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13 Well-being and dysfunctional behaviour at work

This chapter introduces the reader to well-being and dysfunctional behaviour in organizations. The first section focuses on well-being. Well-being is conceptualized in terms of positive and negative psychological states. The importance, causes, effects and management of well-being are discussed. The chapter then proceeds to dysfunctional behaviour, including absenteeism, presenteeism, theft, sexual harassment, bullying, and alcohol and drug misuse.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

When you have completed this chapter you should be able to:

- 1 Define well-being in organizations in terms of negative and positive feeling and functioning.
- 2 Describe the causes of well-being.
- 3 Discuss the effects of distress and well-being, and moderators thereof.
- 4 Identify interventions which could be used to manage well-being.
- 5 Describe various forms of dysfunctional behaviour and make recommendations on the best ways to deal with these behaviours.

WELL-BEING AT WORK

Definition of well-being

In order to prosper and to survive in a continuously changing environment, organizations need healthy and motivated employees (Weinberg and Cooper, 2007).

Perspectives on well-being

- *Hedonic perspective*: well-being is experienced when pleasure is maximized and pain is avoided.
- *Eudaimonic perspective*: well-being is experienced when an individual functions well.

Individuals' experiences at work, be they physical, emotional or social in nature, affect them while they are in the workplace. In addition, these experiences spill over into non-work domains. Researchers and managers have generally recognized that a lack of well-being can potentially affect workers and their organizations in negative ways.

Well-being goes beyond the fixed idea of health as an absence of illness. It implies a proactive stance towards achieving optimal physical, mental and emotional well-being. Complete health is the absence of physical and mental morbidity, and the presence of sufficient levels of physical and mental well-being. Incomplete health or un-well-being reflects either high levels of physical health and well-being but poor mental health (high morbidity or low well-being), or high levels of mental health and well-being but poor physical health (high morbidity or low well-being); being completely unhealthy reflects high physical and mental morbidity and low physical and mental well-being (Keyes, 2002). Focus 13.1 shows two perspectives on well-being (Ryan *et al.*, 2008).

The importance of work-related well-being

Remarkable changes have occurred in the world of work over the last few decades. Specific changes include the increased utilization of information and communication technology, the rapid expansion of the service sector, the globalization of the economy, the changing structure of the workforce, the increasing flexibilization of work, the creation of the 24-hour economy and the utilization of new production concepts (e.g. team-based work, telework, downsizing, outsourcing and subcontracting). Because of worldwide recessions, there are fewer people doing more work, feeling more insecure and being managed more harshly in most workplaces (Robbins and Judge, 2013; Bell, 2013).

Modern employees increasingly work in offices (and less in agriculture or industry) with information or clients (and less with tangible objects), in teams and less in isolation (Turner *et al.*, 2002). Managers are being put under pressure as cost-cutting, redundancy and deteriorating terms and conditions take their toll (Worrall and Cooper, 2014). Managers are becoming less positive about their organizations and they often feel that their organizations do not care about their well-being. Illness levels have increased, but managers are less inclined to take time off from their work, even if they are ill (Worrall and Cooper, 2014). The types of illness that are increasing most, such as feeling unable to cope, avoiding people and having difficulty in making decisions, tend to undermine managerial effectiveness.

These changes affect people's well-being in organizations. In addition, many organizations have implemented practices that attempt to reduce costs and increase productivity, which often leads to a mentality that favours profitability over the well-being of people. Managers tend to become more autocratic and bureaucratic, partly because it is expected of them to produce higher outputs with fewer resources (Bell, 2013). Many directors of companies have no idea what the reality of their organization is for people at lower levels in the hierarchy (Worrall and Cooper, 2014).

Approaches to studying well-being

Two broad approaches to well-being, namely the disease model and the positive psychology model, will be discussed next.

The disease model

Psychologists have for many years been concerned with the psychopathological underpinnings of suffering, ill health and deviance. Focusing on these psychopathological aspects culminated in the disease model (Peterson and Seligman, 2004). For organizations, the disease model implies that psychopathology, stress and burnout be addressed to promote health and well-being of employees (Schiffirin and Nelson, 2010).

