaches. The key studies in the field were already conducted decades ago.

Elton Mayo looked at human needs in relation to their effect on productivity and determined that productivity is affected by:

- social factors;
- group norms (e.g. working hours);
- informal organisation;
- levels of control.

In 1943, Abraham H. Maslow published one of the most renowned contributions to the study of human needs, his well-known theory of "hierarchy of needs". Originally, Maslow posited that there are five levels in a hierarchy of human needs (physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs). Once a need is satisfied on a more basic level, it re-emerges at a higher level. In Maslow's view, individuals are motivated to work in order to satisfy their needs.

Subsequently, the model was expanded and revised several times, first into a 7-stage and eventually into an 8-stage model of needs. It is important to note that Maslow's (1943, 1954) five-stage model has been expanded to include cognitive and aesthetic needs (Maslow, 1970a), and later also transcendence needs (Maslow, 1970b).

The exact chronology and manner of revisions is provided by McLeod (2020). Today, we refer to the 8-stage model of human needs:

1. Biological and physiological needs – air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sex, sleep, etc.
2. Safety needs – protection from elements, security, order, law, stability, freedom from fear.
3. Love and belongingness needs – friendship, intimacy, trust and acceptance, receiving and giving affection and love. Affiliating, being part of a group (family, friends, work).

4. Esteem needs, which Maslow classified into two categories: (i) esteem for oneself (dignity, achievement, mastery, independence); and (ii) the need to be accepted and valued by others (e.g., status, prestige).
5. Cognitive needs – knowledge and understanding, curiosity, exploration, need for meaning and predictability.
6. Aesthetic needs – appreciation and search for beauty, balance, form, etc.
7. Self-actualization needs – realising personal potential, self-fulfilment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences. A desire "to become everything one is capable of becoming."
8. Transcendence needs – a person is motivated by values which transcend beyond the personal self (e.g. mystical experiences and certain experiences in nature, aesthetic experiences, sexual experiences, service to others, the pursuit of science, religious faith, etc.).

The theory of human needs significantly impacted the theory and practice of management. Meeting human needs became one of the key tools for motivating people. But the theory does have its limitations. One of the more general criticisms pertains to the fact that satisfying a need on a more basic level does not necessarily lead to a new need. Another important drawback is that an employee is not automatically motivated just by having their needs satisfied.

Kohl (2018) states that, over time, employees' needs and requirements change and develop, which is why companies may find it difficult to provide satisfaction. In general, employers are swamped by fashionable advice given by various consultants with the promise of meeting the needs of generations of employees. However, when it comes to attracting and retaining high quality talent, employers need to be able to assess what the employees expect from the company on a case-by-case basis.

3.2.3 Job satisfaction: classic workplace vs remote working

Apart from meeting needs, ensuring job satisfaction has been one of the most important management tools. In order to guarantee that workers are productive, employers need to maintain job satisfaction or, conversely, avoid dissatisfaction.

There have been numerous definitions of what constitutes "job satisfaction". Bullock (1952) was one of the first to claim that job satisfaction is a result of balance and sum total of various likes and dislikes connected to a job. Smith, Kendall and Hulin (1969) defined satisfaction as feelings and responses to various work situations. Smith and Stone (1992) describe job satisfaction as an emotional state which takes into account what the employees expect and what they are actually given. Robbins (2005) defines job satisfaction as a set of emotions a person feels in relation to work. Hulin and Judge (2003) saw job satisfaction as a multi-dimensional psychological response to a workplace. These interpretations include cognitive, emotional, and behavioural elements.

For several decades now, it has been acknowledged that job satisfaction is not merely intellectual, i.e. it is not what we think about a specific job. It is also connected to other physiological responses to perception of a workplace, but we are not talking here about a sense of fatigue. The most well-known effect of job dissatisfaction is insomnia. Totterdell, Reynolds, Parkinson, and Briner (1994) report that the quality of sleep is more related to a sense of well-being following sleep rather than before it. Brissette and Cohen (2002) determined that sleep disturbances are connected to negative effects and are in no way affected by the positive events of the preceding day. Gu, Yuanbo et al. (2020) conducted a one year-study on a sample of 298 pre-school teachers. The results showed that continuous exposure to stress at workplace eventually negatively affects the sense of well-being.

No discussion of job satisfaction is complete without the mention of Herzberg. Herzberg (1966) separated between motivating and hygiene factors:

- Motivating factors include: challenging work, recognition for one's achievement, responsibility, opportunity to do something meaningful, involvement in decision making, sense of importance to an organization, etc. The presence or perception of motivating factors gives rise to employee job satisfaction.
- Hygiene factors include: status, job security, salary, fringe benefits, work conditions, good pay, paid insurance, vacations. The absence of hygiene factors gives rise to job dissatisfaction.

An overview of the various definitions of satisfaction over the past decades shows that all of them share certain common features:

- most definitions define job satisfaction as an emotion, i.e. a person's physical response to perception;

- the content or the object of perception related to job satisfaction is multi-dimensional – it may be an outside object (e.g. the characteristics of the workplace or work environment), the social interactions related to specific work or a specific workplace, or a combination of the above; in any case, they are related to the workplace or the specific work someone is doing;
- the emotion itself is more or less pronounced, in other words, someone may merely "think" it, but it may also surface as a physiological response, the most commonly mentioned being insomnia;
- job satisfaction can manifest in two distinct forms, either as "satisfaction" or as "dissatisfaction".

Theories of needs as well as theories of satisfaction stem from the paradigm of organisational behaviour. They originated in the context of factories and factory workers, with the intention of increasing productivity. Over the course of time, however, work circumstances have undergone significant changes.

As mentioned above, the key role of HRM during the COVID-19 epidemic was related to remote work: how to maintain safety and stability of the processes and ensure development. Of course, productivity is still important with regard to the stability of the process, even when it is not related to factory workers. For this reason, it is very important to ascertain the job satisfaction of remote workers. This also means that any analysis should be adapted to this specific context.

The word "satisfaction" could be interpreted to mean "socio-emotional result". We thus suggest that questions regarding job satisfaction enquire about the "perceived quality of work environment" and not necessarily satisfaction" itself. In doing so, we need to distinguish between "physical environment" and "social interaction". When assessing job satisfaction in remote work, we also need to look at numerous specificities , many of them not fully researched as yet:

- In remote work, the physical environment of the workplace is different – the perceived quality of the work environment and its physical conditions are related to home rather than the workplace; the content or the object of perception connected to job satisfaction is thus fundamentally different than in a classic workplace.

- When looking at the physical environment of the workplace, we thus need to take into account only the variables directly related to a specific workplace.
- In remote work, social interaction with co-workers and superiors is conducted through a different communication channel, i.e. communication is virtual.
- The frequency of perception of social environment also differs.

When an employee is working remotely, the physical environment of the workplace is most often their home. Their social interaction during working hours may thus also include interaction with their family. Thorough research is necessary in order to ascertain any correlation between “satisfaction with the physical environment of the home” and “general satisfaction with remote work”.

Over the past decades, the physical environment of the workplace has been an important factor of employee satisfaction. In determining the satisfaction of employees working remotely, specifically as it relates to their physical environment, we may therefore also look at the following dimensions:

- a person’s salary;
- a person’s career opportunities;
- a person’s job security;
- the position of their department inside the organisation;
- the perceived quality of a person’s direct communication with their immediate superiors (timeliness and thoroughness of information);
- perceived quality of immediate communication among the departments.

As we can see, the above factors are somewhat different than the ones based in the paradigm of organisational behaviour.

Table 1. Examples of questions about the perceived quality of physical environment (Ferjan, 2021).

<table>
<tr><td>0
never</td><td colspan="2">1
a few times a year or less</td><td colspan="2">2
once a month or less</td><td>2
a few times a month</td><td>4
once a week</td><td>5
a few times a week</td><td>6
every day</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="9"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"></td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">I perceive having career opportunities.</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">I perceive not having career opportunities.</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">I perceive having a secure job.</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">I perceive not having a secure job.</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

The perceived quality of inner environment is not only dependent on the "physical dimensions", but also on the perception of interpersonal relations. This aspect consequently requires separate analysis. A good starting point for its study are the findings of Ashkanasy et al.[4] As we have already mentioned, emotions arise as a result of perception. Ashkanasy developed a 5-stage model explaining the phenomenon of emotions and their effects on organisations. The model helps us determine where and how emotions arise in the workplace and, importantly, which perceptions trigger them. It includes the following stages, in the order below (Ashkanasy et al., 2009):

1. stage: Emotional process on the level of an individual (existing emotional states; hidden emotions; mood).
2. stage: Differences between persons.
3. stage: Interpersonal interaction.
4. stage: Interaction on the level of group (emotional makeup; emotionally intelligent groups; emotional contagion; exchange between leader and subordinates).
5. stage: Interaction on the level of organisation.

[4] See: Ashkanasy, et. al., 2009.

It follows that research of interactions between remote workers should look at:

- interpersonal interaction between individuals;
- interaction on the level of group;
- interaction between leaders and subordinates;
- interaction on the level of organisation.

Table 2. Examples of questions about the perceived quality of social environment (Ferjan, 2021).

0 never	**1** a few times a year or less	**2** once a month or less	**3** a few times a month	**4** once a week	**5** a few times a week	**6** every day

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
While working remotely, I am cheerful and in a good mood because of only one co-worker.							
While working remotely, I am angry and in a bad mood because of only one co-worker.							
Co-workers in the department share a sense of co-operation, friendship, good mood, and positive atmosphere.							
Co-workers in the department share a sense of personal rivalry, mutual resentment, and negative atmosphere.							
I am always relaxed (I can feel positive energy) when I meet my superior or communicate with them during remote work.							
I am not relaxed (I can feel uncertain or fearful) when I meet my superior or communicate with them during remote work.							

3.3 WORK ENGAGEMENT

3.3.1 Work engagement vs motivation

We mentioned that organisational behaviour was the prevailing paradigm of the 20th century. One of its foundations is the stimulus-response (S-R) theory. The S-R theory claims that human behaviour is the result of responses to environmental stimuli in the form of reactions and behaviours (Kitchener and O'Donohue, 1999). This is the basis of behaviour based management; in this view, managers elicit the desired behaviours in employees, for instance by:

- trying to meet employees' needs;
- trying to ensure job satisfaction;
- trying to avoid elements of job dissatisfaction;
- developing organisational culture;
- maintaining organisational climate;
- etc.

Employee's actions in the workplace may thus be motivated with the actions of their managers, employers, and with perceptions of their wider physical and social environment. It needs to be emphasised, however, that:

- the understanding of needs, satisfaction, culture and climate has changed over the course of time;
- research into organisational behaviour was principally interested in increasing worker productivity, which dictated the preoccupation with issues of meeting needs and ensuring satisfaction – questions of quality, innovation, intercultural co-operation and security were not at the forefront at the time.

However, a person's behaviour is not necessarily a response to perception and may be intrinsic to the individual. Pennington (2000) groups factors motivating decisions into two categories:

- **dispositional factors**, i.e. factors intrinsic to a person (temperament, character);
- **situational factors**, which are received by a person from their environment through perception.

Human behaviour is thus not only affected by perception but also by dispositional factors, such as personality. Feryal (2012) states that temperament and character are key personality dimensions which determine a person's response to perception.

The notion of temperament refers to a person's behavioural reaction in response to perception of their environment. An individual's temperamental characteristics are relatively stable throughout their lifespan. Feryal (2012) refers to the results of several studies that found that a person's temperamental characteristics depend on their genetic makeup. On the other hand, human character reflects individuals' different ideas of personal goals and values. As opposed to temperament, a person's character develops and changes over time.

Kruse (2012) believes that, following various theories of motivation and motivating and of employee satisfaction, companies can try and meet all their employees' needs and offer them a range of perks to increase their motivation. But whereas this may result in the improved satisfaction of the employees, it does not necessarily increase their engagement. Namely, we need to distinguish between work satisfaction and work engagement. This is further necessary because of historical changes in the nature of work.

The concept of work engagement is quite different from theories based on organisational behaviour. William Kahn was the first to scientifically study employees' work engagement. Kahn (1990) studied employees' attitudes towards their work assignments. His research was still based on theories of organisational behaviour from 1950s and 1960s. It eventually led Kahn to believe that engagement is intrinsic to each individual. An employees' **engagement** describes the personal effort invested into their work. As opposed to that, personal disengagement implies an individual's retreat and a spontaneous defence mechanism; it primarily indicates an obscuring of true identity.

Kahn determined that employees' engagement should be treated separately from their disengagement, since these are two distinct categories. Personal engagement is an individual's spontaneous response and a fundamental, personal reflection of themselves. An individual's engagement is a sign of their attachment to a work task and everyone else connected to it. Engaged individuals possess qualities such as energy and cognitive abilities, which are mirrored in their efforts.

3.3.2 How to measure the work engagement of remote workers

In the years to come, Kahn's research became the basis of numerous other studies. In Europe, this specific research field was the predominant focus of interest at the University of Utrecht, in particular Wilmar B. Schaufeli. They developed a special model to measure employees' work engagement, the so-called Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) or the UWES questionnaire (Schaufeli, Bakker, 2003).

The UWES questionnaire includes questions regarding mental strength and vigour (6 questions), dedication (5 questions), and absorption (6 questions):

- Psychological vigour is reflected in the amount of energy invested into work, mental vigour, positive attitude towards work, persistence and resilience (to potential failure).
- Dedication is reflected in the meaning attributed by an individual to their work, their enthusiasm, inspiration, pride in their work and achievements, and the challenges posed by their work.
- Absorption describes the extent of a person's involvement with their work, the degree to which it pleases them, etc.

The idea of engagement originated in "positive psychology". It is the opposite of burnout. Mental vigour is the opposite of exhaustion. Dedication is the opposite of cynicism. Absorption is the opposite of professional (in)efficiency. However, Schaufeli (2003) points out that this does not imply a negative correlation between engagement and burnout. Someone can be engaged without necessarily ending up burned out. Conversely, burnout is not necessarily the consequence of engagement.

The UWES scale has several versions: "UWES-9", "UWES-15", and "UWES-17". There is also a student version of the questionnaire (UWES-S), with 14 questions. The numbers in the names of UWES versions refer to the number of statements used in the questionnaire.

Table 3. The elements and scale in the »UWES-S« questionnaire (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

A 7-level scale is used:

0 never	1 a few times a year or less	2 once a month or less	3 a few times a month	4 once a week	5 a few times a week	6 every day

Vigour	
A1	I feel strong and vigorous when I'm studying.
A2	I can continue studying for very long periods at a time.
A3	When I'm studying, I feel bursting with energy.
A4	I am very resilient when it comes to studying.
A5	When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to class.
Dedication	
A6	I find my studies full of meaning and purpose.
A7	My studies inspire me.
A8	I am enthusiastic about my studies.
A9	I am proud of my studies.
A10	To me, my studies are challenging.
Absorption	
A11	Time flies when I am studying.
A12	When I am studying, I forget everything else around me.
A13	I feel happy when I am studying intensely.
A14	I get carried away when I am studying.

Eventually, consulting agencies developed numerous commercial scales for measuring engagement. Among these, the Gallup Q12 Survey is one of the most popular ones.

The twelve questions are:[5]

1. Do you know what is expected of you at work?

[5] Source: https://www.goalbusters.net/uploads/2/2/0/4/22040464/gallup_q12.pdf from www.gallup.com

2. Do you have the materials and equipment to do your work right?
3. At work, do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day?
4. In the last seven days, have you received recognition or praise for doing good work?
5. Does your supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about you as a person?
6. Is there someone at work who encourages your development?
7. At work, do your opinions seem to count?
8. Does the mission/purpose of your company make you feel your job is important?
9. Are your associates (fellow employees) committed to doing quality work?
10. Do you have a best friend at work?
11. In the last six months, has someone at work talked to you about your progress?
12. In the last year, have you had opportunities to learn and grow?

The answers options lie on a 5-point scale, with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.

3.3.3 »UWES« vs »Gallup Q12«

There are considerable conceptual differences between the UWES and Q12 surveys, both in terms of questions as well as their evaluation. In fact, the discrepancies are so pronounced, that it is both theoretically possible and practically likely that the two surveys would provide a completely different engagement result for the same employee.

The UWES questions try to determine frequency in relation to intrinsic engagement (e.g. mental vigour, energy, etc.). The survey is thus in keeping with Kahn’s theory.

The Q12 is quite different altogether. Conceptually speaking, it is more akin to organisational behaviour rather than the theory of engagement, since it includes some of its standard questions, for example:

- Q2 inquires about working conditions;
- Q4 inquires about praise;
- Q5 inquires about humane treatment at work;
- Q10 inquires about interactions at work;

- etc.

Of course, it could be argued that praise does not in itself constitute motivation (which would spur future engagement), but rather that it is a consequence of engaged work.

There are also differences between the two surveys when it comes to evaluating results. On the basis of their response to the 12 questions and the resulting mean, Gallup divides employees into three categories:

- engaged (more than 3.7);
- disengaged (from 2.5 to 3.7);
- actively disengaged (less than 2.5).

The Gallup Q12 categorisation is somewhat different than the one employed by William Kahn, who distinguished between two categories rather than three. According to Gallup Q12, the third category is comprised of "actively disengaged" employees. These are workers who actively voice their discontent.

The UWES survey does not fully comply with Kahn either. It classifies employees' engagement according to their mean in 5 categories, with the scale somewhat different for each of the UWES survey versions.

Table 4. Norm scores for "UWES-17" (Schaufeli, Bakker, 2004).

	Vigour	Dedication	Absorption	Total score
Very low	≤2.17	≤1.60	≤1.60	≤1.93
Low	2.18 – 3.20	1.61 – 3.00	1.61 – 2.75	1.94 – 3.06
Average	3.21 – 4.80	3.01 – 4.90	2.76 – 4.40	3.07 – 4.66
High	4.81 – 5.60	4.91 – 5.79	4.41 – 5.35	4.67 – 5.53
Very high	≥5.61	≥5.80	≥5.36	≥5.54

3.3.4 How to improve the work engagement of remote workers

Q12 could lead us to conclude that nurturing employee work engagement is primarily the task of managers. In this view, managers may affect employees' engagement through, for instance:

- working conditions;
- praise;

- ensuring good work relationships.

As mentioned above, this understanding of engagement or nurturing engagement is rooted in the paradigm of organisational behaviour.

However, as Kahn pointed out, engagement is intrinsic to people. Kahn (1990) further concluded that there is a connection between employees' individual engagement and the meaning they ascribe to specific situational factors:

- **Meaningfulness of a work task** refers to a person's sense of receiving a return on their investment into a given task.
- **Safety** refers to a person's sense that they can remain in work, without fear of losing their job, their self-image, and their career.
- **Availability** refers to a person's sense that they have the physical, mental, and emotional energy necessary for the realisation of a task.

The above notions also represent the foundation of the manager's tasks. A manager thus needs to:

- assign tasks that the employees find meaningful and important;
- ensure that good work is acknowledged in both material and non-material ways;
- do everything in their capacity to give the employees a sense that their jobs are secure;
- create conditions for employees' career growth;
- make sure that employees are not burdened to the extent where they are left without energy needed for the job.

Schaufeli (Schaufeli, Bakker, 2004) conducted a survey on a sample of 9,679 people. His two key findings are as follows:

- engagement differs among various occupational groups;
- an employee's statistically significant lower score of engagement in relation to the occupational group may indicate problems at work.

Generally speaking, the differences in mean levels of engagement between various occupational groups are significant but relatively small, and they almost never exceed the size of one standard deviation. Nevertheless, a particular pattern is observed whereby farmers and managers exhibit the highest scores in all dimensions and blue-collar workers and physicians show the lowest scores.

3.4 JOB SATISFACTION AND ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE

3.4.1 Meaning of the discussed terms

In order to dissipate doubt or potential misunderstanding, we would like to begin by outlining the meaning of the discussed terms:

- **satisfaction** refers to physical response and consists of two "states" – contentment (positive value) and discontent (negative value);
- **organisational climate** represents a stimulus reinforcing a positive behaviour in members of an organisation (e.g. innovation, quality) and consists of a single state – in other words, it only possesses a positive value;
- **organisational culture** refers to the "collective programming" of mind and may relate to different content.

We have already provided some of these definitions in our discussion of job satisfaction above.

The idea of organisational climate is often mistakenly brought into connection with job satisfaction. Similarly to job satisfaction, organisational climate originated within the paradigm of organisational behaviour. The notion of "organisational climate" originated with Renato Tagiuri (1919–2011) in 1968. According to Tagiuri, organisational climate referred to the subjective perception of an organisation as a system. It was a perception of event, practices, and procedures on the level of organisation. Organisational climate thus refers to the organisation as a whole, whereas job satisfaction refers to an individual's specific job or workplace.