Individuals experience *occupational stress* when the demands of the workplace exceed their adaptive responses. The term 'stress' may have been derived from the Latin word *strictere*, which literally means 'to draw tight' (Cooper and Dewe, 2004: 1). The stressfulness of the situation will depend on people's assessment and perception of the difference between the demands of the situation and their ability to meet those demands. Occupational stress appears specifically within the parameters of the work environment, is caused by work-related factors and also has consequences for the work situation. It implies that a person cannot effectively handle work-related demands, such as work overload, role conflict in the workplace and poor working conditions. Therefore a 'mismatch' exists between the demands made on an individual and his or her ability to cope with them (Weinberg and Cooper, 2007).

Focus 13.2 shows four theories of occupational stress that have generated considerable attention (Nelson and Simmons, 2003).

Burnout can be considered as a particular kind of prolonged job stress. Burnout is defined as 'a persistent, negative, work-related state of mind in "normal" individuals that is primarily characterized by exhaustion, which is accompanied by distress, a sense of reduced effectiveness, decreased motivation, and the development of dysfunctional attitudes and behaviours at work' (Schaufeli and Enzmann, 1998: 36). Exhaustion is a core indicator of burnout and a sense of reduced effectiveness is an accompanying symptom, but it has three additional general symptoms, namely distress (affective, cognitive, physical and behavioural), decreased motivation, and dysfunctional attitudes and behaviours at work.

Burnout consists of three interrelated but conceptually distinct characteristics, namely exhaustion, cynicism or depersonalization, and low professional efficacy (Schaufeli, 2003). *Exhaustion* is defined as a reduction in the emotional resources of an individual. Burned-out employees feel drained or used up and physically fatigued. *Cynicism* is defined as a negative, callous or detached response to various aspects of the job, while *depersonalization* refers to cynical and insensitive attitudes towards work,

Four theories of occupational stress

- *Person–environment fit approach.* This approach emphasizes the stressful nature of confusing or conflicting role demands. Fit is defined as a match between an individual's skills and abilities and the demands of the job. A lack of person–environment fit leads to distress.
- *Demand-control model.* This model identifies a high-strain job as one that has a high level of responsibility, without accompanying authority. High-strain jobs are related to symptoms such as depression, job dissatisfaction and increased sickness-absenteeism. The model also suggests that the 'best' job is an active job, one in which high demands are balanced by high decision latitude.
- *Cognitive appraisal approach.* This approach emphasizes the individual's role in classifying situations as threatening or non-threatening. Stress depends on an individual's cognitive appraisal of events and circumstances and on the ability to cope. An individual's coping strategy is constantly changing to manage specific demands that are appraised as exceeding the person's resources.
- *Preventive stress management.* Both individuals and organizations are responsible for managing stress.

colleagues, clients and/or patients. Low *professional efficacy* is defined as a feeling of being unable to meet clients' needs and to satisfy essential elements of job performance. It is estimated that about 4 per cent to 7 per cent of the working population suffers from severe or clinical burnout (Schaufeli, 2003).

The positive psychology model

In developing a model of well-being at work, two considerations are important (Rothmann, 2013).

- First, a *multidimensional* model of well-being should be used. The concept of thriving (Porath *et al.*, 2012), which is a psychological state consisting of two dimensions (i.e. vitality and learning), is an example of a multidimensional state of well-being at work. For example, if an employee is learning but feels depleted (i.e. has low vitality), he or she does not thrive. Porath *et al.* (2012) pointed out that not considering the multidimensional nature of well-being might result in behaviour that is detrimental to the long-term well-being of individuals.
- Second, the dimensions of well-being should be regarded as 'states', of which at least some part can be influenced by the job context and social relationships rather than personality dispositions.

Based on these considerations, two conceptualizations of well-being from the positive psychology model, namely Psychological Capital and the Mental Health Continuum are distinguished.

Psychological Capital (PsyCap)

PsyCap is defined as an individual's positive psychological state of development that is characterized by self-efficacy, optimism, hope and resilience (Luthans *et al.*, 2007).

- *Self-efficacy.* An individual's confidence about his or her abilities to mobilize the motivation, resources and/or courses of action needed to successfully execute a specific task within a given context.
- *Optimism.* A generalized positive expectancy and an optimistic explanatory style.
- *Hope.* A positive motivational state that is based on a sense of successful agency and pathways relative to goals.
- *Resilience.* The capacity to 'bounce back' from adversity, uncertainty, conflict and/or failure.

PsyCap can be developed through targeted interventions because the four constructs are open to development and management (Peterson *et al.*, 2011).