The first questionnaire for assessing organisational climate was developed by George Litwin and Robert Stringer in 1968. Research into organisational climate was most intense in the period from 1970 to 1980, but waned somewhat afterwards. It was never quite as popular as research into employee job satisfaction. The analysis of organisational climate branched into three areas: comparing or finding connections between organisational climate and organisational culture;
connecting organisational climate with job satisfaction;
researching organisational climate as a completely distinct category.

3.4.2 The concept of organisational climate vs concept of culture

Even though the concepts of organisational climate and organisational culture are similar in substance and interrelated to a certain extent, they are fundamentally different in their manifestation. One of the most extensive studies on cultures was conducted by Geert Hofstede, which we will look at in a separate chapter below.

Hofstede (2001) claims that culture is a form of collective mind programming, which separates members of one group or category from another. Svyantek and Bott (2004) proposed definitions which delineate the differences between organisational climate and organisational culture. Organisational culture is thus a sum total of employees' shared values and norms. Organisational climate, on the other hand, is related to behaviour, and is to do with employees' perceptions which are the basis of their "stimulus" and incentive to be creative, innovative, etc.

In certain fields, the analysis of organisational climate may overlap with organisational culture, for instance in:

- **In-group collectivism** (Collectivism II) – the extent of an individual's sense of belonging and identification with a group, family, or organisation.

- **Future orientation** – the extent to which a society encourages and rewards future-oriented behaviour (e.g. planning for the future, investment).
- **Performance orientation** – the extent to which a society esteems and rewards individual achievements and excellence.

In all of the above cases, organisational climate may be understood as a manifestation of culture.

3.4.3 Organisational climate vs job satisfaction

Similarly to culture, job satisfaction and organisational climate also manifest differently. As we have stated above, job satisfaction is characterised by the following:

- Satisfaction is an emotion based on the perception of a job or workplace and may manifest either as a "thought" or as a general physical response; it may also manifest secondarily as behaviour.

- Outward manifestations of "satisfaction" include both "satisfaction" and "dissatisfaction", with factors of satisfaction and dissatisfaction falling into two separate categories.
- Organisational climate refers to the organisation as a whole and manifests in employee behaviour.

Patterson et al. (2005) claim that very little progress has been made over the decades in understanding and developing the theory of organisational climate. Namely, the dimensions of organisational climate have barely been refined over the years. Dunnette, Lawler and Weick (1970) outlined four dimensions of an organisational climate:

- individual autonomy;
- personal responsibility;
- rewarding success;
- support.

Muchinsky (1977) defined the differences between job satisfaction and organisational climate. In his view, organisational climate includes the following categories:

- the attitude of an organisation to people as individuals;
- standards;
- efficiency of leadership/organisation;
- organisational structures and procedures;
- responsibility;
- employees' identification with an organisation.

According to Muchinsky, job satisfaction includes:

- work, i.e. the nature of work;
- control;
- salary;
- promotion;
- co-workers (relationship with co-workers).

3.4.4 The concept of organisational climate as a distinct category

As already mentioned, organisational climate represents a stimulus reinforcing a positive behaviour in members of an organisation (e.g. innovation, quality) and consists of a single state – in other words, it only possesses positive value. Remote workers may also perceive stimuli, such as:

- joint vision;
- awareness of the main activity of the organisation and the intended users;
- rewarding contributions towards shared goals;
- supporting and rewarding good ideas;
- systems approach towards business and systematic problem solving;
- orientation towards progress.

All of these categories are evidently quite distinct from the categories mentioned in our discussion of job satisfaction.

Table 5. Examples of questions assessing organisational climate Ferjan, 2021).

0 never	**1** a few times a year or less	**2** once a month or less	**3** a few times a month	**4** once a week	**5** a few times a week	**6** every day

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
I perceive that all employees in our organisation share a joint vision.							
I am aware of the main activity of our organisation and its intended users.							
I perceive that our organisation rewards contributions towards shared goals.							
I perceive good ideas are being supported and rewarded.							
I perceive our organisation takes a systems approach towards business and engages in systematic problem solving.							
I perceive that employees are oriented towards progress.							

3.5 ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

3.5.1 Development of organisational culture

When we think of culture, the first thing that comes to mind are usually painters, poets, writers, composers, musicians, directors, literature, art, music, film, opera, ballet and theatre. All of this, of course, is culture. However, the notion of culture is far more extensive than that. Geert Hofstede, whom we shall talk about more further below, understands culture as "collective mind programming". In this sense, culture is something which affects the flow of social processes and human interrelations.

According to Needle (2004), organisational culture represents joint values, convictions and principles, shared by members of organisations. It is a product of various factors, such as the history of an organisation, its leadership or founders, technology used in an organisation, its employees and the wider (national) culture in which the organisation is active. Organisational culture includes an organisation's vision, values, rules, business process, behaviours and customs, as well as symbols, language, presuppositions, environment, location, etc.

In the period spanning from the beginnings of industrial age to our digital age, organisations have continuously changed and developed. These shifts included changes in technology, business processes, values, location of business spaces, etc. Alongside these changes, the understanding and substantive approaches towards organisational culture have also transformed.

The idea of organisational culture first emerged during the introduction of principles of scientific management, i.e. at the beginning of the 20th century. The purpose of the introduction of the notion of organisational culture differed from one period to another:

- In the early stages of research, the issue of culture was primarily related to improvements in the productivity of factory workers.
- In the middle of the 20th century, the issue of providing high quality products and the related **culture of quality** superseded the question of productivity.
- At the end of the 20th century, research was predominantly engaged with the question why, given the use of same technological advances, some companies thrive while others fail – in other words, it looked at issues

of customer satisfaction and social responsibility, which led to the development of **corporate culture**.

- The advent of internet, digitalisation, and globalisation meant that local providers were now faced with global competition – the primary focus of research were thus the issues of intercultural co-operation, doing business in different cultural environments, the "export" of cultures and the concomitant issues of safety.
- At the beginning of 21st century and in light of the COVID-19 epidemic, the key issues in organisational culture relate to ensuring safety and health and maintaining the stability of processes during the epidemic.

Large groups became the focus of study relatively late, only after the year 1950. In 1951, Elliot Jacques published his work *The Changing Culture of a Factory*, which is generally considered as the first work to directly study organisational culture. This work is still rooted in the paradigm of organisational behaviour. Jacques (1951) distinguished between the following attributes of organisational culture:

- fair and just treatment of all employees;
- fair pay, including fair differences in payment according to difficulty, success, and merit;
- interaction between leaders and subordinates;
- distribution of responsibilities and powers;
- trust;
- organisation's vision;
- offering opportunities to individuals.

This treatment of organisational culture presupposed fairer attitudes towards employees, better work conditions, care for job satisfaction, etc. In fact, there is a general misconception that organisational culture was only studied for moral and ethical reasons. This was not the case, however. In the 20th century, the West was dominated by neoliberalism. The impulse for the study of organisational culture thus originated in the desire for increased worker productivity.

The introduction of semiconductor technology, and especially the invention of the microprocessor in 1971, led to great technological changes. Manufacturing was increasingly robotised. Already in 1980, Engelberger (1980) came to the conclusion that robots were a cheaper, more reliable and more productive alternative to humans when it comes to manufacturing. To a large extent, the issue of productivity thus became obsolete. Parallel to the robotisation of industry, the markets of Western Europe and the USA were inundated by cars and consumer electronics made in Japan. In these circumstances, the main issues of concern became:

- quality;
- continual enhancement of products.

American businesses were faced with the fact that Japanese companies were more successful precisely because of their different culture (Ouchi & Wilkins, 1985; Morrill, 2008). At that time, culture gave the Japanese economy its competitive edge.

In order to compete, Western economy had to change the key values of its organisational culture. Following the example of Japan, the 1980s saw the emergence of two novel concepts:

- the notion of Total Quality Management (TQM);
- the notion of a learning organisation.

Quality and product enhancement became two key values, which shifted the focus of organisational culture.

Despite the change of priorities in the organisational cultures of the West in the 1980s and the focus on quality and innovation, some companies still failed where others thrived, even if they relied on the same technology. This led to questions about where and how a company needs to be better or different from others. In 1982, Tom Peters and Robert Waterman published a book, *In Search of Excellence*, which turned into a cult work on finding an organisation's individuality and greatly advanced the contemporary understanding of organisational culture. Even though it does not directly address the question of organisational culture, the book brought a revolutionary perspective. The authors write about what the most successful companies (e.g. McDonalds) do differently than their less successful counterparts working in the same field and using the same technology. In other words, they try to answer what a company of the same quality and with the same productivity as its competition does differently in order to be more successful.

During the same period, another book came to prominence, *The Competitive Advantage of Nations*, which was written in 1990 by Michael Porter. This work also addresses the issue of competitive advantage.

The search for individuality and competitive edge led to a rising interest in corporate culture and social responsibility. **Corporate culture** denotes the beliefs and behaviour of an organisation's employees and leaders inside as well as outside the framework of traditional business functions. It is therefore related to:

- factors of customer satisfaction (e.g. working hours, dress code, product quality);
- emphasis on a company's history and tradition;
- elements of social responsibility (e.g. responsible use of natural resources, social responsibility towards local communities, etc.).

The idea of social responsibility came into practice at the end of 20th century as a response to the effects of globalisation. One of the first consumer responses to exploitation of workers was the *Fairtrade* initiative, which was established in 1988. This was the year when the first Fairtrade labelled packets of coffee appeared in the Dutch market. The main idea behind the initiative was to oppose the exploitation of coffee pickers on plantations. The essence of culture of social responsibility is for companies to run their businesses legally and economically while voluntarily shouldering responsibility towards their social and natural environments. Unfortunately, an in-depth analysis of the concept lies beyond the scope of this contribution.

3.5.2 Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory and GLOBE

The Dutch professor Gerard Hendrik (Geert) Hofstede is the author of a pioneering work of research in the field of inter-cultural co-operation. In the period from 1967 to 1973, while Hofstede was working for IBM, he conducted interviews in 40 countries in Europe and the Middle East. He first published his findings in 1978. Hofstede later expanded his research to include other countries. His work resulted in an original model of cultural dimensions.

Hofstede's basic model, which is based on research and study of employees in the international corporation IBM, describes five cultural dimensions (Hofstede, 2001):

- **Individualism / Collectivism:** Individualism is characteristic of societies with loosened ties among individuals. Individuals are expected to take care of themselves and their families. In contrast, people in collectivist societies are integrated into strong, cohesive groups that protect their members in return for their unconditional loyalty.
- **Power distance** is a dimension which is defined as the extent to which less powerful members of society expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. It describes the manner in which various societies face social inequality, noticeable in phenomena such as prestige, wealth, and power. It relates to society's social stratification and tells us to what extent a society is separated into social classes and whether it holds different value systems and expectations for members of different social classes.
- **Uncertainty avoidance** is rooted in a society's cultural heritage and describes its manner of dealing with uncertainty. People in societies with a greater degree of uncertainty avoidance prefer organised structures in their organisations and predictable and known relationships. As opposed to that, some cultures are characterised by risk, e.g. frequent job switching.
- **Masculinity and femininity** describe societally prescribed gender roles. Femininity is characterised by dedication to social goals, care for others and relationships. In contrast, masculinity represents egotistical goals, such as career and money. Masculinity is oriented towards economic goals, whereas femininity is focused on interpersonal relationships.
- **Long vs short-term orientation** is a dimension which describes short-term or long-term aspects of thinking, such as perseverance, personal growth, stability, and adherence to tradition. Long-term oriented cultures are focused on the future and highlight the importance of education, moderation and perseverance; short-term oriented cultures give precedence to looking towards the past and respect tradition, maintaining the status-quo, fulfilling social obligations, etc.

In 2010, researchers added a sixth dimension to Hofstede's cultural dimensions (Hofstede Insights, 2017), namely, **indulgence vs restraint**. This is the degree to which individuals may freely satisfy their needs without the necessity to adhere to strict rules of conduct, or, in other words, the extent to which a society tolerates indulgence.

Hofstede (2001) makes a distinction between organisational and national cultures, but points out that all organisations are embedded into national and social frameworks which affect their running. **National cultures** differ in terms of their foundations and values shared by their members, which is why they are very slow to change. **Organisational changes** are visible in everyday practices of organisations and their effects on changes. Hofstede further emphasised the usefulness of general cultural theory in analysing organisational culture.

The **GLOBE Project** (Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness), a special research project for measuring cultural dimensions, was developed as an extension of Hofstede's model. The study by Jung, Scott, Davies, Bower, Whalley, McNally and Mannion (2009) developed 70 instruments which can be used to research organisational culture. The GLOBE project is thus one of many ways to study organisational culture. It was initiated by Robert J. House. But even though the GLOBE project is based on Hofstede' model of national cultural dimensions, Hofstede (2010) himself finds it inadequate. According to Hofstede, the model is inefficient and unclear in terms of what it is measuring. He therefore believes it is not a significant instrument for measuring organisational culture.

The GLOBE model distinguishes between **nine cultural dimensions**, which explain cultural differences on **national and organisational levels**. The specific dimensions are defined as follows (House et al., 2002):

- **Uncertainty avoidance** is the extent to which individuals rely on societal norms, rules and organisational policies to mitigate the unpredictability of future events and lessen their own sense of uncertainty.
- **Power distance** is a dimension which is defined as the extent to which members of society expect power to be distributed equally.
- **Societal collectivism – Collectivism I:** GLOBE distinguishes between two dimensions of collectivism, social and collective: social collectivism describes the degree to which a society appreciates and rewards forming into group, group action, and joint sharing of resources.

- **In-group collectivism – Collectivism II** is the extent of an individual's sense of belonging and identification with a group, family, or organisation.
- **Gender egalitarianism** is the degree of a society's tendency to lessen the differences between genders related to division of labour, responsibility and reward.
- **Assertiveness** is the extent of societal expectations for individuals to be hard, self-confident, competitive, or aggressive in interpersonal relationships.
- **Future orientation** is the extent to which a society encourages and rewards future-oriented behaviour (e.g. planning for the future, investment).
- **Performance orientation** is the extent to which a society esteems and rewards individual achievements and excellence.
- **Humane orientation** is the degree to which a society appreciates and rewards selflessness, care, honesty, kindness, and generosity.

3.5.3 Improving aspects of cultural dimensions in remote workers

In the past, organisational culture was predominantly related to features which we have already mentioned above: fair and just treatment of all employees, fair compensation, including fair differences in pay, interaction between leaders and subordinates, distribution of responsibilities and powers, trust, etc.

We also stated the reasons for introducing organisational culture did not come from the moral or ethical incentive of the managers, but were economically rooted instead. This is supported by the following facts:

- Organisational cultures have never arisen in and of themselves; instead, they were always introduced by organisations through various management approaches.
- Companies introduced organisational cultures with the intention of increasing their competitiveness.
- The key values, which serve as the foundation of organisational culture, have changed over the course of history and have included, at various times: productivity, customer satisfaction, quality, business excellence, and cost reduction.
- All of these values were geared towards improving the competitiveness of businesses and were not always in the best interest of their employees.

An overview of literature shows that organisational cultures first appeared after the rise of the Industrial Revolution. Early forms of organisational culture were rooted in the paradigm of organisational behaviour, while the more recent ones stem from the theory of social identity. Initially, organisational culture was specific to industrial plants, but globalisation and digitalisation turned it into a global phenomenon.

Despite having lived, until very recently, in a world where organisational cultures were the result of globalisation and digitalisation, this, too, has gradually begun to change. Global events, such as the war in Syria, the annexation of Crimea, and the rise of Chinese influence in Africa show that Western notions of globalisation have come to an end and that the world is once again embroiled in a battle for dominance. The means and methods of this battle differ, however, from traditional war. **We thus strongly believe that ideas of culture should also include a dimension related to questions of security.**

Prior to introducing organisational culture and remote work, we first need to understand the reasons for doing so: what are our goals? There many possible goals for introducing remote work:

- cost reduction;
- continuous employee availability and quick response times;
- unburdening of the traffic infrastructure;
- increasing employees' comfort.

In 2020 and 2021, we witnessed a situation where remote work also pursued other goals:

- preventing the spread of epidemic;
- ensuring health and safety at work;
- maintaining the stability of processes.

Of course, these goals should be followed by the necessary adaptations of organisational culture. The COVID-19 epidemic and the subsequent rise in remote work has altered the understanding of many traditional cultural dimensions:

- **Uncertainty avoidance** – people will need to rely more on societal norms and rules in order to mitigate the unpredictability of future events and lessen their own sense of uncertainty.

- **Societal collectivism (Collectivism I)** – there will be an increased need for joint sharing of resources related to ensuring health and safety at work.
- **In-group collectivism (Collectivism II)** – new measures will be needed to promote the identification of remote workers with an organisation or group.
- **Humane orientation** – societies will be forced to give greater emphasis and reward selflessness, care, honesty, kindness, and generosity related to health and safety at work.
- **Indulgence vs restraint** – in view of the increased threats to health and safety, societies will need to accept strict rules of conduct.

3.6 ORGANISATIONAL IDENTITY

3.6.1 Remote working and new values in organisations

Previous chapters looked at motivation, satisfaction, engagement, organisational climate and organisational culture. In discussing these topics, one often gets that feeling that jobs have only become a means for people to meet their needs. We regularly read and listen to contributions on the topic of satisfaction whose main thrust is that employers should do everything in their power to satisfy their employees' needs.

All too often we neglect the issue of the purpose of a specific organisation or company. Why does a company exist? So that its satisfied employees could meet their needs? Of course not. A company or an organisation is there to meet the needs and expectations of:

- owners or founders;
- clients or users;
- employees.

This chapter will devote more time to owners and users. We shall try to look at specific issues which need to be kept in mind if we wish for an organisation to maintain its nature after the introduction of remote work.

Many naively imagined remote work as employees sitting down behind the computer in their living rooms, clacking on their keyboards, and clients happily continuing to buy products; everyone will get paid and things will be as they always were. This, however, is not necessarily the case. If someone worked as a PE teacher at school, and was generally an athlete, doing their work remotely may mean they (and their pupils) finish the school year 20 pounds heavier. In this case, an athlete is no longer an athlete, and physical education is no longer physical education. PE thus ends up losing its identity as PE and no longer even looks like PE.

On the other hand, a PE teacher may organise their remote work in a way which keeps the students, fit, lean, and flexible. For this to happen it is essential for PE to remain PE. Even if the teacher no longer leads the exercise in a gym, but rather from their home, PE is still PE. In other words, even if the manner of work has changed, the key identity attributes should remain the same. Here, the final outcome depends on many factors, some of them responsibility of the teacher, but many of them also of the organisation management and the organisation as a whole. This chapter will therefore look at certain aspects of identity, image, and reputation which need to be taken into account during the introduction of remote work.

Organisational identity comprises all that an organisation is and everything that we can we perceive in relation to an organisation. The concept of organisational identity first emerged somewhere after 1950; however, it did not really take off until decades later. At the time, many organisations did not feel the need to actualise this idea. The situation changed with the rise of the internet.

According to Balmer and Greyser (2013), prior to developing organisational identity we should answer the following questions:

- **Central focus:** What are the key features of our organisation?
- **Differentiating yourself from others:** Which characteristics separate your organisation from other organisations?
- **Continuity:** How was the organisation unique during its life cycle?

They continue to list questions about organisational identity:

- What are the main characteristics of the organisation?
- Who is the organisation going to communicate with and what about?
- What is the organisation’s mission and how is the organisation committed to its environment?

- What brings together members of the organisation and what affinities do they share?
- How was the organisation perceived by its environment over time?
- How is the organisation perceived by its organisation today?

Balmer and Greyser state that the actual identity of an organisation (i.e. everything that can be perceived by its environment) is the sum total of the organisation's values. It manifests in various ways:

- in the name of the organisation;
- in the owners or founders of the company;
- in its management;
- in its employees;
- in its facilities and premises;
- in its management style;
- in its organisational structure;
- in the characteristics of its business functions;
- in the name, quality and all other discernible attributes of its products and services;
- in its business results;
- and other features.

ORGANISATIONAL IMAGE

Organisational identity tells us what an organisation looks like and everything that people perceive in relation to an organisation. According to Elsbach (2013), **organisational image is people's temporary but transient perception of an organisation.** In other words, these are "images" or "mental representations" people have of an organisation. An organisation can have several concurrent images. This is due to the fact that external publics, as well as internal publics, can each have their own image of an organisation.

Elsbach (2013) believes that organisational image consists of the following dimensions:

- legitimacy;
- correctness and consistency;
- reliability and
- reputation.