The Mental Health Continuum

Building on the research on subjective well-being (Diener *et al.*, 1999), and psychological well-being (Ryff and Singer, 1998), and positive emotions (Fredrickson, 1998), Keyes (2007) operationalized flourishing as a pattern of positive feelings and positive functioning in life. He summarized the scales and dimensions of subjective well-being under the following subcategories: emotional well-being, psychological well-being and social well-being (see Focus 13.3). On the opposite continuum is languishing, which can be defined as the absence of mental health characterized by experiences of emptiness and stagnation, as well as a life of despair. Each measure of subjective well-being is regarded as an outward symptom of an unobservable state. Individuals flourish when they experience high levels of at least one symptom of emotional well-being, as well as high levels of at least six measures of psychological and social well-being. Individuals languish when they experience low levels of at least one symptom of emotional well-being, as well as low levels of at least six measures of psychological and social well-being.

According to Keyes and Annas (2009), well-being consists of two components, namely feeling good and functioning well, which could be combined to study the flourishing or languishing of people. In analysing the results of a study on mental health, Keyes and Annas (2009) found that 48.5 per cent of the participants measured high on hedonic well-being, 18 per cent measured high on both types of well-being, while 30.5 per cent measured high on hedonic well-being (feeling well) and moderate on eudaimonic well-being (functioning well). Individuals who measured high on hedonic well-being and moderate on eudaimonic well-being had approximately twice the rate of mental illness than individuals who measured high on both types of well-being.

Two studies in South Africa focused on the flourishing of employees (as defined above), namely in a sample of information technology (IT) professionals (Diedericks and Rothmann, 2014) and managers (Rothmann, 2014a). The results showed that 37.6 per cent and 48.5 per cent of IT professionals and agricultural managers respectively fitted the criteria for flourishing. However, more than 60 per cent of IT professionals and more than 50 per cent of agricultural managers did not flourish.

Dimensions of flourishing

Emotional well-being (positive emotions/feelings)

- *Positive affect*: energetic, regularly cheerful, serene, good-spirited.
- *Affirmed quality of life*: showing general satisfaction and happiness with life overall.

Psychological well-being (positive psychological functioning)

- *Self-acceptance*: positive attitudes towards self/own personality.
- *Personal growth*: ambitious, seeks to maximize own potential.
- *Purpose in life*: own life has direction and meaning.
- *Environmental mastery*: shows ability to change and manage personal environment to suit own needs.
- *Autonomy*: has socially acceptable internal standards and values as guidelines in life.
- *Positive relations with others*: ability to establish trusting interpersonal relationships.

Social well-being (positive social functioning)

- *Social acceptance*: positive towards and accepting of diversity in people.
- *Social actualization*: believes in the potential of others (individuals, groups and societies).
- *Social coherence*: finds society and social life meaningful and comprehensible.
- *Social contribution*: regards own daily activities as adding value to society and others.
- *Social integration*: experiences sense of relatedness, comfort and support from community.

FOCUS 13.3

Seligman (2011) distinguished between five elements of flourishing, namely positive emotions, engagement, meaning, accomplishment and positive relations. Positive emotions refers to having as much pleasure as you can through the experience of positive affect. Engagement results from knowing what your signature strengths are and recrafting your life to use them at work, in love, in leisure, parenting and friendship. Meaning and purpose exist when you know what your highest strengths and talents are, and using them in the service of something you believe is bigger than you are. Accomplishment refers to pursuing success, winning, achievement and mastery. Positive relationships refer to warm, satisfying and trusting relationship with others.

A multidimensional model of flourishing (consisting of emotional and psychological well-being dimensions) in the *work and organizational context* has also been developed

Flourishing at work

Emotional well-being

- *Job satisfaction*: a positive evaluation of a job or parts of it.
- *Positive affect balance*: the presence and frequency of more positive or pleasurable emotions, such as joy and happiness at work (compared with adverse emotions, such as sadness or feeling dejected).

Psychological well-being

- *Psychological need satisfaction* (self-determination).
 - *Autonomy*: the need for freedom and choice when carrying out an activity.
 - *Competence*: the need to feel effective in interacting with the environment.
 - *Relatedness*: the need to feel connected to others, to love and care for others, and to be loved and cared for.
- *Meaningfulness*: subjective judgements that work is worth doing and is valuable.
- *Purpose*: goals and a sense of directedness.
- *Engagement*.
 - *Vitality*: physically involved in tasks and shows vigour.
 - *Absorption*: alert at work and experiences involvement.
 - *Dedication*: connected to jobs/others while working, and shows dedication and commitment.
- *Harmony*: experiences balance, inner peace, self-acceptance and a positive relationship with him- or herself.

FOCUS 13.4

(Rothmann, 2013). Concerning emotional well-being, Focus 13.4 shows that job satisfaction and a positive affect balance, which reflects the extent to which employees feel well at work, should be included. Regarding psychological well-being, individuals who flourish at work are engaged in their work (i.e. they have high energy/vitality, are dedicated and absorb themselves in their work), experience self-determination because their psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness are satisfied, have a purpose and meaning at work, and experience harmony at work. Considering more than one of these dimensions is necessary if one want to promote the well-being of employees. Individuals might show engagement and self-determination, but they might experience dissatisfaction with aspects of their jobs (e.g. remuneration) and a lack of positive emotion (e.g. because of violation of an expectation in the psychological contract). Similarly, aspects of psychological well-being at work might be lacking (e.g. relatedness).

Diagnosing well-being at work

Diagnosing well-being requires that the work and organizational psychologist develop and validate measures to evaluate stress and burnout, but also flourishing.

Causes of work-related well-being

The work-related well-being of individuals could be affected by outside forces, organizational factors and individual factors.

Outside forces

Forces outside the organization could affect the work-related well-being of individuals (Robbins and Judge, 2013; Schultz and Schultz, 2014):

- *The rate of social and technological change.* Employees are constantly subjected to various changes, including new value systems in society and developments in information technology. Technological changes and innovations can make a person's skills and knowledge obsolete. Such innovations include the use of automated production processes, the use of robots in production processes, and the use of computers and computer technology. These changes might lead to the fear of losing one's job, which in turn might lead to distress.
- *The family.* The family situation of employees may also affect their well-being in a positive or negative way, resulting in either eustress or distress. Relocation of the family and changes in the financial situation of the family can act as significant stressors for employees.
- *Race, sex, social class and community.* Sometimes minority groups are subjected to more stressors than majority groups. It seems as if women experience more psychological distress than men. Especially in the case of professional women, the sources of stress are located in discrimination, stereotyping, balancing the demands of work/career and family and experiencing social isolation. Men, again, are more likely to suffer from severe physical illness due to stress. It may also be that people in different socioeconomic classes are exposed to different groups of stressors. Community stressors include bad housing conditions, lack of services, and noise and air pollution.
- *Environmental factors.* Environmental factors such as economic and political factors might impact on the well-being of an individual. During times of economic uncertainty people tend to become worried about their work security, which might lead to feelings of stress. Political uncertainty may have much the same effect.

Organizational forces

Job and organizational demands and resources might result in either occupational stress and burnout, languishing or flourishing of employees (Rothmann, 2014a). In general, it seems that job demands and a lack of job resources result in stress, burnout and languishing, while the availability of job resources results in flourishing (Rothmann, 2013; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004).

Job demands refer to those physical, psychological, social or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological effort and are therefore associated with certain physiological and/or psychological costs. Job demands include the following (Demerouti *et al.*, 2001):

- *Role demands.* Role demands relate to pressures which are placed on a person because of the particular role he or she plays. Role demands include role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload/underload.
- *Responsibility for others.* Individuals who are responsible for other people and who must motivate them, reward or punish them and communicate with them, are more likely to experience higher levels of stress than people who are responsible for the other functions.
- *Interpersonal demands.* Interpersonal demands are pressures which are created by other employees. These pressures can develop out of poor interpersonal relationships and a lack of social support.
- *Organizational structure.* In an organization which is characterized by a high degree of differentiation, different sections or departments sometimes tend to function on their own. If there is no efficient way in which the efforts of the different departments or sections can be integrated, people who function in jobs which depend on this integration might experience the situation as stressful. When there is excessive dependence on rules and regulations, and when individuals have no participation in decisions which affect them, it might be a source of stress.
- *The nature of specific jobs.* Some jobs, for example emergency-room physician, firefighter, airline pilot, production manager and foreman, are more stressful than others. It seems that these jobs require of the people who hold them to a great extent to make decisions, to constantly monitor devices or materials, to repeatedly exchange information with others, to work in unpleasant physical working conditions and to perform unstructured rather than structured tasks.
- *Physical job conditions.* Excessive heat, cold, humidity, dryness in the air and noise can also increase stress.