The legitimacy of an organisation is evident in its regularity (compliance with legal norms), suitability, and desirability of an organisation's activities from the perspective of socially accepted norms, expectations, and definitions. An organisation's legitimacy is thus not only reflected in its adherence to legal norms and definitions, but also to socially accepted values.

Correctness and consistency relate to the functioning of an organisation's management. They are evident in the realisation of its projects.

Reliability is a feature of an organisation which allows it to pursue its activities with:

- competence;
- benevolence;
- integrity.

An organisation's competence represents its skills and capacities to achieve its goals. An organisation' benevolence refers to its readiness to do good. Integrity refers to an organisation's adherence to accepted social norms and ideals.

CORPORATE REPUTATION

Reputation is the perception of an organisation's status. An organisation's status is ranked (or comparatively classified) with regard to other institutions. It is tied to very disparate attributes, such as reliability, credibility, social responsibility, etc.

Remote working and new symbols

We have already mentioned that the reasons for introducing remote work may vary. For instance, remote work may be introduced to decrease costs or with the desire to have constantly available staff. Perhaps remote work is part of our organisational structure or a characteristic feature of our business functions. Maybe it contributes to the perceived quality of our products and services.

Be that as it may, all employees should be aware of the organisation's central focus, its difference in relation to other organisations, its key features and mission, and in what respect the organisation is committed to its environment. The introduction of these changes takes time, and corporate identity management is an essential part of this process.

Corporate identity management (CIM) refers to the strategic and operative business management and optimisation of the organisation's external perception. The goal of corporate identity management is to attain a high degree of interconnection between the perception of an organisation in a given environment and its actual identity. Ideally, an organisation's identity shares the same values as its publics and surrounding target groups. This would allow the organisation to identify and align itself with society (Herbst, 2009).

By introducing remote work during the pandemic, most organisations pursued and entirely different set of goals, such as:

- preventing the spread of the epidemic;
- ensuring health and safety at work;
- maintaining the stability of processes.

Of course, we should not lose sight of corporate identity management in these cases either. However, our primary focus should reside with building legitimacy, correctness, consistency and reliability of functioning.

3.6.2 Remote working and organisational rebranding

Miletsky (2009a) found that in our everyday conversations about brands we tend to equate products and the companies making or selling the products. There is an important conceptual difference between a product and a company, however. A company may have a large number of different brands and related products on the market, aimed at different target groups.

The behaviour of consumers and the environment is based on the way these individuals or groups perceive the organisation as a whole, or in other words:

- the identity of an organisation;
- the brands produced by an organisation.

Numerous empirical studies conducted since 1995 have shown that an **organisation's image directly affects customer satisfaction and loyalty**. This was confirmed by researchers all over the world:

- In 1998, Tor Wallin Andreassen and Bodil Lindestad conducted a survey on a sample of 600 tourist services users in Norway. They found that the image of a tourist agency importantly contributed to customer satisfaction.
- In 2000 in New Zealand, Jay Kandampully and Dwi Suhartanto determined that product image and product satisfaction are key contributing factors to a repeat purchase. Price was of little importance in deciding on a repeat purchase.
- Analyses of telecommunications markets in China (Fujun, Ali et al., 2009), in Australia (Minkiewicz et al., 2011) and in Pakistan (Hashim et al., 2015) have come to similar conclusions.

Product brand is a system of product symbols, with its own purpose, aim, and function. Symbols come in many forms, for instance in the name of the product, characteristic shape, colour and packaging, specific logos and images, producer's values (e.g. safety, prestige, capability), cultural aspects, personality (e.g. mature people, youth, athlete), etc.

The purpose of a brand is to provide a discernible object of perception to the customer. Customers need to be able to perceive the symbols which make up a brand. Miletsky (2009) described brands as "emotional triggers" – it is the aim of a brand to trigger emotions in the customer. Customer **emotions** related to the perception and use of brand may include:[6]

- **Trust** – customer believes that a brand will fulfil its promise.
- **Integrity** – customer expects fair treatment and solutions to any potential problems.
- **Pride** – manifests the customer's personal connection with the brand.
- **Passion** – customer is convinced that a brand is irreplaceable.

This emergence of emotions is connected to the following elements:

- **Promise** – needs to be related to the customer's lifestyle or affinities in the realm of culture, entertainment, sports, and so on. A promise in written form is called a slogan, which encapsulates a brand's promise.
- **Personality** – customers have their unique personalities, which is why brands need to establish an emotional connection.

[6] Source: http://www.dialogos.si/slo/objave/clanki/zavzetost/

- **Uniqueness and unique market position** – the characteristics of brand products need to be unique, i.e. different from others.

So how does all this relate to remote work? Quite strongly, actually. Remote workers are equally committed to a brand as their counterparts in the office.

A **corporate brand** refers to the organisation as a whole. It is the collection of all the images people have perceived about an organisation up until the present (McKnight, 2013). As such it includes elements of both organisational image and organisational identity. For example, Volkswagen is a corporate brand, while its product brands include Polo, Golf, etc.

According to Slade (2016), every corporate brand implies a **promise**. Just like with a product brand, a corporate brand may be written or unwritten. A corporate brand, however, is much more than a product name, logo, symbol, or provenance. It functions as an **unwritten contract and assurance**.

The idea of a product brand and corporate brand is not only tied to marketing and business communication, but also to processes inside the organisation. LePla and Parker (1999) listed the numerous benefits of the corporate brand for an organisation's internal processes. These include:

- consistency in developing new products;
- clear strategy of business policies aimed at meeting market demands;
- consistent internal and external communication;
- high degree of employee loyalty;
- greater initiative on the part of employees.

4 ORGANISATION

4.1 THE MEANING OF THE WORD “ORGANISATION”

The word “organisation” has multiple spellings and meanings. In the English language, the word is spelled either with an ‘s’ (i.e. organisation) or with a ‘z’ (i.e. organization). Because the variant with an ‘s’ is somewhat more common in British English, we have chosen to use this spelling.

Apart from multiple spellings, the word may also have different meanings depending on the context. Oxford Dictionary defines organisation as:

- a group of people who form a business, club, etc. together in order to achieve a particular aim;
- the act of making arrangements or preparations for something;
- the way in which the different parts of something are arranged;
- the quality of being arranged in a neat, careful, and logical way.

Similarly, Cambridge Dictionary defines organisation as a group of people who work together in an organized way for a shared purpose.

The present work looks at organisations in the context of scientific management, whose principles we have outlined at the beginning of the book. People have been managing work for hundreds of years. However, the most significant developments in management theory emerged in the 20th century. Henri Fayol (1841–1925) and Frederick Winslow Taylor (1856–1915) are considered the originators of scientific management. Fayol is significant for his work *Administration Industrielle et Generale,* published in 1916, and Taylor for his book *The Principles of Scientific Management,* which was published in 1911.

Friderick Winslow Taylor’s work is significant because it illustrates its historical context and explains the need for the emergence of scientific management and the role of management within organisations. Scientific approach towards management grew parallel to the rise of mass production of goods in factories, which opened up the issue of how to increase productivity. At the time, factory managers had very little contact with workers and mostly left them to produce the necessary product on their own. There was no standardisation, and the workers’ main motivation was often merely continued employment, which means there was no incentive to work as quickly or as efficiently as possible. Scholars[7] of Taylor's work agree that scientific management was in essence a response to a **motivational problem**, known at the time as **soldiering**, i.e. the workers' tendency to do the least amount of work possible in the longest amount of time.

The question of productivity was also the predominant topic of later works, up until 1960. This is especially true of research into organisational behaviour, the leading paradigm of human resource management in the 20th century. As already mentioned, Frederick W. Taylor used the term "soldiering", which reflects the way conscripts may approach following orders, to observe that when paid the same amount, workers will tend to do the same amount of work as the slowest among them. To counter this, Frederick W. Taylor proposed that managers scientifically measure productivity and set high targets for workers to achieve. Taylor himself strongly believed that if each employee's compensation was linked to their output, their productivity would go up.

In response to "soldiering", Frederick W. Taylor proposed an approach based on four principles.
Taylor's four principles are as follows:

1. Replace working by rule of thumb, or simple habit and common sense, and instead use scientific methods to study work and determine the most efficient way to perform specific tasks.
2. Rather than simply assign workers random tasks, match workers to their jobs based on capability and motivation, and train them to work at maximum efficiency.
3. Monitor worker performance and provide instructions and supervision to ensure that workers are employing the most efficient methods of working.
4. Divide work between managers and workers, so that the managers spend their time planning and training, allowing the workers to perform their tasks efficiently.

One of the most important management gurus of the 20th century, Peter Drucker, maintained that Darwin, Freud and Taylor were the harbingers of modern world.[8]

[7] See: The Economist, 2009, February 9.
[8] See: The Economist, 2009, February 6.

Taylor's and Fayol's work originated in industrial society. More than one hundred years have passed since then, and our circumstances have significantly changed:

- the proportion of industrial workers has decreased enormously, as opposed to an increase in the number of employees working in services;
- the initial focus of scientific management on greater worker productivity in factories gave way to other fields of interest, such as quality, innovation, intercultural co-operation, etc.

Data (Gallman, Weiss, 1969) shows that in 1840, 70% percent of all people in employment in the USA worked in agriculture, which represented about 50% of GDP. Only 10% of workers worked in industry, and they created about 20% of GDP. In 1910, only 35% of people in employment in the USA remained in agriculture, which now represented a mere 15% of the GDP; by that time, 30% of workers already worked in industry, which created more than 40% of GDP.

The rise of marketing in the first half of the 20th century created a demand for services: financing purchases, logistics and insurance services, etc. In 1910, approximately 35% of people in work in the USA were employed in services. The situation was similar in the territories of today's G7 nations. As an example, let us look at Germany (taking into account the changes in its territories after the year 1945). In 1925, 43.6% of its working population worked in mining and 29.7% in industry; in 1970, only 8.7% of workers were employed in mining and 48.7% in industry.

According to data collated by the McKinsey Global Institute, in 2012 every dollar made in production required, on average, 19 dollars worth of input services (Manyikla, J. et. al., 2012). Compared to the past, the trend of a falling number of employees working in industry and the concomitant growth of services has stalled somewhat over the last decades. This can also be seen in the structure of GDP. Table 6 shows the structure of GDP for selected countries.

Table 6. Proportion of industry and services in the structure of GDP across countries.[9]

COUNTRY	GDP PROPORTION (%)			
	INDUSTRY		SERVICES	
	2010	2019	2010	2019
Germany	27	27	62.3	62.6
Slovenia	27	29	58.8	56.6
Poland	29	29	56.3	57.6
Croatia	22	20	58.9	58.8
Greece	14	15	71.6	68.1
Portugal	20	19	66.1	65.6
USA	19	19	76.2	76.9
UK	19	17	70.6	71.3
Russia	16	19	49.9	49.1

In view of the above, we are immediately faced with the question whether the principles of organisation and management are still suitable in today's circumstances. Do management and organisation only apply to industry or are they also useful in other activities? **We can safely say that the principles of management and organisation set by Taylor and Fayol are universal.** They are still applied today, not only in industry but also in banks, insurance companies, logistics services, schools, health care and elsewhere. It makes little difference whether these working processes take place in factories, offices, in the field or at home.

The second half of the 20th century saw a radical change in the nature of challenges which were the traditional focus of management. As already mentioned, the rise of scientific management was an attempt to respond to the phenomenon of "soldiering", in other words, it tried to increase the productivity of workers. This issue was characteristic of factory labour at the end of the 19th and beginning of 20th century. However, at a certain point productivity stopped being the focal point of management.

9 Source: The World Bank, 2021.

In the middle of the 20th century and particularly after 1970, markets in Europe and the USA were inundated with providers of derivative goods, cheap copies and products with very short life cycles, while Asian companies kept improving their models. Their products were simply superior to their European and American counterparts. This led to a change in priorities. Companies were now faced with two key concerns, quality and continual enhancement of products. Quality describes the capacity of the product to fulfil its purpose and is measurable by indicators, such as length of a product's life, defect rate, etc. From this perspective, products made in Japan after 1970 were better than products from the USA or Europe.

The principles of management and organisation were first shaped in the context of productivity and not issues of quality. Were now these fundamental principles obsolete? It soon became clear that this was not the case.

The principles of organisation and management are rooted in the understanding that there is a limited number of goods, both in nature and society, which means that the available resources need to be used optimally in order to achieve optimal results. A specific example of this are working hours: because working hours are limited, it is important how we choose to use them. Regardless of whether we are looking at issues of productivity, quality, innovation or intercultural co-operation, the principles of management remain useful, at least for the time being. **No matter what our main focus, the universal purpose of the principles of organisation and management is the optimal use of available resources.**

Henri Fayol was the first to define management functions. According to Fayol, these include:

1. planning;
2. organising;
3. commanding;
4. co-ordinating;
5. controlling;
6. forecasting.

Henri Fayol was also the first to define organisational principles as part of management functions. They include the following:

1. Division of work: employees are specialized in different areas and they have different skills.
2. Authority and responsibility: to get things done in an organization, management has the authority to give orders to employees. Of course, with this authority comes responsibility.
3. Discipline: it is often part of the core values of an organisation's mission and vision in the form of good conduct and respectful interactions.
4. Unity of command: an individual employee should receive orders from one manager and that employee is answerable to that manager.
5. Unity of direction: all employees deliver the same activities, which can be linked to the same objectives.
6. Subordination of individual interest: personal interests are subordinate to the interests of the organisation.
7. Remuneration: motivation and productivity are close to one another as far as the smooth running of an organisation is concerned.
8. Degree of centralisation: management and authority for decision-making process must be properly balanced in an organisation.
9. Scalar chain: there should be a clear line in the field of authority (from top to bottom and all managers at all levels).
10. Order: management and employees in an organisation must have the right resources at their disposal, so that they can function properly in an organisation.
11. Equity: the management principle of equity often occurs as part of the core values of an organisation.
12. Stability of personnel tenure: management must find the right staff in the right place.
13. Initiative: employees should be allowed to express new ideas.
14. Esprit de corps: managers are responsible for the development of morale in the workplace, individually and in the area of communication.

Modern authors often refer to 4, 5, 6, 7, or even 8 management functions. As we have seen, Fayol believed them to be six. However, they all have 4 functions in common: planning, organising, command and control.

- **Planning** is a plan of action for how a task should be carried out, who should do it, when, and with what resources.
- **Organising** is a system of division of work, roles, and rules.

- **Command** involves communicating the tasks to workers.
- **Control** is verifying that the tasks have been realised, in time, by whom, and by using what resources.

Organising is thus one of the basic management functions. It is the process of establishing, tweaking, maintaining and realising a system of norms and relationships between people. Norms refer to rules;
relationships refer to an individual's position in relation to others, with regard to:

- the content of their work
- and their position within the hierarchy.

The division of work in terms of **content** is primarily the result of the many different functions within an organisation: sales, procurement, finance and accounting, human resources, and transformation of inputs into outputs. There is a need for varied specialist knowledge even within a single business function.

The division of work according to **hierarchy** is rooted in the basic principles of scientific organising. (Authority and responsibility: to get things done in an organization, management has the authority to give orders to employees.) Hierarchy also results in differences in:

- power – the capacity to impose your will on third parties;
- status – the extent of someone's reputation;
- salary.

All of the above leads to a very simple definition of organising: to organise means to divide work and to set rules.

Any organisational structure is comprised of three dimensions:

- **Complexity** refers to the vertical and horizontal differentiation between members of an organisation. The horizontal differentiation is the consequence of dividing the work in terms of business functions and a narrow specialisation within a single business function; vertical differentiation is the result of hierarchy.
- **Formalisation** refers to rules, policies, procedures, etc.
- **Centralisation** tells us where the power of decision lies within an organisation. Centralisation stems from the basic principles of scientific

management (Degree of centralisation: management and authority for decision-making process must be properly balanced in an organisation.)

Of course, organising is intertwined with other management processes.

4.2 ORGANISATIONAL DESIGN

Organisational design is a complex process of designing an organisation's structure, processes, values, and organisational culture.

The basic rule of managerial design of organisational structures posits that an organisational structure should ensure the realisation of goals which gave rise to the organisation in the first place.
In order to do so, we need to be fully aware of:

- an organisation's purpose;
- an organisation's mission.

The **purpose** of an organisation can be defined very differently by different people. An organisation's purpose is decided on by its owners, founders, and management. From the perspective of neoliberalism, the only purpose, of course, is to maximise profit for the owners. This is tied to various values and entails optimisation of processes, minimising costs, and everything else necessary.

The end of the 20th century saw a shift, however, in the way of understanding an organisation's purpose. We shall therefore take our point of departure in the philosophy of models of business excellence (e.g. EFQM) and the doctrine of social responsibility. From this perspective, the purpose of an organisation are still its business results, but these are the sum total of:

- results connected to users;
- results connected to owners or founders;
- results connected to employees;
- results connected to society at large.

Defining an organisation's purpose in this manner implies different values, a different organisational culture, potentially also a different formalisation, and possibly a few additional processes within an organisation.

The organisation's purpose must provide answers to the following questions:

- What is the main activity of the organisation?
- Who it is intended for (what are its target groups)?
- What do these target groups appreciate?
- Who are the organisation's partners?
- What are the criteria of success?

In terms of organisational design, the key questions are:

- Who it is intended for (what are its target groups)?
- What do these target groups appreciate?

Let us imagine we are a catering company based in a capital city. Our target groups may include students on campuses, tourists, or day visitors; on the other hand, we may want to provide protocol services for the government or the many diplomatic missions. In all of these cases, we will be concerned with the preparation, distribution, and serving of food. However, there are significant differences between the above mentioned target groups, related to:

- expectations about the content of the service (within the same branch);
- purchasing power;
- type of product within the business activity of catering;
- dynamics of demand;
- requirements regarding the work process;
- demands or the perception of minimum quality standards;
- requirements regarding safety;
- etc.

Everything mentioned here affects the choice of the optimal organisational structure capable of meeting all these demands, the choice of necessary processes, the shared values of the organisation's members, and the nature of adequate organisational climate. **All of these solutions need to be further assessed from the perspective of economics. The final criteria guiding the choice of appropriate organisational design are always tied to economics.**

As we have already explained, organisational structures are made of three dimensions:

- complexity;

- formalisation;
- centralisation.

This chapter will take a more detailed look at **complexity**. Of course, organisational structures which overlook the other dimensions are dead on paper, which is why we will also discuss them in our further chapters.

The idea of organisational design may first associate to the "architecture" of an organisation. In simplified terms, the design of this architecture involves the following stages:

- choice of organisational structure;
- job design;
- calculating the necessary staffing levels;
- applying correction factors.

Each of these stages represents a highly complex process which also needs to take into account other management functions and, of course, the business functions of a given organisations. Certain stages of organisational design are connected to the human resources function (e.g.: job design, calculating the necessary staffing levels, applying correction factors).

We will touch upon **centralisation** when discussing the bureaucracy necessary in an organisation. **Formalisation** refers to rules, policies, procedures, etc. We will also take a closer look at them in the chapter on bureaucracy, particularly at the segments of formalisation connected to remote work (in chapters looking at the legal aspects of remote work and the rights and responsibilities of employers and employees).

Organisational design can also be said to include the design of the organisational culture. Organisational culture is subject to a more in-depth analysis presented in chapters on human resources management. We believe that all members of an organisation however should share one key value, the satisfaction of customers, owners, and the environment, which is why we will take a look at the related concepts below.

4.2.1 Choice of organisational structure

Over the years, organisational theory has developed numerous organisational structures. These are generally combinations of basic organisational structures. We are familiar with the following organisational structures:

- simple;
- functional;
- divisional;
- project.

In all of the above cases, the organisation is led by a manager. There are some key distinctions, however, in terms of:

- the structure of division of work with regard to specialisation on lower hierarchical levels;
- the authority and responsibility of the leader on the second hierarchical level.

It is characteristic of a **simple organisational structure** that all the authority and responsibility reside with the general manager.

A functional organisational structure is characterised by:

- division into departments with tasks corresponding to various business functions, which are staffed by specialists in each department's field of work;
- a second hierarchical level with managers responsible for managing departments connected to business functions.

There are 5 basic business functions: procurement, sales, human resources, finance and accounting, and transformation of inputs into outputs. If an organisation is large, these functions may be more complex, with a more extensive division of work according to specialty.

Divisional organisational structure is characterised by:

- division into departments with tasks corresponding to target groups (e.g. the imaginary catering business mentioned above could hypothetically include two divisions: division for "student catering" and division for "protocol services");

- a second hierarchical level with managers responsible for managing divisions (or, put differently, for meeting the expectations and demands of target groups).

Project organisational structure is characterised by:
- division into departments with tasks connected to specific projects (e.g. the imaginary catering business mentioned above could hypothetically include a project organisational structure for doing the catering for a state event, catering and service at a graduation ceremony, etc.);
- a second hierarchical level with managers responsible for managing a specific project;
- individual nature of projects – each project may take place in different circumstances, the expectations of users may vary widely; all of which means that project structure is never static.

Once we have chosen an appropriate organisational structure on the basis of –
- the organisation's purpose;
- the organisation's mission;
- economics;
- necessary technology;
- other possible factors;

– we should proceed to the next step.

4.2.2 Job analysis and design

In order to precisely calculate the necessary staffing levels, it is very important to conduct a job analysis. Jobs need to be performed in order to produce a product, offer a service, or perform a business function. Job analysis is the process of collecting, analysing, and structuring information about a given job. Job analysis studies:
- input;
- output;
- characteristics of the job as a process.

This mostly includes the following information:
- Information about the purpose: why a certain job needs to be done and what contributes to the realisation of the final goal.

- Information about content and field: the necessary tasks and operations; the knowledge, skills, and habits which affect work results.
- Responsibility with regard to content of action: the task performer's responsibility.
- Criteria of realisation: criteria, indicators or parameters which help us ascertain that a task has been completed.
- Competency: knowledge, skills, and habits necessary to perform the task, potential need for more complex knowledge.
- Responsibility from the perspective of use of resources and the quality of product: criteria for using resources, potential quality criteria.
- Duration of work per unit of product.
- Other.

Job analysis can be conducted with different types of methods:

- methods which allow us to collect information about the specificities of a given job (factory work, working with people, research, etc.);
- methods which allow us to collect quantitative data which present the characteristics of a job in a numerical manner;
- methods which allow us to collect qualitative data that present the characteristics of a job in a descriptive manner;
- standardised job analysis methods;
- established data bases.

Individual tasks are joined into specific jobs. Job design is a process of transition from analysis to synthesis. It is based on job analysis, which provides us with basic information about the content and field of activity, responsibility, competence of the task performer, etc.

The process of job design is influenced by numerous, oftentimes interdependent factors. The main factors affecting job design include:

- the necessary technology;
- type of product or service;
- choice of organisational structure;
- work facilities;
- demands by business partners;
- other.

The basic attributes of a job are as follows:

- job title;
- employer's name;
- work tasks;
- working environment;
- direct responsibility;
- knowledge, skills, and habits necessary to perform a given job.

A job title encapsulates the job within the framework of a business function; it can also refer to a position within a hierarchy. Generally, work tasks are described in great detail. A job description provides us with the basic information about a job. It is based on the results of the job analysis and describes the nature of the work and the field of activity. A job description may also include specific examples. Working environment is the place, space or area where the work is being done. Direct responsibility tells us who the worker doing a specific task is directly responsible to. The name of the employer is also one of the job attributes. Specific jobs require certain knowledge, skills, and habits.

When designing a job we should thus meet the following demands:

- the tasks required in a given job should be related to each other in terms of necessary knowledge, skills, and habits;
- the tasks should be at a specified level of complexity;
- they should represent a meaningful whole;
- the employer should be known, so that it is possible to legally establish a relationship between the employer and the employee:
- work should be executed within a specified environment;
- other.

Of course, job design is sometimes severely circumscribed by technological procedures, so it is not always possible to take into account all of the above.

Apart from everything we have mentioned so far, job design also needs to consider structural and organisational aspects. As already mentioned, organisational structure is made of three key dimensions: complexity, formalisation and centralisation. Out of these, complexity is of particular importance. In terms of complexity of organisational structures we need to bear in mind the following:

- which tasks can be coherently joined into a single job;
- whether these tasks belong under the purview of leaders of individual departments;
- how will the jobs be distributed along hierarchical levels.

In the 21st century, it is vital to know which jobs can be done remotely. Jonathan I. Dingel and Brent Neiman from the University of Chicago attempted to answer this question. 37 percent of jobs in the United States can be performed entirely at home, with significant variation across cities and industries.
Dingel and Neiman (2020) classify the feasibility of working at home for all occupations using the responses to two surveys:

- **Work Context Questionnaire** includes questions aiming to capture the "physical and social factors" that influence the nature of work.
- **Generalized Work Activities Questionnaire** includes questions aiming to capture the "general types of job behaviours occurring on multiple jobs", such as the input of information, interaction with others, mental processes, and work output.

If any of the following conditions in the Work Context survey responses are true for an occupation, Dingel and Neiman (2020) code that occupation as one that cannot be performed at home:

- Average respondent says they use email less than once per month.
- Average respondent says they deal with violent people at least once a week.
- Majority of respondents say they work outdoors every day.
- Average respondent says they are exposed to diseases or infection at least once a week.
- Average respondent says they are exposed to minor burns, cuts, bites, or stings at least once a week.
- Average respondent says they spend majority of time walking or running.
- Average respondent says they spend majority of time wearing common or specialized protective or safety equipment.

If any of the following conditions in the Generalized Work Activities survey responses are true, Dingel and Brent (2020) code the occupation as one that cannot be performed at home:

- Performing general physical activities is very important.
- Handling and moving objects is very important.
- Controlling machines and processes [not computers or vehicles] is very important.
- Operating vehicles, mechanized devices, or equipment is very important.
- Performing for or working directly with the public is very important.
- Repairing and maintaining mechanical equipment is very important.
- Repairing and maintaining electronic equipment is very important.
- Inspecting equipment, structures, or materials is very important.

4.2.3 Calculating the necessary staffing levels

Once we have designed the jobs, we can move on to calculating the necessary staffing levels. It is very important that we do this by applying adequate methods of calculation:

- **Repeat processes** are characterised by a large number of repeated identical tasks which are done at approximately the same time intervals (e.g. at the production line); oftentimes there are standard times or other norms to be kept. In order to calculate the necessary staffing levels we use normative methods of calculation.
- **Serving** is characterised by customer visits; the period between two customer visits may be a random variable. Even though service is always of the same type, it can be somewhat different each time (e.g. doctor, post office, cash register). The population needing to be served may be finite or infinite; we may also have customers who can skip the line (e.g. emergencies at the doctor). Calculating the necessary staffing levels involves choosing the appropriate model of serving.
- **Projects** are characterised by being one-off events, which means they are unique – each project is different or being conducted in different circumstances. In order to calculate the necessary staffing levels for projects, we opt for project planning methods.

Applying the wrong method may end up in giving us completely false results and eventually lead to problems. A typical error of this kind is the use of normative methods in case of serving jobs. An example of this is the use of normative methods of calculation in calculating the necessary staffing levels in health care or call centres. None of these cases involve repeat processes; in fact, these are examples of serving jobs. This is why normative methods of calculation will give us the wrong results. In practical terms, the error will manifest itself in dissatisfied customers and overburdened staff.

The use of mathematical models for calculating the necessary staff is not possible in all cases (e.g. the necessary number of workers in research and development).

In terms of cost, it sometimes makes more sense to outsource tasks rather than employ staff of our own.

4.2.4 Applying correction factors

Calculating the necessary staffing levels will never give us the final number of required staff, which is why we need to correct it. We do this for a variety of reasons:

- our calculation results are generally never a whole number;
- we should always take into consideration planned absenteeism;
- we should also take into consideration the productivity of workers.

We need to be aware that calculating the necessary staff by applying mathematical models or methods (such as the normative method or the service model) will almost **never provide us with a whole number**. But we can only employ a whole worker. In such cases we need to anticipate minor job tweaks and internal reorganisation. If this does not produce the desired outcome, we may also choose to realise some tasks through atypical forms of employment.

The final outcome of the staffing calculation may also need to be corrected due to absenteeism. First it needs to be corrected for the number of days assigned for annual leave and then for other forms of absence. Absenteeism refers to any job absence. It includes missed days, being late, leaving your job, or being absent from work. Absenteeism can be either unjustified or justified, and includes:

- sick leave;
- study leave;
- work leave;

- etc.

Employee productivity has always been a variable which strongly affects the necessary number of staff. Because the focus of our study is remote work, we were particularly interested in the productivity of employees working remotely.

A number of studies conducted before the COVID-19 epidemic indicated that remote work or working from home does not affect productivity and might even increase productivity. Bloom, Liang, Roberts, and Ying conducted a study in a tourist company with 16,000 employees. The study was done on a sample of employees in call centres. Volunteers worked from home for 9 months. Analysis showed that they were more productive than the cohort working from office. Several studies looked at "work from home" arrangements within single organizations prior to the pandemic. A randomized controlled trial in a Chinese call centre found evidence of significant increase in worker productivity after workers could select into work from home arrangements (Bloom, Liang, Roberts, and Ying, 2015).

Research conducted in call centres by Kuhn et al. yielded similar results. Work from home may be relatively effective for call centre workers, who work independently and follow scripts (Kuhn et al. 2020).

Etherridge et al. (2020) used the COVID-19 module from the UK Household Longitudinal Survey (UKHLS), administered monthly from April 2020. In the UK Household Longitudinal Survey, employees who work from home stated that they are about as productive as in the office (Etheridge et al., 2020).

Gibbs, Mengel and Siemroth, C. (2021) studied productivity before and during the work from home [WFH] period of the COVID-19 pandemic, using personnel and analytics data from over 10,000 skilled professionals at a large Asian IT services company. Hours worked increased, including a rise of 18% outside normal business hours.

As we are all working at a university, we were naturally interested in the productivity of the academic staff at our home university (University of Maribor – UM) and at our home faculty (Faculty of Organizational Sciences – FOV). We compared data on the number of scientific publications published in the year before the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic (2018) and in 2020 (which we spent working from home from 13 March onwards) and 2021 (which we spent working from home). The results are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Productivity at university level[10].

	FOV_18	FOV_20	FOV_21	UM_18	UM_20	UM_21
Scientific article	35	38	33	995	1083	1102
Review article	0	5	5	59	87	100
Monograph chapter	9	17	12	301	294	308
Academic monograph	1	5	2	48	49	49

4.2.5 Setting a productive and operational remote work schedule

The first step towards achieving an organisation's goals includes job analysis and the calculation of necessary staffing levels. The next step is setting a productive and operational remote work schedule, which is based on effective time management. If we want to set a productive and operational remote work schedule, we should:

- define clear goals;
- set our priority tasks;
- plan our tasks;
- design remote work schedule;
- assign work tasks;
- monitor the remote work schedule.

Defining clear goals is vital in setting up a productive and operational remote work schedule. The goals of individual jobs are set on the basis of our organisation's strategy. We distinguish between strategic and operational goals. Strategic goals include long-term, general goals; operational goals, on the other hand, are short-term and more narrowly defined. Operational goals are connected to specific work tasks and based on strategic goals. Florjančič et al. (2004) define them as work goals. An individual's work goal refers to their specific plan for achieving anticipated work results. Work goals need to be achieved within a given time frame, in a given field, and with co-workers who have their own work plans.

[10] Source: www.sicris.si.

We can have annual, monthly, weekly, and daily work goals. Setting a timeframe for achieving goals is vital for two reasons: it lets the person know when a certain goal needs to be realised and allows them to stay motivated, which is facilitated by short-term goals.
Setting goals is important for a number of reasons:

- Without goals we may fulfil tasks without knowing whether the path we are taking is, in fact, the right one.
- We cannot measure results without knowing the expected, desired results.
- Without clearly defined goals it is impossible for us to know the obstacles which we need to overcome.
- Individuals cannot become efficient without being clear about their goals.

We are familiar with three types of work goals:

- routine goals (e.g. machine maintenance, use of materials);
- creative goals (e.g. improving an inadequate technological process);
- personal development goals (e.g. to keep abreast of latest professional developments).

Work goals are well defined once an individual is capable of incorporating them with their own personal goals. This means that they will also define work goals on the basis of their own personal or professional and career goals. This increases individual motivation and leads to better results.
We can thus say that in setting work goals we need to adhere to the following principles:

- Work goals should be set realistically and shouldn't overreach – an individual should strive to coordinate work goals with the organisation's goals to the extent that they are achievable. This implies that an individual should know what they can achieve and when. Furthermore, an individual should be capable of saying: "I can't." This conveys a clear message to their supervisor who can then set new goals based on their mutual communication. If not, and the goals remain out of reach, the worker will not be able to achieve them; in other words, not only will the goals remain unrealised, the individual will also lose motivation for further work.
- Goals should not be rigid, but should be flexible instead – in today's world and its dynamic environment, individual needs and perspectives change from one moment to another. It is thus vital for goals to be flexible and

adapted, if necessary, either to shifts within an organisation or changes in individual requirements.

- Goals should be set in relation to people not work – a beginner will not be able to keep up with an employee with years of experience. It is thus important to set goals for each person individually, according to their capacity.
- If we are dealing with a large organisation, we first need to set long-term goals and only then performance goals.

Once the goals are set, we need to determine priority tasks. In theory and in practice we still tend to follow the so-called Pareto principle or the 80-20 rule. Vilfredo Pareto was an Italian economist and sociologist who, in 1906, noticed that 80% of wealth in Italy was owned by 20% of wealthy people. Later, the idea was transposed onto the field of business, where it was determined that, in most cases, 20% of clients bring in 80% of revenue. Once the phenomenon was observed on a larger scale, it was discovered that the 80-20 rule also applied to other fields. With regard to time management this would imply, for instance, that 20% of efficiently organised time will bring 80% of results, whereas the other 20% of results will take up as much as 80% of our time (Seiwert, 1997). This means that people spend the majority of their time on unproductive work.

In order to maintain individual productivity it is thus vital to set **work task priorities**. One method of setting priorities is the Eisenhower matrix, which is based on the military strategy of General Dwight Eisenhower, who later went on to become the President of the USA. During the Second World War, Eisenhower led the allied invasions into Africa and Normandy. During this time his experience and knowledge led him to develop a special matrix, which also served as a guideline for his commanders. The purpose of the matrix was to facilitate making decisions related to particular military operations (tasks), i.e. to determine which military operations (tasks) require urgent attention and thus to avoid the damage of reacting too late.

The Eisenhower matrix was eventually applied to the business world by Stephen R. Covey (2020) with the aim of efficiently distributing tasks and making use of people's time. Covey distributed tasks according to their importance and urgency (Table 8).

Table 8. Time management matrix (Covey, 2020)

	Urgent	**Not urgent**
Important	• Crisis • Pressing problems • Deadline driven projects	• Relationship building • Finding new opportunities • Long-term planning • Preventive activities • Personal growth • Recreation
Not important	• Interruptions • Emails, calls, meetings • Popular activities • Proximate, pressing matters	• Trivia, busy work • Time wasters • Some calls and emails • Pleasant activities

Urgent and important tasks/operations require immediate attention. In crises, for example, there is no time for delay. Solutions to crises must be found as soon as possible, since delayed actions may result in extensive and long-term damage. This is why crises are important.

On the other hand, there are tasks/operations which are neither urgent nor important. For example, people engage with time-wasters, such as social media, where one can spend hours uploading new posts, commenting, having conversations, etc. Instead of giving their full attention to work tasks, social media and other distractions divert people's attention and make it difficult for them to regain the necessary focus, which results in even more wasted time.

There are tasks, however, which are important but not urgent. In such cases, people should be proactive in order not to neglect them. In the opposite case, these tasks will eventually become urgent, and may cause significant stress or even result in long-term illness.

After we have set our priority tasks, the next step is **to plan their execution**. The aim of planning task execution is to create a list of all the necessary items of work and set an approximate timeframe for their completion. Planning is usually done in writing or with the use of tables, so that the list of tasks and their timeframe can also be accompanied by necessary means and potential costs. In this way, we can also simultaneously plan how to obtain the means necessary for the execution of our tasks. Task execution plans can be created daily, monthly, or even yearly. It is vital that we regularly reassess them and adapt them if necessary. This provides us with an overview of completed tasks and any digressions which prevented us from completing a task.

The next step towards setting a productive and operational remote work schedule is the actual **designing of the remote work schedule**. The remote work schedule details the timeframe of particular tasks. It is made on the basis of the list of collated tasks and the degree of their urgency/importance.

The creation of an efficient remote work schedule has many advantages (Mind tools, 2021):

- It helps you understand what you can realistically achieve with your time.
- It can help you make sure you have enough time for essential tasks.
- It helps you add contingency time for “the unexpected”.
- It prevents you from taking on more that you can handle.
- It enables you to work steadily toward your personal and career goals.
- It allows you to schedule enough time for family and friends, exercise and hobbies.
- It helps you achieve a good work-life balance.

A successful remote work schedule also allows us to continuously adapt and assess individual tasks and gives us control over our duties and time. The feeling of having control over one’s time and the capacity to organise significantly affect our sense of engagement. Pre-defining tasks increases a person’s motivation and desire to achieve goals, since this manner of organising time increases individual sense of productivity and efficiency.

The creation of an efficient remote work schedule includes the following steps (Mind Tools, 2021):

1. Identify available time – establish the time you want to make available for your work. Time spent on work depends on the design and content of your professional and personal goals in life.
2. Schedule essential tasks – essential tasks are tasks necessary for the purpose of your workplace (field development, finding new solutions) and enter them into your schedule.
3. Schedule high-priority tasks – schedule urgent and important tasks.
4. Schedule contingency time – schedule some extra time for dealing with contingencies and emergencies. As a general rule, the more unpredictable your job, the more contingency time you'll need.
5. Schedule discretionary time – time available to deliver your priorities and achieve your goals.
6. Analyse your tasks – if you find that you have little or no discretionary time available, you need to redo steps two, three and four, and see whether all of the tasks you entered are necessary. It may be that some things can be delegated or addressed in a more time-efficient way.

It is also important to create a remote work schedule with precisely defined and realistic content. This means that the timeframe for completing tasks should be adapted to our capacities, since this is the only thing which will ensure that we can keep to schedule, or in other words, that the schedule is of actual help.

Remote work schedules can be written down or created digitally. There a number of software programmes available for this purpose, which enable us to use a digital schedule. Nowadays, this is further facilitated with the use of smart phones, which are always at hand and allow us to easily edit our schedule if necessary.

The more time we spend analysing our activities, tasks, and jobs, the more efficient we will become. In setting up a productive and operational remote work schedule, we will thus often resort to **delegating tasks**. If we delegate tasks, we transfer a segment of our tasks and duties to another person, with the understanding that the person has the time and capacity to fulfil these tasks.

It is not always easy to delegate tasks. Ashira Prossack (2020) has six recommendations for effectively delegating tasks:

1. Start by being okay with letting go – sometimes our need for control is so strong that it prevents us from delegating tasks. It is therefore essential to find the reasons for holding on to a certain task (fear, mistrust).
2. Be strategic – it is important to delegate the task to a person who is qualified to do it and has the necessary time.
3. Set expectations – when delegating tasks it is essential that we clearly express our expectations about the results and their desired shape.
4. Do not micromanage – once we delegate the task, we should pull back. Our interruptions are frustrating both for us and the person to whom we delegated the task.
5. Trust your team – when we delegate the task we need to trust that the person to whom the task was delegated will bring it to successful conclusion. This means that the person is given full authority to realise the task.
6. Check-in after the task is completed – once the task is completed, we need to check the results. Despite delegating the task, it still remains our responsibility, which means that the potential failure to complete it is, in fact, our own failure.

We generally delegate routine and operative tasks. These are usually repeat tasks which do not significantly affect the running of an organisation. Delegating tasks saves us time and helps us set a more productive and operational remote work schedule.

Monitoring our remote work schedule allows us to keep track of the completed tasks, and the ones we are currently engaged with or will be in the future. We mark completed tasks, edit and adapt the timeframe of remaining tasks in light of unexpected changes, and add new tasks. Keeping track of our remote work schedule gives a sense of safety and control over our work life, which increases job satisfaction. Daily checks also allow us to balance our personal and work life with greater ease. In other words, an overview of all the necessary tasks and their execution enables us to organise our personal time in order to meet individual needs.

4.3 LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR REMOTE WORKING IN THE EU

ILO (2020) defined telework as the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs), such as smartphones, tablets, laptops, and desktop computers, for work that is performed outside employer's premises. In other words, telework implies work achieved with the help of ICTs and conducted outside employer's location.

The legal framework for telework or remote work is provided by:

- guidelines issued by the International Labour Organization (ILO);
- national legislations;
- the EU legislation;
- collective agreements;
- internal rules and regulations of various organisations.

ILO (2020) states that remote work should occur on the basis of a voluntary agreement between the employer and the employee. Apart from agreeing on the location of work (at the employee's home or elsewhere), there are several other aspects that need to be clearly defined:

- working hours or schedule;
- necessary communication tools;
- work to be accomplished;
- supervisory mechanisms;
- arrangements for reporting completed work.