Job resources are those physical, psychological, social or organizational aspects of the job that may be functional in achieving work goals, reducing job demands and stimulating personal growth and development (Demerouti *et al.*, 2001). Job resources include the following (Rothmann, 2014b):

- *Manager/supervisor relations.* Managers/supervisors are often intentionally or unintentionally devoted to manipulate the environment in which individuals function in such a way that they encourage them to be productive. Most managers have little understanding of the influence they have on employees' flourishing, commitment and/or intentions to stay or leave (Daniels, 2000). Studies (e.g. Rothmann *et al.*, 2013) showed that employees who experience satisfaction of their psychological needs will be more engaged and less inclined to quit.
- *The nature of the job.* The significance and purposefulness of a task, which includes skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback. When an employee perceives that a job lacks variety, learning opportunities and autonomy, distress might result. Most people like to have some variety in their work, but

sometimes people experience too much variety in their tasks as being stressful. When there is great interdependence between the person's tasks and the tasks of others, the person is likely to experience stress. Research has shown that employees in jobs that involve planning, problem solving and evaluation with clearly defined roles and objectives experienced more flow states than employees in positions where their roles were not clear and work was not reviewed on a regular basis (Grant, 2008).

Furthermore, the social context of work plays an important role in shaping employees' flourishing (Grant, 2008). The social context of work refers to the interpersonal interactions and relationships that are embedded in and influenced by the jobs, roles, and tasks that employees perform and enact. Across cultures, people want to contribute to protecting and promoting the well-being of others: they want to do good, make a social contribution, serve and make a difference. Jobs with strong pro-social characteristics (i.e. they allow people to do good), contribute to flourishing of employees and affect organizational outcomes (Grant, 2008).

- Co-worker relations. The nature of relationships with co-workers affect the stress, burnout and flourishing of employees. Employees will tend to experience a sense of meaningfulness if they are treated with respect, dignity and appreciation for their contributions. Co-worker interactions create a sense of belonging and a sense of social identity. A loss of social identity can lead to meaninglessness.
- Communication. The nature and quality of communication with employees will affect their well-being (Lewis, 2011). Often, opportunities for upward communication need to be attended to (given that downward communication tends to happen quite effectively in many organizations). The upward flow of feedback can be promoted by employee meetings and quarterly, brief, online surveys which capture the changing concerns of employees.
- Performance management. The nature and quality of performance-management activities in organizations will affect the well-being of employees. Performance management should focus on the strengths of employees, include opportunities for goal seeking and goal setting, and recognize accomplishments. The performance management culture which exists in an organization affects employees' well-being. The performance management system should be associated with the celebration of successes and accomplishments, rather than a time to document missteps. The focus should be on things people find rewarding, including social relationships, experiencing pleasure, a chance to use their strengths, and/or being engaged.

Moderators of work-related well-being

Different people react differently to the same demands or resources. Some people seem to thrive on stressful situations, while others are unable to cope. It thus seems as if there are certain factors which determine the relationship between potential sources of stress and the way in which different people experience these stressful situations.

- Perception. A person reacts in response to his or her perception of reality rather than to reality itself. To one person a challenging assignment means that he or she is able to make use of his or her potential and abilities, while to another person the same assignment might be interpreted as being a threat to his or her well-being.

- Job experience. For many people, the newness of a situation poses a threat. At the same time, once these people get used to a particular situation, the situation seems to become less threatening. The same goes for the work situation: the more one is exposed to it, the less stressful it becomes. Therefore, job experience tends to be negatively related to work stress. Employees who have been with an organization for a long time will tend to experience less stress.
- Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is defined as 'beliefs in one's capabilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to meet given organizational demands' (Wood and Bandura, 1989: 408). Task-specific self-efficacy is a state-based expectation or judgement about the likelihood of successful task performance measured immediately before any effort is expended on the task. It is a powerful motivator of behaviour because efficacy expectations at a given point in time determine the initial decision to perform a task, the effort expended and the level of persistence that emerges in the face of adversity.
- Locus of control. Rotter (1966) proposed the concept of locus of control as the perception, by the individual of his or her ability to exercise control over the environment. Those characterized by an internal locus of control believe they have control over their environment and their personal successes, whereas those with an external locus of control view their lives as controlled by external factors such as chance or powerful others. Compared with individuals with an external locus of control, individuals with an internal locus of control will be less inclined to cope with frustrations in organizations by withdrawing or by reacting aggressively (Rahim and Psenicka, 1996).
- Optimism. Nelson and Simmons (2003) distinguish between two conceptualizations of optimism, namely dispositional optimism (Carver and Scheier, 2007) and learned optimism (Seligman, 2002). Learned optimism relates to an optimistic explanatory style. Dispositional optimism is defined as a global expectation that good things will be plentiful in the future and that bad things will be scarce. Optimists seem to use more problem-focused coping strategies than do pessimists. Optimists are less likely to accept the reality of a challenge to their current lives. They are less likely to display signs of disengagement. Optimists experience less distress than pessimists when dealing with difficulties in their lives.
- Coping. The level of stress an individual experiences in his or her organizational context, and the extent to which adverse effects such as psychological and other strains occur, depend on how effectively he or she copes with stressful organizational situations. Coping refers to perceptual, cognitive or behavioural responses that are used to manage, avoid or control situations that could be regarded as difficult (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). Workers could use problem-focused and/or emotion-focused coping styles.

The effects of (un)well-being

High levels of occupational distress and low levels of flourishing could lead to physical, psychological and/or behavioural effects.

Physical, psychological and behavioural effects

The physical effects of stress include headaches, spastic colon, indigestion, ulcers, high blood pressure, palpitations, hyperventilation, asthma, stiff and sore muscles, trouble with sleeping, change in appetite, change in sexual drive and decreased immunity.

The experiencing of high levels of stress may lead to feelings of anger, anxiety, depression, nervousness, irritability, tension and boredom. This may lead to lower job performance, lower self-esteem, resentment of supervision, inability to concentrate and make decisions, and job dissatisfaction.

Behaviours which are directly related to stress, burnout and/or languishing include the following: undereating or overeating, sleeplessness, increased smoking and drinking and drug abuse. There also seems to be a relationship between stress and absenteeism, and between stress and labour turnover. One can imagine that these symptoms are very costly to organizations. Absenteeism and labour turnover have direct cost implications for organizations. A person who is suffering from sleeplessness is unable to perform up to standard. Drinking and drug abuse lead to people being unable to concentrate on the task at hand, which might lead to industrial accidents. Drinking and drug abuse may also contribute to absenteeism.

Work outcomes

Sometimes mention is made of the so-called 'inverted-U' relationship between stress and performance (Robbins and Judge, 2013). Low levels of performance accompany low levels of stress. As the level of stress increases, the level of performance also increases, until it reaches an optimum point. If the level of stress increases beyond this point, the level of performance goes down again.

There are exceptions to the general rule that stress seems to lower job performance (Robbins and Judge, 2013). There are some people who are able to turn out exceptional performance at times of experiencing high stress, perhaps because they have become experts in the task(s) being performed. Perhaps these 'experts' view high levels of stress as challenges rather than threats. In many situations, stress can indeed interfere with performance. However, its precise effects depend on several different factors (e.g. complexity of the task being performed, personal characteristics of the individuals involved and their previous experience with this task).

Flourishing individuals compared with individuals who are not flourishing have a lower turnover intention; show more organizational citizenship behaviour, e.g. they are more likely to help fellow workers and customers than those who are not flourishing; show lower counterproductive behaviour; show more commitment to their organizations and are more productive at work (Diedericks and Rothmann, 2014; Rothmann, 2014b).

Preventing stress and burnout, and promoting well-being

The following general guidelines are provided regarding the role of the organization in ensuring well-being at work (Barling *et al.*, 2002; Rothmann, 2014b):

- *Ergonomics.* Ergonomics is concerned with the design of a work system in which work methods, machines, layout, equipment and physical environment (e.g. lighting, heat, noise and vibration) are compatible with the physical and behavioural characteristics of the worker. Physical ergonomics focuses on the design of the physical workplace. Cognitive ergonomics focuses on the fit between mental requirements of a job and human abilities. Organizational ergonomics focuses on system risks.