While remote work is typically time limited (e.g. to one or two days per week), many workers are now required to work remotely full time in order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Given the health risks, all workers who perform work tasks and activities which are compatible with teleworking should be eligible to work remotely during this crisis, including those in temporary employment and interns.

The field of working from home (WFH) is regulated by national legislations. In Slovenia, it is regulated by the *Employment Relationships Act*. Slovenian law distinguishes between:

- work from employee's home;

- work conducted by the employee in facilities of their choice but outside their employer's premises;
- remote work conducted by the employee through the use of IT.

Other countries define work in different manner, for instance as:
- work from office;
- work from home;
- work from anywhere.

The legislation of the Republic of Slovenia stipulates that a contract of employment should also define:
- place of work (home or elsewhere);
- distribution of working hours, breaks, weekly and monthly rest days;
- scale of remote work (full time or part time, and combinations thereof);
- amount of compensation for employee's use of own equipment.

National legislations also stipulate the obligatory manner of keeping of work records. In Slovenia, this is regulated by the *Labour and Social Security Registers Act*.

The various aspects of remote work are also regulated by the EU legislation. Some of its solutions regarding the practice of remote work are summarised below:[11]
- As a basic rule, you are subject to the legislation of the country where you actually work as an employed or a self-employed person. It does not matter where you live or where your employer is based.
- If you work in a EU country different from the one where you live and you return to your country of residence daily, or at least once a week, you are a cross-border worker (so-called "frontier worker"). The country where you work is responsible for your social security benefits.
- If you pursue a substantial part of your activity – at least 25% – in your country of residence, you will be covered by the legislation of that country.
- If you pursue a substantial part of your activity – at least 25% – in your country of residence, you will be covered by the legislation of that country.

[11] See: https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=851&langId=en

Remote work is further regulated by collective agreements. The stipulations of collective agreements must not be less favourable than the stipulations of the national law.

Content not covered by the agreement can be further specified in the internal rules and regulations of the employer, such as:

- the process of drawing up a remote work contract;
- the extent of work responsibilities and the expected work product;
- issues regarding health and safety at work;
- manners of monitoring employee productivity;
- issues regarding data protection;
- time logging;
- defining inappropriate behaviour;
- measures in cases of injury at work;
- manner of recording working logs;
- manner of monitoring assigned work tasks and results or employee reports;
- availability of the employee at home – when, at what times, and in what way should the employee be available to the employer and vice versa;
- provision of a safe connection with the employer's Wi-Fi;
- manner of reporting information important for fulfilling the obligations of the employment contract (e.g. leave, medical leave, work trips etc.).

4.4 EMPLOYEE AND EMPLOYER RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

Most national legislations stipulate that workers working from home or other facilities of their choice (in agreement with the employer) hold the same rights as workers working in the employer's premises, including the right to employee management co-operation and the right to unionise.

Most legislations furthermore specify that the employer is responsible for occupational health and safety of staff who work from home as well as their office-based workers. This duty cannot be transferred onto the worker.

During the COVID-19 pandemic the extent of remote work significantly increased. In 2020, the International Labour Organization (ILO) responded by issuing a guide entitled *Teleworking during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond:*

a practical guide, which contains guidelines aimed at employees and employers. Below, we summarise some of the ILO guidelines:[12]

Management practices have to be adjusted to the situation, including prioritisation, workload, tasks, and deadlines. Typical steps that enterprises can take as a response may include:

- Ask workers to prepare an individual teleworking Workplan, which should be discussed and agreed upon with their direct supervisor. These Workplans should complement and not replace current Workplans and related procedures, or existing Workplans need to be adjusted to fit the new reality.
- Clarify priorities and deprioritise work that is not essential or realistic under the current circumstances.
- Agree on a common system to signal availability for work and ensure that managers and colleagues respect it.
- Break up larger teams into smaller cross-functional ones, each with a clear mission and reporting line, where directions and tasks are easy to implement.
- Encourage workers to share when they are feeling overloaded to serve as an early warning system to detect the risk of burnout, and know when tasks or team members have to be re-assigned.
- Conduct a skills-mapping among the workers, to potentially re-deploy under-stretched workers to overstretched teams.
- Talk about how work gets done. Ask employees how they work when they feel most productive, energised, and focused. Encourage workers to work that way as much as possible.
- Ask workers to share examples of how they have changed their everyday routines in ways that work for them.
- Recognise that offline time is needed for getting substantive work done well.

It is also essential for the employer to elaborate their Occupational Safety and Health Policy. The Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) policy update and related actions may include the following aspects:

[12] See: International Labour Organization (ILO), 2020.

- Clarify and update the responsibilities of employers for the protection of the occupational health and safety of the teleworker by taking stock of the health and safety risks and hazards, the home office environment, equipment, ergonomics, and stress as well as other mental health issues.
- Clarify the rights and responsibilities of teleworkers regarding their health and safety while working from home.
- Update and empower health and safety professionals with tools and processes in terms of workers' health support systems, the working environment, training, information, and compliance mechanism regarding OSH and ergonomic protocols specifically designed for teleworkers.
- Train managers and teleworkers on the importance of taking sufficient rest breaks during the workday, as well as clarifying that such breaks won't have negative career consequences.
- Use every opportunity to promote physical health, including exercise, and encourage workers to maintain healthy eating habits, i.e., by sharing links to physical and mental wellbeing videos, and promoting the use of fitness apps and services.
- Establish new options or augment existing options for psychological support for workers to share their fears and worries confidentially, i.e., through access to helplines, counselling, and employee assistance programmes.
- Encourage managers to be a role model for staff under their supervision and conduct themselves in ways that show how to mitigate stress.
- Consider allowing workers to borrow equipment from the office for the duration of the pandemic-related teleworking, such as office chairs, monitors, and other relevant tools that are fully compatible with ergonomic standards.

Apart from everything mentioned above, employer may also have special demands, such as:[13]

- reporting anything suspicious to the IT department;

[13] Source: https://wlj.com/in-the-workplace-2021-legal-implications-of-remote-work-in-the-covid-19-era/

- ensuring Wi-Fi routers and all devices are protected by a strong password and the latest encryptions;
- regularly changing passwords and making them more complex;
- avoiding public Wi-Fi;
- exercising caution when opening attachments or links from unfamiliar senders or websites;
- preventing email addresses from being used to steal passwords and financial information;
- not sending sensitive corporate data to personal email or cloud accounts;
- and not allowing family members to access company systems or devices.

4.5 FORMAL AND INFORMAL ORGANISATION

Chester Barnard (1866–1961) is generally considered the first researcher of informal organisations. Informal organisation is defined as an aggregate of human interactions. Informal organisations are created spontaneously, in all places where personal contacts and interactions take place.[14]

Work based professional relationships are oftentimes impersonal. But human beings are social by nature; their psychological makeup is geared towards seeking personal contact with others. People thus also try to establish relationships inside the organisation they are working for. All work and all organisations are consequently characterised by a social component. The need for contact and alliance drives people to bond in informal organisations. After all, as already mentioned above, group collectivism is one of the universal cultural dimensions. Informal organisations arise alongside formal organisations. They are formed by individuals who are looking for alternative ways to achieve their personal goals. Namely, each individual also pursues personal goals, which may or may not align with the goals of the organisation they are working for. In general, people tend to spend more energy trying to realise their own personal goals. If anyone in the organisation thwarts the realisation of these goals, or if they find themselves unsuccessful in pursuing them, individuals will usually seek alliance.

Formal organisations differ from informal ones in the following regard:

[14] Published in: Organization Theory by Chester Barnard, quoted in: Isomura, 2020.

- **Purpose**: the purpose of an informal organisation is usually not defined, whereas the purpose of a formal organisation is defined by its owner or founder.
- **Internal procedures**: internal procedures in formal organisations are formalised; in informal organisations, they are usually generated spontaneously.
- **Values**: the values of formal organisations are defined by the owners or founders; in informal organisations, values are created on the basis of interpersonal communication.
- **Rules**: formal organisations are characterised by stable rules; in informal organisations, rules are spontaneously adapted to the environment and interests or needs.
- **Responsibility**: formal organisations have clearly defined responsibilities rooted in hierarchy; while informal organisations may be characterised by differences in authority and thus an informal hierarchy, there is no clear allocation of responsibility.

Informal groups arise for the following reasons:

- individual interests which can only be realised through the working of a group;
- personal affinities and friendships;
- familial, local, or other types of acquaintance;
- group interests;
- belonging to the same subculture.

4.6 MACHINE BUREAUCRACY VS PROFESSIONAL BUREAUCRACY

When we speak of bureaucracy, we generally first think of offices, intricate procedures and piles of documents. However, the term can also apply to other things. Bureaucracy or a bureaucratic institution is a type of organisation which is not necessarily connected to the state, officialdom, etc. Namely, the principles of bureaucratic institutions are also applied in business companies. However, the term “bureaucratic organisation” is also tied to some other, more inconsistent interpretations.

The idea of bureaucratic organisation is closely connected to Max Weber, even though it was theoretically elaborated by his son, Maximilian Weber (1864–1920). He is often mistaken for his father, Max Weber (1836–1897), who was an important state official and politician. Academic literature abounds with descriptions of various attributes of bureaucratic organisations. Wikipedia, for instance, lists 9; it also quotes the work of Richard Swedberg and Ola Agevall who, if we look closely, only explicitly list 6 features. Swedberg and Agevall (2005) say that Weber wrote on bureaucratic organisation in numerous works, where he described various attributes, but these were never collected in a single work, since he fell ill in 1897, following the death of his father. After Weber himself died, his wife destroyed all of his later work. Swedberg and Agevall (2005) describe Maximilian Weber as one of the world's most important social scientists but also one of the most notoriously difficult to understand.

On the basis of various sources, we can summarise the principles of bureaucratic organisation as follows:

1. Members of bureaucratic organisations have specialised roles.
2. Each member only makes decisions within the sphere of their remit.
3. Employment is provided on the basis of formal qualifications and competencies (e.g. through an open call).
4. There are unified principles of placement, promotion and transfers.
5. Set salaries.
6. Members are promoted on the principle of seniority.
7. Careers are defined through a systematic structure of salaries.
8. There is a hierarchy of authority and responsibility, but decisions are only made within the sphere of individual remit.
9. Formal behaviour is subject to strict rules of discipline and control.
10. Procedures should be traceable.
11. Documents need to be archived.
12. Everything is subject to abstract rules.
13. A bureaucratic organisation and everything related to it is impersonal.
14. It is politically neutral.

Bureaucratic organisations are still relevant today. Even the most modern car, for instance, made in a fully robotised company, is produced following the principles of a bureaucratic organisation, including the full traceability of materials and processes, archiving of documentation, manufacturing of components, and the eventual services.

This type of organisation is undoubtedly also very significant for remote work, since it prevents individual arbitrariness. However, it does have some disadvantages:

1. It may result in the obscuring of goals: concern for procedure may supersede the actual goal of the procedure.
2. Standards of execution may turn into the upper limit of performance.
3. Workers might limit their effort merely to not making procedural mistakes.
4. Excessive formalisation may impinge on the autonomy of decision-making.

Still, it would be wrong to see bureaucracy or bureaucratic organisations as merely something (stereotypically) bad. Apart from disadvantages, there also advantages to bureaucratic organisations:

- Bureaucratic organisations are, or should be, impersonal and apolitical.
- Bureaucratic organisations prevent the arbitrariness of individuals.
- Bureaucracy is almost the only way to ensure the traceability of past events.

Because Maximilian Weber once described a bureaucratic organisation as a well-oiled machine, it is often also referred to as **machine bureaucracy**.

Henry Mintzberg (b. 1939) has a somewhat different outlook on organisational structure. Mintzberg (1980) divided organisations into 5 typologies. The typology of five basic configurations includes:

- **Simple structure** (is a very simple organisation, minimally formalised and highly centralised, suitable for dynamic environments).
- **Machine bureaucracy** (with attributes described by Maximilian Weber, suitable for stable environments).
- **Professional bureaucracy** (based on standardisation of knowledge, with very specialised but not highly formalised jobs done by highly qualified workers; the organisation is very decentralised, its technical systems are simple; suitable for stable environments).
- **Divisionalised form** (made of market based units).
- **Adhocracy** (has a matrix structure, jobs are very complex and demand high levels of specialisation, departments are small and decentralised).

According to Mintzberg, there are six ways in which an organisation can coordinate its work:

- mutual adjustment (realised through mutual communication);
- direct supervision (one person supervises multiple others);
- standardisation of work processes (work processes are specified);
- standardisation of output (the desired output is specified);
- standardisation of skills and knowledge (particular jobs require precisely specified skills and knowledge).
- standardisation of norms and behaviour.

Mintzberg's work, *Professional Bureaucracy*, was highly popular at the end of the 20th century. After its publication students all across the globe studied it, within the context of widespread belief that professional bureaucracy may serve as an alternative to bureaucratic organisations. In comparison, it does have some advantages, especially in that authority is not rule based, but instead rests on professional capacity.

The advantages of professional bureaucracy also became evident during the widespread, ad hoc introduction of work from home, but only in branches with relatively simple technical systems. This was the case, for example, with education, where it was relatively easy to transition into remote learning. Such a massive and rapid transition into work from home after the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic would have been impossible without highly qualified people. No bureaucracy foresaw the COVID-19 outbreak, and if it was up to machine bureaucracy we probably would not have shifted to remote work in a very long time. Branches which were quick to transition into remote work obviously contained elements of professional bureaucracy even before the outbreak.

Attributes of professional bureaucracy can be found in many organisations – education, health care, industry and elsewhere. In most cases, however, there are no organisations which exist in a single, pure form. The characteristics of machine bureaucracy are here to stay. It is difficult to imagine schools, health care or car industry, to name just a few examples, without at least some of the attributes of bureaucratic organisation (e.g. a hierarchy of authority and responsibility, traceability of documentation, etc.).

4.7 LEARNING ORGANISATION

The second half of the 20th century saw a radical change in challenges which were the traditional focus of management in the USA and Europe. All of a sudden, productivity was no longer the most burning issue. This may be attributed to the fact that managerial approaches became firmly established over the decades, so that people grew accustomed to them and adapted their behaviour accordingly. Values and habits changed, and in the aftermath of the Second World War society in general changed – these transformations took place over the course of at least one or even two generations of workers.

Technology advanced to the extent that it changed the nature of work. Furthermore, there were at least two more events which we can plausibly claim changed the world:

- the use of semi-conductor technology;
- the Arab–Israeli wars of 1967 and 1973.

Semi-conductor technology was the subject of research in as early as the 19th century. The invention of bipolar transistor in 1947 and 1948 was the result of decades of research. The first integrated circuit based on semi-conductor technology was produced by the company Texas Instruments in 1959. The technology evolved with such speed that after the year 1970 a single integrated circuit could hold up to 100,000 transistors; after 1990, this number rose to 10 million electrical components.[15]

The introduction of semiconductor technology, and especially the invention of the microprocessor in 1971, led to robotisation. Hockstein (2007) reports that the first robot to become part of the manufacturing process was introduced already in 1961 by General Motors in the USA. Of course, there is no "soldiering" in robots, so the issue of productivity became largely obsolete. At least in companies, the

[15] Summarised after: https://www.hitachi-hightech.com/global/products/device/semiconductor/history.html

primary reason for the introduction of management disappeared. This, however, did not mean that management was no longer needed. Of course not!

For example, if we look carefully at the processes in a modern car factory somewhere in Germany, we can recognise a clear outline of a factory, despite the robots, with the characteristic smell, colour, sound, and everything else that comes with it. However, there is virtually no supply of components on the production line, everything is delivered "just in time", and all the work tasks are precisely allocated. Once we come to the end of the production line, newly finished cars roll off it, but there are no cars outside – all of them are moved immediately. Everything is carefully planned and organised and all of this is the result of management.

But apart from this, management also has other concerns. Parallel to the robotisation of industry, the markets of Western Europe and the USA were inundated by cars and consumer electronics made in Japan. The first products to come to the USA and Europe from Japan were cars. Toyota began selling cars in the USA already in 1958, but only sold 258 vehicles in their first year. The situation changed drastically during the time of Arab-Israeli wars, in 1967 and in 1973. In 1970, Toyota sold as much as 1 million cars in the USA and had the biggest market share of personal vehicles in the USA in 1973. At that time, American cars were large and wasteful, while the Toyota's flagship model, the Corolla, represented a smaller alternative. However, an increase in Toyota's market share was not only the result of its smaller and more economical cars. Toyota's main competitive advantages were the quality and continuous improvement of its models. A similar situation occurred on the market of consumer electronics, which was dominated by Panasonic and Sony.

But the biggest shock to the industry, and in particular car industry, in the USA and Western Europe was yet to follow. After the war in 1973, Arab countries imposed an embargo on the export of oil to the USA and a number of countries which supported Israel during the war. This resulted in a price hike of oil in the USA, which went up by as much as 300%. Under the new circumstances, the companies' previous concern with productivity soon shifted to issues of quality and continual enhancement of products.

The idea of a learning organisation emerged as one of the possible answers to the need for continuous enhancement of products, services, and processes. The principles of a learning organisation contributed to the growth and increased market share of some manufacturers (e.g. Toyota), whereas many who failed to adopt them crashed. In a way, we can say that the notion of a learning organisation originated in the car industry and the industry of consumer electronics, i.e. in field with the greatest need for rapid improvement of existing products. Organisations implemented it in order to make their products better and better and for buyers to recognise this. In other words, the aim was to maintain or increase market shares, i.e. to maintain or enhance their competitiveness.

The new paradigm significantly contributed to the development of a number of large, global companies: Nokia, Oracle, Microsoft, Samsung, Google, and many others. To this day, the idea of building a learning organisation is still the ideal of managers world over. The transformation of Samsung Electronics under the leadership of Lee Kun-hee has been theoretically explained through various perspectives, such as communication, paradigm shift, and strategic vision, which can all be seen as strategies falling under the umbrella theory of learning organisation (Hur Chul-boo, 2010). Microsoft built its learning organisation strategy based on 3 ideals and 4 principles. The first ideal is self-criticism; the second ideal is message feedback; and the third ideal is a wide-ranging exchange.

The principles of a learning organisation also have a vital application in some sports, both team sports and individual sports. Shamsie and Mannor (2013) have conducted an analysis of a large sample of Major League Baseball teams from 1985 to 2001. Their results provide significant proof of the importance of tacit knowledge for the performance of an organization.

The idea of a learning organisation was theoretically elaborated by Fiedler (1967), Argyis (1978), Senege (1990), Huber (1990), Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995), and others. The first comprehensive contingency model for innovating processes in organisations was developed by Fred Fiedler (1967). Fiedler believed that the key to leadership success was managerial style. He attempted to define basic leadership styles. He hypothesised that leadership styles were permanent. A permanent leadership style may prove a problem in changed circumstances or when an organisation fails to meet its goals. In this case, organisations are forced to change either their goals or their leader.

Argyis (1978) sees a learning organisation as a process of recognising and correcting errors. In his view, an organisation learns through the individual learning of its people.

Huber (1990) ties the idea of learning organisation to four constructs: knowledge acquisition, information distribution, information interpretation, and organisational memory.

Peter Senge is generally considered to be the founder of the theoretical notion of a learning organisation. Senge's (1990) starting point is the idea that progress in not the result of abstract, imaginary forces, but is instead caused by people. According to Senge, learning organisations allow people to continuously develop their capacities in order to achieve the results that they truly want and welcome new, expansive ways of thinking. Senge (1990) describes the five attributes of a learning organisation:

- employee excellence and personal mastery;
- mental models;
- joint vision;
- team learning;
- systematic problem solution and systems thinking.

Employee excellence in learning organisations is primarily seen in:

- personal mastery
- self-management.

Most successful organisations have extraordinary individuals. Amazon is personified by Jeff Bezos, Tesla by Elon Musk, the Slovenian Olympic basketball team in Tokyo by Luka Dončič. The essence of a learning organisation is the establishment of a relationship between the individual and the organisation and between the knowledge and learning of an individual and the knowledge and learning of an organisation.

Self-management refers to the capacity of an individual to commit their work efforts to long-term goals and their ability to eventually achieve them.

In his work, *The Fifth Discipline*, Senge (1990) describes **mental models** as one of the five attributes of a learning organisation. The term »mental model« is believed to have originated with Craig. A mental model is a sort of an internal symbol or representation of external reality. Individual mental models are stereotypes, generalisations, preconceived notions, **pre-existing mental scripts about what or how something should happen**, what or how someone should act, or even about what people should look like (Craig, 1943). Mental models are often the reason or trigger for certain types of action or inaction. When entering an organisation, individuals usually come with certain stereotypes or preconceived notions. Because a goal can be understood as a type of a mental model, it is important to have goals in a learning organisation.

Organisation as a whole has its own mental models and organisational memory. According to Hegberg (1981), organisations have conscious systems and memories. Hegberg (1981) likens it to human beings and claims that organizations can change and develop their personalities, habits, beliefs, and ideologies over time. He further believed that organisational memories preserve certain behaviours, mental maps, norms, and values. In creating a learning environment it is thus important to replace confrontational attitudes with an open culture (McHugh et al., 1998).

A vision is a mental image of the future. Many people, including top managers, have their **personal vision**; this, however, may never translate into a **shared vision** or a **common goal** of a given organisation. History has shown that there are individuals capable of transforming their personal visions into the goal of an organisation and succeed. Their success is due to the motivation of their employees, their capacity to learn and their desire to achieve the set goal. Often the shared vision is to succeed against a competitor (Wang&Ahmed, 2003).

Senge (1990) believes that a team is the core or basic unit of learning in an organisation. Teams are formed primarily to achieve synergy between individuals. **Team learning** is the process of working collectively to achieve a common objective in a group. In the context of a learning organisation, team members

tend to share knowledge and complement each others' skills. If members lack commitment and effort, team work will result in failure and will not lead to learning. This is why teams should be given the freedom to act, especially in the context of a learning organisation (Decuyper et al., 2010).
Team members discuss their goals, assess ideas, make decisions, and act jointly in order to achieve set goals (Heller and Hindle, 2001).

- A **systems approach** entails the breaking down of a whole into components. Components are usually less complex and therefore easier to understand. A systems approach means that we study both:
- the characteristics of components
- and the nature of the interaction between them.

In other words, we look at singularities and look at how the connections between them affect the working of the whole. Even though many a discovery or innovation was a product of coincidence or intuition, this does not diminish the fact that systems thinking has been the conceptual framework and basic tool of development in the past fifty years.

After 1990, several other models of a learning organisation have emerged. A well-known model was proposed by Nonaka and Takeuchi; its main focus is the transfer of knowledge within an organisation. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) propose that creation of knowledge is the result of an interaction between tacit/implicit and explicit knowledge. This interaction takes place through the processes of socialisation, externalisation, combination, and internalisation. The *socialisation* of knowledge begins by building connections that enable and allow the members of an organisation to exchange experience and thus create implicit knowledge. *Externalisation* enables the members of a group to join the process of converting implicit into explicit knowledge. *Combination* allows the employees to systematise and exchange their newly acquired explicit knowledge and to convert existing knowledge into knowledge systems.

Richardson (1995) created a model of “six building blocks”, which includes:

- **Systematic problem solution.** Like Senge, Richardson highlights the needs for systematic problem solution.
- **Experimenting** is the systematic acquisition and testing of new knowledge.

- **Learning from experience** demands systematic storage and continual re-evaluation or assessment of success and failure. The aim of error analysis is not to assign blame, but rather to draw attention to mistakes in order to prevent them from happening again in the future. Success is not productive unless it is clear how it occurred in the first place.
- **Learning from others** implies having an organisational culture which promotes the so-called enthusiastic borrowing of ideas or SIS (Steal Ideas Shamelessly). This includes systematic benchmarking with others in the same industry.
- **Transfer of knowledge** is necessary if we are looking to learn something new, since it is difficult to achieve wisdom and become knowledgeable if we are passive.
- **Measuring progress** allows for better process management.

Dimovski (2005) claims that learning societies of the 21st century are based on equality, open access to information, loose hierarchies, wide scope of control and organisational culture that promotes flexibility and team work. The FUTURE-O model (Dimovski et al. 2005) demands a comprehensive realisation of the idea of a learning organisation and emphasises the holistic nature and interconnectedness of all processes and employees.

In 2013, Ferjan, Mežnar and Jereb published the results of a study conducted among ski jumpers who competed in large competitions, such as the world cup, world championships, and the Olympic games. They were trying to establish whether the presence of attributes of a learning organisation in the process of training affects competition results and how strongly this is affected by specific attributes.

They took into consideration the following characteristics of a learning organisation:

- systematic problem solution and systems thinking;
- experimenting;
- learning from experience;
- learning from others;
- transfer of knowledge;
- measuring progress;

- individual knowledge;
- shared vision;
- mental models;
- team learning.

The researchers conducted a survey among 54 competitors, including 15 jumpers who achieved first, second, or third place in world cup competitions, at the Olympic Games, or at world championships.
They determined that, statistically speaking, each of the participating jumpers could finish anywhere between 1st and 16th place in any given competition. The differences between the very best are truly small. At the Olympic competition (normal hill) in Pragelato in 2006 first place was won by Lars Bystøl and the second by Matti Hautamäki with a difference of one point – translated into distance, this means that he was less than a meter behind. Similarly, at the Olympic Games in 2010 (Whistler Olympic Park; normal hill), the difference between second (Adam Małysz) and third place (Gregor Schlierenzauer) amounted to 1.5 points, i.e. less than 1 meter.

It is hard for dry analytical numbers and correlation coefficients to yield their true meaning. But we can safely say that there is a statistically significant correlation between the application of the principles of a learning organisation and competition results.

As we have mentioned, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in an increased volume of remote work. From the perspective of a learning organisation, the two key issues are:

- How do you train remote workers?
- How do you follow the principles of a learning organisation with remote workers?

One should not overlook the importance of training with remote workers. The method and techniques for remote training have been known for at least 20 years, so we do not have to look far for an answer. Rebecca Skilback (2020) published the findings of her study on the topic in FORBES magazine. In it, she finds that 94% of employees say they would stay at a company longer if it invested in their career development and the opportunity to learn is one of the top reasons why people accept a job offer. 42% of millennial employees say they are likely to leave if they are not learning fast enough.

COVID-19 has accelerated our adoption of remote work practices. Currently, nearly twice as many employees are working from home than at their workplace. Workers like the flexibility of remote work – 72% of US workers say they would like to work from home at least two days a week post-COVID and a third (32%) say they would prefer never to go to the office again.[16]

Thorpe (2021) conducted her research in libraries. She determined that the experience with COVID-19 has shown that new and developing roles demand skills, knowledge, and capacity which the library staff has not been trained for. In Thorpe's view, the idea of a learning organisation is one of the possible frameworks for the continuous education and motivation of employees.

How to maintain this innovative attitude in the context of remote work is a different issue. Studies have shown that remote workers communicated more during the COVID-19 epidemic. Evidence from a large sample of email and meetings metadata shows stark increases in virtual meetings and emails after government-enacted lockdowns (which effectively forced work from home on large samples of workers), presumably as a way to compensate for the loss of physical interactions (DeFilippis, Impink, Singell, Polzer, & Sadun, 2020).

However, just as with athletes where the differences between them are small but there can only be one winner, this is also true for business. When buying products (e.g. a car, mobile phone, or a PC), we do not buy all of them on the market, but carefully select one.

[16] Source: Skilback, 2020, November 24.

4.8 CUSTOMER SERVICE

Classic organisational theory began to emerge at the beginning of the 20th century and stems from classic definition of business functions: sales, procurement, human resources, finance and accounting, and the process of transforming inputs into outputs. Over the decades, our environment has changed and our expectations have increased. We might, for instance, need to consult a user manual, and we expect to be able to immediately find it on the company website. When a product breaks (e.g. our Notebook), we expect to be able to buy a new one immediately and have it delivered to our door and the old one taken away. We need to install a new printer; it seems natural to us that the appropriate software is readily available. In the old days, the key factors in our decision to buy something were the "shop window" and price. Nowadays, all of this has changed. Just like our work, our buying is also largely done from home.

The AIDA model was first presented already around 1900. The model breaks the customer's decision to buy something in four stages: Awareness-Interest-Desire-Action. AIDA proposes that the customer comes to the decision to buy something on a rational level, since they first show interest and then gather information about the product or elements of purchase with the relevant personal and business sources. This shows that even more than a century ago, information was already important. In today's age of internet and ICT technologies, this is even more true: customers make sure they know what they are buying and who from, either directly at the shop or through the internet.

Apart from the product, this also involves other important dimensions. J.D. Power was one of the first models developed for measuring customer satisfaction. It was developed in 1968 by Dave Power and was initially created to measure the satisfaction of car buyers. Nowadays, the criteria of satisfaction are different from what they used to be. Organisations measure satisfaction continuously. In fact, ratings are already part of our internet browsers, and a mere decimal point of difference may make a customer turn to another product.

However, aspects of satisfaction go beyond the classical marketing mix. In their work, González-Rodríguez et al. (2015) focused on three dimensions of social responsibility: financial, social, and environmental. They thoroughly analysed studies from 1978 onwards and came to the conclusion that there is a great variety of customers. Some of them may be altruistic (they show solidarity to others and the environment and any decision to purchase is also guided by their values) or they are egotistical (the only thing guiding them is the price).

These findings should be kept in mind when designing an organisation. In our introduction we highlighted that organisational design is fundamentally guided by two elements, i.e. the purpose and mission of an organisation. In this respect, we can basically adopt two positions:

1. We can consciously decide to limit ourselves to economic effects, i.e. profit, and leave everything else aside. This approach is in keeping with the doctrine of liberalism or neo-liberalism. In this case, specific processes within an organisation will be somewhat less complex or missing altogether – this will reduce the number of staff and decrease the number of departments.
2. On the other hand, we can also strive for other, not merely economic effects: customer-related results (i.e. customer satisfaction), results connected to owners or founders, results connected to employees, and results related to society at large. This approach will primarily demand an adjustment in formalisation (in terms of quality guidelines) and the consequent adaptation of processes – we might need extra staff and a department or two more.

Each of these two options has its own set of advantages and disadvantages. The first approach results in smaller costs of running, lower costs of production and services, and most likely also in lower quality. There is a general consensus that this is not a viable long-term approach, but this is not necessarily true if the organisation finds an appropriate target group.

Throughout history, several concepts were developed with the aim to ensure the satisfaction of customers, owners or founders, employees, and the general society. Each of these concepts has an effect on organisational structure and needs to be taken into account when designing an organisation. These ideas may only relate to specific aspects (e.g. marketing and customer service are only aimed at customers; ideas of business excellence, however, are more complex). The most well-known among them include:

- marketing;

- social responsibility;
- organisational identity or reputation;
- customer service;
- other.

4.8.1 Marketing

The idea of marketing has been around for a long time. The term "marketing" can already be found in dictionaries of American English dating back to 1832 and 1856 and in British English dictionaries from 1932 onwards. It is commonly assumed that the idea of marketing first came into prominence at the turn of the 20th century and then continued to prevail throughout the 20th century. First courses in marketing were offered by British universities in 1901 and in 1902 by American universities. Weitz (2002) tells us that *Marketing Methods and Policies*, published in the USA in 1917, is considered the first marketing textbook.

However, the idea of marketing was theoretically elaborated only in 1957 by Wroe Alderson. According to Wroe, marketing is fundamentally aimed at providing customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is not only measured through product or services, but also in other ways. The key difference between a traditional sales concept and marketing is that a s**ales oriented company is oriented merely at the product** or at how to sell it. Marketing, however, is aimed at **customer satisfaction** and thus also includes other elements. In the early days, these elements were as follows:

- the product itself, in term of usefulness, quality and other criteria;
- price and manner of payment;
- sales channel or manner of selling;
- delivery.

One of the most important marketing theories is the idea of **marketing mix**. It is highly useful because:

- process results (e.g. advertising, delivery, servicing) are objects of the buyer's direct perception and affect their satisfaction;
- with appropriate organisation (process planning internal rules, internal division of work) the provider can influence these processes.

Chai Lee Goi (2009) claims that ideas similar to modern marketing mix, which is so often referred to nowadays (e.g. 4Ps or 7Ps), appeared well before the Second World War. He refers to a marketing theory which emerged somewhere after the year 1930 and which includes four elements: price, quality, service and advertising. According to Lee Goi, the theory was based on the first letter, P (price). In other words, it was a rudimentary outline of the later 4P theory. In general, early marketing tended to see price as the predominant if not the only element of marketing.

The phrase **marketing mix** came into use (again) after the Second World War. It was first used by Neil Border in 1949. According to Borden, marketing mix included 12 elements:

- product planning;
- pricing;
- branding;
- channels of distribution;
- personal selling
- advertising
- packaging;
- promotions;
- servicing;
- physical handling;
- display;
- fact finding and analysis.

There are many advantages to marketing mix theory, which is why it was in use for several decades. Despite its widespread use, it was also subject of criticism. One of the key objections to marketing mix was that many organisations understood it and applied it only as means of aggressively selling their products and not as a way to gauge customer satisfaction.

The disadvantages of marketing mix in the 21st century, especially with regard to organisational structure, are as follows:

- Marketing mix sees the product as the key "player" on the market. Product comes first in all marketing mix models. Providers develop and manufacture products in order to meet the customer's needs. But in the 21st century, this process is often reversed: **customers build the desired product on their own through web applications** – the provider is only there to meet their need.

- The second element of marketing mix is usually pricing. This does not take into account that the **customer can chose their own way of financing** through online resources.
- Marketing mix models do not foresee a symmetrical, two-way relationship between the provider and the customer (e.g. customer service, which we will look at below).
- The model does not enable customer feedback.
- In the second half of the 20th century, the model was evidently abused as a tool to influence customer habits. Newer marketing mix models often fail to include post-sales services, which were still there in the early 20th century models.
- The model still relies on geographic segmentation, which was made obsolete with the rise of globalisation. **There is only one market.** Simple access to a variety of global providers gives the customer more freedom of choice, which had been previously limited by their geographic location.
- Interactivity facilitates customer individuality in the search or configuration of products. At the same time, development in production actually allows for a quick production of the individualised product.
- The interactivity of online banking enables individual configuration of payment.
- Marketing is no longer primarily oriented at the company. The existence of web applications, which give customer more choice and even enable them to configure their own product, frees the company to focus on the customer.

4.8.2 Social responsibility

The term "social responsibility" describes organisations voluntarily taking responsibility for various social, economic, ecological, and cultural issues. The idea that corporations should also tackle these issues originated in the 19th century. During this time, companies started to build living quarters for their workers in the vicinity of factories. The phrase "social responsibility" was first used in 1953 by Howard Bowen in his book, *Social responsibilities of the businessman*. (Demmerling, 2015).

Since then, there have been numerous definitions of the expression. Dahlsrud (2008) analysed as many as 37. He found they all had in common three dimensions of social responsibility:

- The **social dimension** of social responsibility relates to the relationship between the company and society as a whole. This also includes the treatment of its employees and the principles of fair trade.
- The **environmental dimension** is related to the effects exerted on the environment by the company and to renewable energy sources.
- The **economic dimension** of social responsibility is related to responsibility for business results. Or profit, of course. But it is also tied to other social-economic and financial aspects, including responsibility for all business operations.

Discussions of social responsibility often refer to Carroll's pyramid. Carroll (1979) uses it to represent the four responsibilities of companies:

1. **Economic responsibility** is obligatory or required. It is the priority and responsibility of every organisation to achieve an adequate business outcome. Profitability is the only way for a business to survive, which is beneficial to society in the long run.
2. **Legal responsibility** is also required. A business is required to follow the regulations and abide by the law.
3. **Ethical responsibility** is voluntary. It includes the obligation and readiness of an organisation to act morally and ethically.
4. **Philanthropic responsibility** is voluntary. It refers to the obligation and readiness of an organisation to give back part of the profit to society. Even though philanthropic responsibility is discretionary, it is highly important.

Despite the idea of social responsibility being an old concept, it came into prominence relatively late and was only fully established in the 21st century, partly also due to the rise of internet. Before internet, corporations used PR to control information appearing in the media, such as newspapers, radio or TV. The appearance of internet resulted in new channels of communication which cannot be as easily controlled. Social media and chat rooms often include information which the companies would prefer not to be out there, such as news of worker abuse, environmental pollution, etc.

There are various reasons for introducing social responsibility. Demmerling (2015) lists the following:

- **Moral-ethical reasons**: companies wish to demonstrate that this is their duty (which goes against the grain of neoliberalism, where companies are only socially responsible if they operate at a profit).
- **Preventing obstacles and limitations**: a socially responsible company acts proactively and preventatively. This enhances the company's positive image and lessens the possibility of critique or legal impositions.
- **Societal pressure and reputation**: numerous cases show that companies are quick to respond to pressures in relation to social and ecological problems in order to prevent escalation through media or protests.
- **Strategic business reasons:** companies are socially responsible for strategic reasons because this makes them more recognisable to the customers. In other words, companies act socially responsible in order to gain customer support and increase their profit.

4.8.3 Organisational identity or reputation

Organisational identity comprises all that an organisation is and everything that we can we perceive in relation to an organisation. The concept of organisational identity first emerged somewhere after 1950, but it did not fully take off until decades later. At the time, many organisations did not feel the need to actualise this idea. It was only important what the organisation looked like, and the company could manage its media image through public relations – it was the task of PR to create a favourable, positive image.
The situation changed with the rise of the internet, which enabled a rapid distribution of both wanted and unwanted information about companies. Suddenly, it was important what an organisation actually is. Organisations had to take responsibility for their identity.

Reputation is the perception of an organisation's status. An organisation's status is ranked (or comparatively classified) with regard to other institutions. It is tied to very disparate attributes, such as reliability, credibility, social responsibility, etc. In terms of status, organisations can be categorised from two perspectives:

- perspective of organisations' resources and characteristics tied to its capacity;

- perspective of organisation's position on the market and the attributes with which the organisation maintains its market share and competitiveness.

4.8.4 Customer service

Gupt (2021)defines customer service as the act of supporting and advocating for customers in their discovery, use, optimization, and troubleshooting of a product or service. It is also the processes that support the teams making good customer service happen. The goal of customer service is to foster lasting customer relationships. The main difference between service today and service 10 years ago is that customers expect premium service to be built in from the first sales or marketing interaction and carried through to the moment they ask for help, post-purchase, and back again. To position themselves for success, businesses must integrate service into the journey at every interaction point.

Customer service must build relationships and establish a true partnership in the long term. In doing so, it follows four principles:[17]

1. **Personalised:** Good customer service always starts with a human touch. Personalised interactions greatly improve customer service.
2. **Competent:** Consumers have identified competency as the element that plays the biggest role in good customer experience.
3. **Convenient:** Customers want to be able to get in touch with a customer service representative through whichever channel is the most convenient for them. Offer support through channels of communication your customers rely on most, and make it easy for customers to figure out how to contact you.
4. **Proactive:** Customers want companies to be proactive in reaching out to them.

[17] Source: https://www.helpscout.com/blog/customer-service-skills/, 7. 8. 2021

5 ABOUT RESEARCH

5.1 AIMS

Remote work has been in use for decades, but always as more of an exception rather than the rule. Looking at the history of remote work, the term telecommuting was first coined in 1973 by Jack Nilles, a NASA engineer, in his book, *The Telecommunications-Transportation Tradeoff*. In 1979 five IBM employees were allowed to work from home as an experiment.[18]

The idea of remote work, as we can see, is not new. It has been in use and well established for decades. During this time, most countries set at least minimal legal foundations in their national legislations for regulating remote work. But while people were aware of remote work as a reality, it was rarely used in practice. The main obstacle to its widespread use was the shared conservative attitude of many employees and, sadly, managers.

Recently, the COVID-19 epidemic presented managements with a challenge which needed to be swiftly addressed. Many organisations resorted to remote work. The emergence of the novel coronavirus at the end of 2019 and in the beginning of 2020 resulted in the extensive use of this work format. In order for organisations to continue their work in the changed circumstances of the epidemic, they needed to undergo significant transformations. One of them was also the mass introduction of remote work. Managements in all walks of life – business, education, health care, local and state institutions – were called upon to fulfil their role.

According to data by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SURS),[19] 57.6% of people in employment worked at their employer's premises in the period from 30 November to 13 December 2020 (during the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic) all days of the week. The rest of the employees:

- worked from home all days of the week: 17.2%;
- worked partly from home and partly at the employer's premises: 7.3%;

[18] Source: Butler, 2021.

[19] Source: https://www.stat.si/StatWeb/sl/News/Index/9498

- were absent due to medical leave, annual leave, child care, furlough, etc.: 17.9%.

According to SURS data, 72.0% of people in employment worked on their employer's premises in the period from 8 February to 21 February 2021 (after the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic) all days of the week. The rest of the employees:

- worked from home all days of the week: 8.8%;
- worked partly from home and partly at the employer's premises: 9.9%;
- were absent due to medical leave, annual leave, child care, furlough, etc.: 9.3%.

The situation was similar elsewhere in the world.

Our study was thus concerned with remote work. Our work was undertaken within the larger context of research into management and business functions in circumstances of remote work.

In the chapters above we defined management functions as planning, organising, command, and control. On the other hand, business functions within an organisation include: procurement, human resources, finances and accounting, and the process of transforming inputs into outputs and sales.

During the epidemic we all sensed a shift in the business functions, for instance:

- Disruptions in the supply chain and logistics. At the outbreak of the epidemic, Europe was faced with problems in procuring medical supplies, which led to changes in the processes of procurement, both with individuals and organisations.
- There were changes in the business regimes of stores; during certain periods they were forced into complete closure, which led to changes in the manner of sale.
- In some countries, lockdowns resulted in severe financial problems.
- Workers in many branches of the economy were prevented from working.

The aim of our study was to assess the nature and extent of these changes. We focused on transformations brought in by the introduction of remote work. We did not, however, look at all of the business functions, but instead chose to focus on changes in the internal working of organisations, in fields defined by theory as:

- human resources as a business function;
- organisation and organising as management functions.

Our study was not interested in the activity of the analysed organisations nor did it look at their target audience.

We were trying to determine whether the resulting changes were governed by a common set of rules, which is why our research encompassed disparate organisations.

Our starting point was the hypothesis that all of these shifts were complex in nature. This is why we looked at a relatively wide area of research. In other words, rather than looking at the details, we adopted a big-picture approach.

Our initial aim was to assess the nature of changes in the functions of human resources and organising caused by remote work during the COVID-19 epidemic: The chapters above theoretically define human resources functions as calculating the necessary staffing levels; identifying the talent pool; recruiting, selection, and final choice of staff; employment (and dismissal); induction, education and training; managing payroll; and ensuring health and safety at work. We grouped these tasks under the umbrella term “personnel management”. Our analysis aimed to evaluate the nature of related changes caused by remote work during the COVID-19 epidemic.

We also looked at the area of “personnel administration”. In this segment, it was the aim of our study to determine what changes occurred in the keeping of human resources records.

We also looked at the effects of remote work on engagement, satisfaction, and organisational climate.

One of the two aspects studied included the organising function. We chose to focus on complexity, formalisation, and centralisation and tried to determine whether remote work in any way affected organisational structures or caused changes in the division of labour.

Our research also analysed informal organisation.

We started with the presumption that the epidemic might be an event that could transform organisational culture and a society's culture in general. We thus hoped to assess, at the very least, whether these changes in culture truly occurred.

5.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study looked at the following questions:

1. How did remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic change the field of HRM?
2. How did remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic change the field of organisation and organising?

Our research looked at the following HRM aspects:

- principles and processes of HRM;
- organisational behaviour, job satisfaction, and organisational climate;
- work engagement;
- organisational culture;
- organisational identity.

In terms or organisation and organising, we analysed the following aspects:

- organisational design;
- legal framework for remote working in the EU;
- employee rights and obligations and employer rights and obligations;
- formal and informal organisation;
- remote working and attributes of a learning organisation.
- Sample

Our research was conducted in the Republic of Slovenia. We chose a purposive sample, with the selection criteria based on our research goals. It was our aim to paint "a big picture", which was also reflected in the sample criteria:

- gender;
- position within the organisation's hierarchy;
- activity of the organisation;
- size of organisation.

We wanted our sample to include an approximately equal proportion (50:50) of men and women. We also wished our study to look at individuals on the second or third hierarchical levels in the organisation. In some of our specific cases this means:

- When looking at ministries, we did not chose a minister or state secretary, but rather managers of administrative units, mayors, or heads of departments or services.
- In cases of local communities (municipalities), we did not look at managers of administrative units or mayors, but rather at department heads.
- In universities or high schools we did not look at rectors or principals, but rather at deans and sub-deans and at high school heads of departments.
- With banks, insurance companies and manufacturing businesses, we did not look at general managers, but rather at heads of departments or services.

In terms of organisation activities we were looking for a heterogeneous but balanced sample. We planned to conduct our survey over a two-week period, with two hours allocated to each individual, so we estimated that we would need a sample of 30 people. We eventually invited 36 people to participate. One of the prospective participants was ill, one was abroad on work, one could not be reached for unknown reasons, and one failed to return our call despite prior agreement. We conducted 30 surveys and interviews within the planned span of time. We were subsequently contacted by two more people whom we invited to participate while we were conducting our survey.

Our final sample thus included 32 people: 16 men and 16 women. Sample structure according to organisation size is shown in Table 9, whereas the sample structure according to activity is shown in Table 10.

Table 9. Sample structure according to size of organisation. (n=32)

SIZE ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	NUMBER	PROPORTION (%)
Micro (up to 10 employees)	2	6.3
Small (11 to 50 employees)	7	21.9
Medium (51 to 250 employees)	12	37.5
Large (more than 250 employees)	11	34.4
Total	32	100.0

Table 10. Sample structure according to organisation activity. (n=32)

ACTIVITY	NUMBER	PROPORTION (%)
Public institutions (education, health care, social services...)	6	18.8
Public utilities (public water supply system, sewerage, waste management...)	1	3.1
Public administration, local administration, politics	8	25.0
Economic activity – manufacture of goods (e.g. industry, agriculture, construction...)	6	18.8
Economic activity – services (banks, insurance companies, trade...)	11	34.4
Total	32	100.0

5.3 METHOD

We have employed two research methods:
- a telephone survey;
- structured interviews.

At the outset we planned on completing our research within two weeks. It eventually took us more time than initially planned. The reason for this was the time needed to complete structured interviews and issues with scheduling. The study was completed in the period between 1 September 2021 and 22 September 2021. We first contacted the prospective interviewees and invited them to take part in our study. We agreed with the participants on the date. On the date the participants took part in a telephone survey with close-ended questions, followed by a structured interview.

The participants' responses to the survey were immediately entered into a pre-prepared SPSS file. The survey took from 8 to 12 minutes to complete. At the end, the survey results were statistically processed with SPSS.

After having completed the telephone survey, the same participants also took part in a structured interview. The interview was conducted via telephone. The duration of structured interviews spanned a minimum of 30 minutes and a maximum of 2 hours.

5.4 QUESTIONNAIRE

Our research tool of choice was a close-ended questionnaire, shown below.

QN_1: During the COVID-19 epidemic many organisations, particularly those in critical infrastructure, assigned a segment of their employees to work from home to eliminate the risk of contracting the virus at work. Do they need more or fewer people?

1. We need more people.
2. The same number of people.
3. We need fewer people.

QN_2: How much did you hire during the epidemic?

1. More than before.
2. The same as before.
3. Less than before.

QN_3: How did you complete the selection process during the epidemic?

1. In person.
2. Remotely, with the aid of online tools (MS TEAMS, MS ZOOM...).
3. Combined (in person and remotely).

QN_4: In what way does your organisation assign remote work?

1. Our existing employment contracts already include this option.
2. With a new employment contract.
3. With an annex to the existing contract.
4. With a work order assigning work from home.
5. In some other way.

QN_5: Does your organisation's occupational safety and health policy cover remote work?

1. Yes.
2. No.

QN_6: Do you keep special records for working from home?
1. Yes.
2. No.

QN_7: Do you measure the productivity of remote workers?
1. Yes.
2. No.

QN_8: What is the situation like with the sense of personal rivalry, interpersonal grudges or ill will? Do you think that remote work has resulted in more or less of it?

1. less than before 2. same as before 3. more than before

QN_9: What is the situation like with co-operation between co-workers? Do you think that remote work has resulted in more or less of it?

1. less than before 2. same as before 3. more than before

QN_10: What is the situation like with energy expended by co-workers on their work, with their effort, and with their persistence? Do you think that remote work has resulted in more or less of it?

1. less than before 2. same as before 3. more than before

QN_11: What is the situation like with the workers' dedication, their sense of enthusiasm and the meaningfulness they ascribe to their work? Do you think that remote work has resulted in more or less of it?

1. less than before 2. same as before 3. more than before

QN_12: What is the situation like with active expression of dissatisfaction? Do you think that remote work has resulted in more or less of it?

1. less than before 2. same as before 3. more than before

QN_13: What is the situation like with the degree of individual sense of belonging and identification with the group or organisation? Do you think that remote work has resulted in more or less of it?

1. less than before 2. same as before 3. more than before

QN_14: During the period of remote work, did you ever get the sense that remote workers adapted their productivity to their least productive co-worker?

1. Yes.
2. No.

QN_15: Did the increased volume of remote work in any way change the following: employees' job descriptions or systematisation or the content of job descriptions in employment contracts?

1. Yes.
2. No.

QN_16: Did the increased volume of remote work in any way change the organisational structure (simple, functional, divisional, project)?

1. Yes.
2. No.

QN_17: Did the increased volume of remote work in any way change the extent of authority and responsibilities of leaders on lower hierarchical levels?

1. Leaders were given more authority than before.
2. Leaders were given less authority than before.
3. Nothing changed.

QN_18: Did the increased volume of remote work in any way change the extent of authority and responsibilities of employees working in departments?

1. Employees were given more authority than before.
2. Employees were given less authority than before.
3. Nothing changed.

QN_19: During the period of increased volume of remote work, do you also engage in remote employee training?

1. We never used it before nor did we use it now.
2. Same as before.
3. More than before.
4. Less than before.

(Related to HRM and learning organisations)

QN_20: During the period of increased volume of remote work, do you also promote virtual informal socialising of employees (e.g. through online tools such as MS TEAMS, MS ZOOM, etc.)

1. We never promoted informal socialising before, nor do we promote it now.
2. We newly introduced this.
3. Same as before.
4. More than before.
5. Less than before.

QN_21: Which of the following comes to mind first when asked about what you are oriented towards in your organisation during the period of remote work?

1. Towards not making procedural mistakes in the work that I do.
2. Towards satisfying my employer's quantitative expectations.
3. Towards our product or service.
4. Towards the customers' or clients' satisfaction.
5. Towards the general satisfaction of clients, owners or founders, and society at large.

(Related to HRM and organisation's mission, central focus and purpose)

How do you estimate (i.e. less than before, same as before, more than before) the following attributes in your organisation during the period of remote work:
QN_ 22: collective spirit:
QN_23: individualism:
QN_24: accepting power and authority:
QN_25: willingness to take risks:
QN_26: egotism, concern for career:
QN_27: concern for good interpersonal relationships:
QN_28: long-term thinking:
QN_29: focus on success:

QN_22 to QN_29 (ANSWERS TO QN_22 to QN_29: 1. less than before; 2. same as before; 3. more than before)

QN_30: Participant's gender?

1. Male
2. Female

QN_31: Size according to number of employees?
1. Micro (up to 10 employees)
2. Small (11 to 50 employees)
3. Medium (51 to 250 employees)
4. Large (more than 250 employees)

QN_32: Activity
1. Public institutions (education, health care, social services...)
2. Public utilities (public water supply system, sewerage, waste management...)
3. Public administration, local administration, politics
4. Economic activity – manufacturer of goods (e.g. industry, agriculture, construction...)
5. Economic activity – services (banks, insurance companies, trade...)

5.5 LIMITATIONS

Our study has several limitations:
- limited aim of the study;
- methodological limitations;
- time limitations;
- a limited sample size;
- other.

All of the listed limitations are interconnected. As we have mentioned several times, our aim was to get a complex picture or assessment of the changes that occurred in the areas of organisation and HRM during the period of extensive use of remote work and of what needed to be done in order to adequately manage this work. In other words, our aim was to make an assessment of a very complex situation. Our methodological limitations corresponded to this aim.

If we had studied a single aspect or only measured a limited number of variables (e.g. engagement or culture), we would have used one of the already established questionnaires (e.g. UWES or Q12 for engagement or GLOBE for culture). However, our study looked at a number of different dimensions. Measuring them with existing questionnaires would have resulted in an oversized study. This is why we had to approach our research in a different way.

Our study wished to go beyond the restrictions of an online opinion survey. We wanted to approach the respondents individually, since we were not only interested their survey responses but also in their personal experience or perception of remote work. We consequently conducted our survey and the subsequent interview in person, via telephone. Of course, this was time demanding and thus resulted in a smaller sample.

However, we believe that this was the correct approach: survey results provide us with data points, but the reality of a situation generally tends to be quite dynamic. Whereas a larger sample would have provided us with specific values for given variables, in reality the circumstances were much more dynamic, so that the results could have changed from one moment to another. Our interviews made us aware that the situation changed significantly in different time periods. A number of respondents told us that employees were initially very enthusiastic about working remotely. In time, however, many of them wished to return to their offices.

Unfortunately, our study does not provide us with sufficient basis to claim with any statistical probability that the value of a certain quantity (e.g. engagement according to UWES or culture according to GLOBE) has actually changed due to remote work. Despite this, we believe our study gives us enough viable data for us to provide a competent assessment of the situation.

6 RESEARCH RESULTS

6.1 FINDINGS RELATED TO HRM

6.1.1 Principles and processes of HRM

Basic HRM principles and processes include:

- Basic procedures of recruitment, selection, and compensation.
- Personnel administration.
- Bureaucratic procedures related to remote working.

Our survey questionnaire included the following questions related to this topic:

- Did remote work require organisations to use more people, fewer people, or the same number of people?
- How much did organisations hire during the epidemic?
- How did organisations conduct selection processes during the epidemic?

The responses to the above questions are presented in tables 11, 12 and 13.

Our survey results and interviews showed that, in general, remote work did not lead to a change in number of employees working in departments. The interview results indicated that the only exception to this, i.e. a potential bottleneck, are the ICT support departments.

Table 11. Did remote work require organisations to use more people, fewer people, or the same number of people? (n=32)

ANSWER	NUMBER	PROPORTION (%)
We need more people.	1	3.1
Same as before.	29	90.6
Fewer than before.	2	6.3
Total	32	100.0

Table 12. How much did organisations hire during the epidemic? (n=32)

ANSWER	NUMBER	PROPORTION (%)
More than before.	1	3.1
Same as before.	23	71.9
Less than before.	8	25.0
Total	32	100.0

Table 13. How did organisations conduct selection processes during the epidemic? (n=32)

ANSWER	NUMBER	PROPORTION (%)
We did not have any cases of this kind.	6	18.8
In person.	7	21.9
Remotely, with the aid of online tools (MS TEAMS, MS ZOOM...).	8	25.0
Combined (in person and remotely).	11	34.4
Total	32	100.0

During the epidemic, most organisations conducted their selection processes in person or combined (in person and remotely). Our interviews established that the organisations which adopted the combined approach conducted the first part of the selection via remote interviews with the candidates. The second part was conducted through classic interviews with the remaining candidates. In most cases, the final selection of the candidate was made following a classic interview. We therefore conclude that most organisations find that remote interviews cannot fully substitute for personal contact.

6.1.2 Organisational behaviour

In the introductory part of our book we explained that the emergence of scientific management was related to the so-called phenomenon of "soldiering". In response, Frederick W. Taylor proposed the principles of scientific management.

An important reaction to this phenomenon is also the theory of organisational behaviour, which was first established by Elton Mayo. It came to the following conclusions:

- Individual productivity is, to a large extent, affected by social factors.
- Group norms (e.g. working hours) affect productivity.
- Productivity is also affected by informal organisation.

Organisational behaviour theory was first created on the basis of studies conducted in factories. Remote work is of an entirely different nature.

The productivity of workers is not adapted to the least productive worker. The phenomenon of "soldiering" is not true in case of remote workers. None of the interviewees sensed that the productivity of workers was tailored to their least productive colleague. This was confirmed both by questionnaire and interview results. Out of all the responses, these answers were by far the most uniform and confident.

It makes no sense to set the remote worker the same rules as a factory worker. The idea of factory work rules – such as working hours more comfortable for the worker, breaks, lunch time and so on – originated in the first half of the 20th century, with the intent of increasing the productivity of workers. However, the nature of remote work makes it impossible to simply apply factory work rules to remote work. It is difficult to imagine that rules regarding working hours, break schedule, lunch time, etc. can be straightforwardly implemented in remote work.

It is thus almost impossible to measure most categories of organisational behaviour with our method.

6.1.3 Job satisfaction and organisational climate

We defined job satisfaction as a set of emotions a person feels in relation to work. The feeling of satisfaction is connected to a job or the specific work which somebody does.

The content or the object of perception related to job satisfaction is different in remote workers than it in factory workers. Theories of job satisfaction are based in the idea that the object of perception which triggers the feeling of satisfaction can be found either in the physical environment (e.g. in the characteristics of the work place), social interactions (e.g. with co-workers, with the manager), or in some mixture of the two.

Our research method did not allow us to take an in-depth look at the issue in such a manner. We did, however, ask our participants about social interactions between co-workers. The respondents were asked two questions:

- What is the situation like with the sense of personal rivalry, interpersonal grudges or ill will?
- Do you think that remote work has resulted in more or less of it?

Their responses are shown in Table 14.

Table 14. What is the situation like with the sense of personal rivalry, interpersonal grudges or ill will? (n=32)

ANSWER	NUMBER	PROPORTION (%)
Less than before.	6	18.8
Same as before.	23	71.9
More than before.	3	9.4
Total	32	100.0

We estimate that physical distance between remote workers does not result in any less sense of personal rivalry or in fewer grudges than when the workers are working together at an office. The results of the survey and the interviews showed that remote work does not affect interpersonal rivalry. There is no more and no less personal rivalry, grudges, or ill will in organisations due to remote work.

As part of the structured interview, we talked extensively with the respondents about satisfaction and organisational climate. With regard to satisfaction, our main question was: are remote workers satisfied with working from home, i.e. that they do not need to go into work. All of the participants were of a nearly uniform opinion that the satisfaction with remote work changed over time. In this respect, the answers were quite uniform. The Ordinance on the declaration of the COVID-19 epidemic in the territory of the Republic of Slovenia was first declared on 12 March 2020; our study was conducted in September 2021. The respondents were of a relatively uniform opinion that in the beginning stages of the epidemic employees were very satisfied, even enthusiastic about being able to work from home and schedule their own time. Gradually, this initial satisfaction waned and some workers even became dissatisfied.

Globally, there has been much research into the satisfaction and productivity of remote workers. We have listed some of them above. Studies mostly show that remote workers are more productive, satisfied etc.

We believe that these studies should be repeated to include observation over a longer period of time. We suggest that the productivity and satisfaction of remote workers may change over a period of time. In cases of prolonged remote work, we believe it would be beneficial to consider a combination of remote work and work at the employer's premises.

We defined organisational climate as a stimulus reinforcing a positive behaviour in members of an organisation (e.g. innovation, quality). We further stated that one of the key dimensions of organisational climate is a shared vision. A shared vision implies that all of the employees see the same future for their organisation. On the outside, a shared vision is manifested as co-operation.
In order to at least estimate the organisational climate, we asked our respondents two questions:

- What is the situation like with co-operation between co-workers?
- Do you think that remote work has resulted in more or less of it?

Their responses are shown in Table 15.

Table 15. What is the situation like with co-operation between co-workers? (n=32)

ANSWER	NUMBER	PROPORTION (%)
Less than before.	13	40.6
Same as before.	12	37.5
More than before.	7	21.9
Total	32	100.0

We believe that co-operation among co-workers is one of the most critical aspects of remote work. We were surprised to find that the results of the survey and the interviews indicate that in some environments there was actually less co-operation among co-workers during the COVID-19 epidemic than there would be if they were at place of work. On the other hand, we found there was more co-operation in other environments.

We estimate that the mere circumstance of employees working remotely does not affect their mutual co-operation. After all, remote work has been in existence for more than 50 years. We thus assume that co-operation among employees is affected by other factors. The participants in our study believe that co-operation among co-workers depends on the nature of work and on the individuals themselves. We can thus conclude that remote work is not suitable for all types of work and for all employees. We also believe that more thorough research is needed to provide an answer of what actually affects co-operation among remote co-workers.

6.1.4 Work engagement

Similarly to job satisfaction, it is almost impossible to directly measure employee engagement with our method. In order to provide at least an estimate, we employed the two most commonly used questionnaires: UWES and Q12.

As we have already explained above, the UWES questionnaire is aimed at employees. A 7-level scale is available for their self-assessment. The questions are aimed at the following: mental strength and vigour, dedication, and absorption.

Psychological vigour is reflected in the amount of energy invested into work, mental vigour, positive attitude towards work, persistence and resilience (to potential failure).

- Dedication is reflected in the meaning attributed by an individual to their work, their enthusiasm, inspiration, pride in their work and achievements, and the challenges posed by their work.
- Absorption describes the extent of a person’s involvement with their work, the degree to which it pleases them, etc.

Our study was conducted with managers. Because we believe that third persons (managers) in circumstances of remote work cannot perceive absorption (on part of their employees) we only asked them about their perception of vigour and dedication. In order to provide at least a general assessment, we asked our respondents two questions:

- What is the situation like with energy expended by co-workers on their work, with their effort and their persistence, do you think there is more or less of it because of remote work?
- What is the situation like with the workers' dedication, their sense of enthusiasm and the meaningfulness they ascribe to their work? Do you think that remote work has resulted in more or less of it?

Their responses are shown in Tables 16 and 17.

Table 16. What is the situation like with energy expended by co-workers on their work, with their effort and with their persistence? (n=32)

ANSWER	NUMBER	PROPORTION (%)
Less than before.	9	28.1
Same as before.	16	50.0
More than before.	7	21.9
Total	32	100.0

Table 17. What is the situation like with the workers' dedication, their sense of enthusiasm and the meaningfulness they ascribe to their work? (n=32)

ANSWER	NUMBER	PROPORTION (%)
Less than before.	12	37.5
Same as before.	16	50.0
More than before.	4	12.5
Total	32	100.0

The Gallup Q12 Survey is one of the most popular methods for measuring engagement. The questionnaire includes 12 questions. When formulating our research approach, we started with the categorisation employed by the Q12 questionnaire, i.e. the division of employees into three groups.

The most problematic category in terms of organisation, according to Gallup Q12, is the third category, which is comprised of "actively disengaged" employees. Actively disengaged employees are workers who actively voice their discontent.

In order to provide at least a general assessment, we asked our respondents two questions:

- What is the situation like with active expression of dissatisfaction?
- Do you think that remote work has resulted in more or less of it among co-workers?

Their responses are shown in Table 18.

Table 18. What is the situation like with active expression of dissatisfaction? (n=32)

ANSWER	NUMBER	PROPORTION (%)
Less than before.	9	28.1
Same as before.	15	46.9
More than before.	8	25.0
Total	32	100.0

We cannot assess the effects of remote work on engagement on the basis of survey results. The obtained survey results need to be looked at in the context of structured interviews with the respondents. Most respondents were of the opinion that during the initial stages of the epidemic the employees were highly enthusiastic, but this eventually waned. We believe that the issue of engagement is one of those areas which require further in-depth study. In cases of prolonged remote work, we believe it would be beneficial to consider a combination of remote work and work at the employer's premises.

6.1.5 Organisational culture

We based our assessment of organisational culture on the GLOBE model. The GLOBE model distinguishes between **nine cultural dimensions**, which explain cultural differences on **national and organisational levels**. We have somewhat adapted the statements contained in the model. Because we were only interested in remote work, we adjusted the possible value of answers, which consequently differs from the original. We provided the respondents with three possible answers:

- less than before, value 1;
- same as before, value 2;
- more than before, value 3.

Table 19 contains the percentages of provided answers. We also included arithmetic means to further outline the trend.

Table 19. How do you estimate (i.e. less than before, same as before, more than before) the following attributes in your organisation during the period of remote work? (n=32)

ANSWER	Less (%)	Same (%)	More (%)	Mean
collective spirit	50.0	34.4	15.6	1.66
individualism	9.4	34.4	56.3	2.47
accepting power and authority	15.6	71.9	12.5	1.97
willingness to take risks	31.3	59.4	9.4	1.78
egotism, concern for career	3.1	78.1	18.1	2.16
concern for good interpersonal relationships	40.6	40.6	18.8	1.78
long-term thinking	21.9	34.4	43.8	2.22
focus on success	6.3	65.6	28.1	2.22

We determined that changes have occurred in the organisational culture and in the culture of the society at large:

- collective spirit – we estimate that there is less collective spirit;
- individualism – we estimate that there is more individualism;
- accepting power and authority – we estimate that there have been no changes in the acceptance of power and authority;
- willingness to take risks – we estimate that people are willing to take fewer risks;
- egotism, concern for career – we estimate that there has been no change;
- concern for good interpersonal relationships – we estimate that there is less concern for good interpersonal relationships;

- long-term thinking – despite the epidemic people are engaged in slightly more long-term thinking;
- focus on success – people are somewhat more focused on success.

6.1.6 Organisational identity

Organisational identity can be studied from numerous perspectives, since it is made of everything that an organisation actually is. Our study focused on two aspects of identity:

- sense of belonging to an organisation;
- focus.

Our point of departure in studying the sense of belonging was the history of the phenomenon of identity. Throughout history there were human communities that would not have been able to survive without a sense of shared identity. This sense of shared identity gave rise to tribes, nations, religious communities and states. Historically speaking, identity may have served as a precondition for biological continuity.[20] The basic elements of identity included : language, ruler, faith, at times even a shared hatred towards a different group.

It is often the case that a sense of belonging to an organisation is most strongly and demonstratively expressed by individuals whose capacity to survive depends most on the community. On the other hand, history has shown that in times of crisis identity may provide the internal cohesive force within a community. During challenging times an absence of merely one or two elements of identity may result in the fall of a community.

In order to provide at least a general assessment, we asked our respondents a question connected to the sense of belonging in remote workers. Their responses are shown in Table 20.

Based on the survey and interview results we estimate that remote work and the sense of belonging to an organisation are not interrelated.
We were initially somewhat surprised by the result. We expected the COVID-19 epidemic to heighten the sense of belonging. But this was not the case. We

[20] For more see: Sabaté, 2015.

evidently need to take into account that remote work is carried out by employees from a different social class, with different values, different attitude towards job security and clearly also with more self-confidence.

Table 20. What is the situation like with the degree of individual sense of belonging and identification with the group and organisation? (n=32)

ANSWER	NUMBER	PROPORTION (%)
Less than before.	6	18.8
Same as before.	23	71.9
More than before.	3	9.4
Total	32	100.0

The mental model of remote workers is distinctly different from the model of workers working in less complex jobs. We also came to this conclusion on the basis of finding that in most cases leaders do not measure the productivity of remote workers at all. In particular, they do not do this in any way comparable to the measuring of productivity of factory workers decades ago. Remote workers as well as their leaders are only interested in a job well done.

We need to mention here that our study only detected measuring of productivity within the context of systems in the repressive apparatus. In real terms, this means that supervisors counted the number of fines, for instance, issued by the local parking enforcement officer. Namely, our survey also included organisations which oversee the municipal police (part of municipalities) and inspection services (part of ministries). During the COVID-19 epidemic, the employees of these services also worked remotely.

The study also looked at another aspect of identity, i.e. focus. The results are shown in Table 21.

Table 21. Which of the following comes to mind first when you are asked what you are oriented towards in your organisation during the period of remote work? (n=32)

ANSWER	NUMBER	PROPORTION %)
Towards not making procedural mistakes in the work that I do.	3	9.4
Towards satisfying my employer's quantitative expectations.	4	12.5
Towards our product or service.	11	34.4
Towards the customers' or clients' satisfaction.	6	18.8
Towards the general satisfaction of clients, owners or founders, and society at large.	8	25.0
Total	32	100.0

An organisation's focus tells us what the key features of our organisation are. The survey results and the structured interviews showed that in the period of remote work the focus of organisations remained fixed on the content of work and on the satisfaction of customers, owners or founders. Only a small proportion of organisations remains fixed on quantitative expectations. These answers further indicate that management of remote work needs to go beyond the old paradigms applicable to factory work.

6.2 FINDINGS RELATED TO ORGANISATION

6.2.1 Organisational design

Organisational structures are comprised of: complexity, formalisation and centralisation. We were interested to see how these aspects affected remote work. The survey respondents were thus asked the following questions:

- Did the increased volume of remote work in any way change the following: employees' job descriptions or the systematisation or the content of job descriptions in employment contracts?
- Did the increased volume of remote work in any way change the organisational structure (simple, functional, divisional, project)?

- Did the increased volume of remote work in any way change the extent of authority and responsibilities of leaders on lower hierarchical levels?
- Did the increased volume of remote work in any way change the extent of authority and responsibilities of employees working in departments?

The responses provided by both the survey and interviews were almost uniform, so that we can conclude:

- the increased volume of remote work did not change job descriptions;
- it did not change the content of job descriptions in employment contracts;
- it did not change the extent of authority and responsibilities of leaders;
- it did not change the extent of authority and responsibilities of the subordinates.

The mere fact of introducing remote work did not affect organisational structure. In a way, this seems understandable, since the organisations' mission, purpose and the volume of business also remained unchanged. The only thing different was the location where a certain job was completed. This has no effect on the organisational structure.

The participants did highlight the significance of ICT support departments, however, especially in light of the increased volume of their work. Because of this, many ICT departments have undergone significant changes.

6.2.2 Legal framework for remote working

Employers use different ways to assign remote work:

- Our study revealed that 2 out of 32 organisations included assigned their employees remote work in a manner which may not be compatible with the law. The interviews conducted after the survey showed that the response "in some other way" in this specific organisation meant that the manager issued a verbal order. This, we believe, may not be an appropriate manner.
- Only 3 of the 32 participants included remote work as part of their basic employment contracts even before the epidemic.
- In light of the epidemic and increased need for remote work, 15 out of 32 respondents made use of annexes to existing contracts.
- 11 out of 32 respondents issued work orders for work from home. We need to point out that in the Republic of Slovenia change of work due to natural

or other disasters is regulated by the 171th article of the Employment Relationships Act. In cases of natural or other disasters, if such an accident is expected or in other exceptional circumstances where the life and health of people or the property of the employer are endangered, the type or place of work specified in the employment contract may be temporarily changed without the consent of the employee but only as long as such circumstances persist. The law does not specify whether the order needs to be issued in written form or verbally, but administrative rules lead us to conclude that it should be issued in writing.

The results are shown in Table 22.

Table 22. In what way does your organisation assign remote work? (n=32)

ANSWER	NUMBER	PROPORTION (%)
Our existing employment contracts already include this option.	3	9.4
With a new employment contract.	1	3.1
With an annex to the existing contract.	15	46.9
With a work order assigning work from home.	11	34.4
In some other way.	2	6.3
Total	32	100.0

Study participants also told us that quite a commonly used approach, which was not included in our survey, involves a combination of employment contract and an agreement or decision on referral. This means that the option of remote work is also included in the basic employment contract while the operational details are regulated with a decision on referral or an agreement between the employee and the employer.

6.2.3 Employee and employer rights and obligations

The relationship between employee and employer is a contractual relationship, entered into on the basis of the law. This results in mutual obligations and rights.

Among the numerous employer obligations, we would like to highlight their duty to ensure a healthy and safe working environment. Our study showed that all of the organisations included in the survey were aware of the significance of ensuring health and safety at work. They are conscious that remote work is no exception. One half of them (16 out of 32) have special rules regarding health and safety at work, specifically for remote work. Others have regulated this in other ways. All of the respondents have proof that this area is formally regulated. They are also aware that this duty cannot be transferred onto employees.

Respondents make use of one or a combination or more of formal approaches:

- health and safety at remote work may be part of the basic rules on health and safety;
- when issuing the employee with a decision on referral, employers may also include written guidelines on safe and healthy work;
- before issuing the employee with the decision, employers may ask the employee to submit photos of their workspace at home or at another location;
- an employer may physically examine the safety of the working environment outside the headquarters before issuing the decision;
- an employers may check that health and safety rules are being adhered to at the employee's home or at another location.

The law also stipulates that employers should keep work records. On the basis of this, an employer may request that the employee keep work logs of remote work. In our sample, 22 out of 25 (88%) respondents ask their remote workers to keep special records, while the rest keep their remote work record as part of already existing records. Our interviews showed that in practice these records come in many forms. Some employers only require employees to keep formal records. There was an organisation, however, which asked its employees to submit work reports structured according to 30-minute intervals.

6.2.4 Formal and informal organisation

For decades businesses and other organisations encouraged the informal socialising of their employees. The reasons for this were of a historical nature. We already mentioned the study conducted in the Western Electric company in Hawthorne, near Chicago, between 1924 and 1933. Despite the still controversial interpretation of results, Elton Mayo’s explanation has prevailed for decades. One of the interpretations also concluded that productivity is affected by informal organisation.

This is why our study also chose to look at informal socialising. We were interested in whether the organisations themselves encouraged informal socialising. The respondents’ answers are shown in Table 23.

Table 23. During the period of increased volume of remote work, do you also promote virtual informal socialising of employees? (n=32)

ANSWER	NUMBER	PROPORTION (%)
We never promoted informal socialising before, nor do we promote it now.	21	65.6
We newly introduced this.	5	15.6
Same as before.	1	3.1
More than before.	5	15.6
Total	32	100.0

In terms of informal socialising, nowadays most employers organise a New Year’s celebration or an annual picnic. Most of us would find it difficult to imagine anything more than that and especially for the employers to actively encourage their employees to engage in a spot of after-work socialising, such as cup of coffee or a beer or two at the local pub. Applied to remote work, this coffee or beer would be drunk “together” in front of the computer. Of course, this does not happen.

Over the past decades, informal socialising was aimed at increasing the productivity of employees. However, productivity has not been a key management issue in years.

Most of the organisations questioned did not encourage socialising before the pandemic, nor do they do so now. The organisations which newly introduced virtual socialising only did so to organise a New Year’s celebration for their employees.

6.2.5 Remote work and attributes of a learning organisation

Our study also included an education-related question. Obviously, we were not interested in classic, classroom education, but rather in remote training. The respondents' answers are shown in Table 24.

Table 24. During the period of increased volume of remote work, do you also engage in remote employee training? (n=32)

ANSWER	NUMBER	PROPORTION (%)
We never used it before, nor do we use it now.	1	3.1
Same as before.	4	12.5
More than before.	20	62.5
Less than before.	7	21.9
Total	32	100.0

We estimate that there has been more remote training, conducted with the use of online tools, than before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Initially, we also wished our research to look into learning organisations. Learning organisations possess numerous attributes which we described in the chapters above. Our survey and especially our structured interviews also inquired, at least indirectly, about this issue. However, we eventually came to the inclusion that the disparity of the organisations included in the survey makes it virtually impossible to compare them in terms of the attributes of a learning organisation (e.g. it is impossible to compare a faculty or a municipal inspection service in terms of a learning organisation).

Our study did include a company, though, which develops professional telecommunications hardware and software. The company's headquarters are in the USA, but its research and development centres are dispersed all across the globe, including Slovenia. Virtually all of its employees work remotely, and the company itself functions as a learning organisation. We believe that the use of remote work is not an obstacle to the practice of a learning organisation.

7 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Looking at the history of remote work, the term telecommuting was coined by the NASA engineer, Jack Nilles, in 1973. Remote work has thus been in use for decades, however, more as an exception than the rule. During the COVID-19 pandemic many organisations resorted to its use. The emergence of the novel coronavirus at the end of 2019 and in the beginning of 2020 resulted in the extensive use of this work format. During this time, more than 25% of all people in employment work outside the employer's headquarters.

We estimate that remote work did not lead to a change in number of employees working in departments. The interview results indicated that the only exception to this, i.e. a potential bottleneck, are the ICT support departments.

During the epidemic, most organisations conducted their selection processes in person or combined (in person and remotely). We believe that remote interviews are appropriate for the first stage of the selection process. A remote interview, however, cannot substitute for an in-person final selection interview.

The phenomenon of "soldiering" is not true in case of remote workers. The productivity of workers is not adapted to the least productive worker. However, the nature of remote work makes it impossible to simply apply factory work rules to remote work. It is difficult to imagine that rules regarding working hours, break schedule, lunch time, etc. can be straightforwardly implemented in remote work.

We estimate that the physical distance between remote workers does not result in any less sense of personal rivalry or in fewer grudges than when the workers are working together at an office.

We also find that the satisfaction with remote work changed over time. The respondents were of a relatively uniform opinion that in the beginning stages of the epidemic employees were very satisfied about being able to work from home, but this satisfaction eventually waned.

We believe that co-operation among co-workers is one of the most critical aspects of remote work. In itself, however, remote work does not affect co-operation; this is influenced by other factors. The participants in our study believe that co-operation among co-workers depends on the nature of work and on the individuals themselves.

In terms of employee job satisfaction and work engagement, we suggest it would be beneficial to consider a combination of remote work and work at the employer’s premises.

We have concluded that remote work has resulted in changes have in the organisational culture and in the culture of the society at large: there is less collective spirit and more individualism. There have been no changes in acceptance of power and authority. People are less willing to take risks. Concern for good interpersonal relationships has decreased.

Remote work and the sense of belonging to an organisation are not interrelated.

The productivity of remote workers is not being measured. It is self-evident that the job needs to be done.

During the period of remote work, the focus of organisations remained fixed on the content of work and on the satisfaction of customers, owners or founders. Only a small proportion of organisations remains focused on quantitative expectations.

We also propose that remote workers are a “different social class”. They have different values, different attitudes towards job security, different criteria about the execution of a job, and evidently also greater confidence than traditional factory workers.

The mere fact of introducing remote work did not affect organisational structure and will not unless there is also change in the organisations’ mission, purpose or volume of business.

The relationship between employee and employer is a contractual relationship, entered into on the basis of the law. This results in mutual obligations and rights. Among the employer obligations, we would like to highlight their duty to ensure a healthy and safe working environment. This duty cannot be transferred onto employees.

The law also stipulates that employers should keep work records. On the basis of this, an employer may request that the employee keep work logs of remote work.

We believe that the use of remote work is not an obstacle to the practice of a learning organisation.

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9 REVIEWS

9.1 REVIEW 1

The COVID-19 pandemic has shaken organisations, altered organisations´ working conditions and created a challenging environment for managers and employees in the field of human resources, who needed to find appropriate solutions to sustain the organisations´ businesses and to help employees to cope with the crisis. To ensure business continuity, many organisations have moved to remote work, which enables employees to work from home. Since all employees could not work from home, human resources managers practitioners had to identify the job positions appropriate for remote work, organise the work and prepare a legal basis for such work. The COVID-19 pandemic, therefore, represents significant challenges for human resources managers and practitioners. The book Human resource management and organising remote work presents human resources as one of the business functions and organising as one of the management process functions, both within the context of remote work. To find out how did remote work affect human resources management and what segments of organisations and organising were affected by remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic, authors have made research in public institutions, state and local administration, manufacturing and service companies and try to determine whether the resulting changes were governed by a common set of rules. In the field of human resources, they have studied principles and processes of human resource management; organisational behaviour, job satisfaction, and organisational climate; work engagement; organisational culture; and organisational identity. In the field of organisations and organising authors have researched organisational design; legal framework for remote working in the EU; employee’s rights and obligations and employer's rights and obligations; formal and informal organisation; organisational identity; remote working and attributes of a learning organisation.

A clear theoretical basis for studying variables presents the first part of the book, furthermore, results of the research and proposals for the practitioners are presented in the second part of the book. The authors explain what kind of interviews are appropriate for which stage of the selection process. They focus also on the problems related to the rules regarding working hours, break schedule, lunchtime, etc. and the relationship between employee and employer. Furthermore, the satisfaction with remote work, critical aspects of remote work and changes in the organisational culture and the culture of the society at large are shown. Therefore, the book is useful both in theory and practice. It offers the potential for wider use of the present scientific findings to develop public and private sector organisations, which is another argument for the publication of this work.

Dr. Tatjana Kozjek, University of Ljubljana

9.2 REVIEW 2

In line with the scientific regulation I reviewed and evaluated the submitted scientific monograph, entitled "HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ND ORGANISING REMOTE WORK", authored Full Professor Marko Ferjan, Ph. D., and Assistant Professor Mojca Bernik,, PhD, and herby provide my positive assessment that the submitted monograph represents a conceptually in-depth and methodologically demanding original scientific work that satisfies all of the criteria for being published as the original scientific monograph.

The entire scientific monograph "HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISING REMOTE WORK" is written in English language. The scientific monograph comprises chapters and reference list (on 111 pages). The scientific monograph aims to answer two research questions, i.e. How did remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic affect human resources management (HRM) in organisations? and What segments of organisations and organising were affected by remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic? It presents the nature of changes in the functions of human resources and organising, caused by remote work during the COVID-19 epidemic. More specifically, authors determine whether the resulting changes were governed by a common set of rules, which is why research encompassed disparate organisations: public institutions, such as primary schools and nurseries, state and local administration, and manufacturing and service companies.

I conclude that the original scientific monograph meets all the requirements for the final publication as the "original scientific monograph, original university text-book". Herby, based on the facts above and as a reviewer of the scientific monograph, I hereby provide a positive assessment of this monograph for all further procedure for final publishing.

Ljubljana, Slovenia, 31st January 2022

Professor Maja Meško, Ph. D.,
University of Primorska Faculty of Management

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