- *Assessment and evaluation of employees.* Personnel assessment and evaluation should be used to ensure an optimal fit between the values and goals of the employee and those of the organization. Wellness audits which focus on both positive and negative aspects of well-being should be implemented and feedback should be given on individual, group and organizational levels.
- *Job redesign and work changes.* The redesigning of jobs could reduce the exposure to psychosocial risks and increase employee motivation. Jobs could be designed to reduce exposure to stressors such as work overload, role demands and conflicts. Furthermore, lacking job resources such as job control and support from co-workers and supervisors should be addressed. Repetitive tasks could be reduced through the technique of job enlargement. Work can also be recrafted to increase the meaningfulness thereof (Wrzesniewski, 2012). Job crafting is also an effective tool for coping with organizational stress and other work pressures. Recrafting can be done in three ways, namely by reframing the societal rationale of the work that employees do by allowing employees to take on additional work that is more closely related to that which they like, and by giving more time, energy and attention to tasks that provide meaning and engage them.
- *Leadership.* A 'good' leader is able not only to prevent job stress and burnout among his or her followers, but also to enhance motivation and engagement. Leaders should: a) acknowledge and reward good performance instead of exclusively correcting substandard performance; b) be fair; c) put problems on the agenda and discuss these in an open, constructive and problem-solving way, both in work meetings and in individual talks; d) inform employees on a regular basis and as early and completely as possible in face-to-face meetings about important issues; e) coach employees by helping them with setting goals, planning their work, pointing out pitfalls and giving advice as necessary; f) interview employees on a regular basis about their personal functioning, professional development and career development. Leaders should express their commitment by giving high priority to safety matters at meetings, allowing high status for safety officers and emphasizing safety training.
- *Training.* In addition to being purely directed at the job content, training programmes that promote employee health and well-being should also be directed at personal growth and development. For instance, they should include time-management, stress management, personal effectiveness and self-management. Work training is a learning process across the entire lifespan that is ultimately related to the employee's job performance. This could be achieved by increasing employees' efficacy beliefs through mastery experiences, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion and positive emotional states.
- *Organizational structure and climate.* Changing the organizational structure and creating a supportive organizational climate can be implemented by decentralizing functions, and by moving the responsibility for decision-making to the levels where people are able to make decisions regarding their own work. If employees see the appraising of performance and the subsequent rewards they receive as being fair, they will tend to experience less stress.
- *Job security.* Especially during hard economic times, job security is high on the priority list of employees. Job security lessens the stress generated by the possibility of unemployment caused by lay-offs or retrenchments.

- *Career development.* By attending to the career development of employees, organizations show that they care about the needs and aspirations of their employees. Career development provides employees with the opportunity to develop their skills and abilities, and to reach their career goals.
- *Organizational roles.* It is management's responsibility to reduce conflict by clarifying organizational roles. Each employee should know what is expected of him or her, and should also have the necessary means for carrying out his or her responsibilities.
- *Employee wellness programmes.* Services can be provided for people to take part in fitness programmes, to lose weight, to control their diets, to quit smoking and to control their intake of alcohol and drugs. Regarding mental wellness, counselling

ACTIVITY 13.1

Joe Brown has completed a well-being survey in his company. Mr Brown has completed a Master's degree in Business Administration. He has been in an administrative position for the last twelve years. The last two years his productivity has dropped and this year he received poor performance ratings. His colleagues observed him complaining about his job often over the last few years.

The well-being survey measured the components of flourishing, namely emotional well-being (i.e. job satisfaction and positive emotions at work) and psychological well-being (autonomy satisfaction, competence satisfaction, relatedness satisfaction, vitality, dedication, absorption, purpose, meaning and harmony). Mr Brown obtained the following sten scores:

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|---|---------------------------|---|---------------------------|---|---------------------|---|
| Job satisfaction | 3 | Positive affect balance | 4 | Autonomy | 2 | Competence | 7 |
| Relatedness | 3 | Vitality | 4 | Dedication | 4 | Absorption | 3 |
| Meaningfulness | 3 | Purpose | 4 | Harmony | 3 | Person-role fit | 2 |
| Task characteristics | 3 | Relations with supervisor | 2 | Relations with colleagues | 6 | Emotional resources | 4 |
| Cognitive resources | 5 | Physical resources | | | | | |

Interpretation of sten scores:

- 1–3: low
- 4–7: average
- 8–10: high

Answer the following questions:

- Is Mr Brown flourishing? Motivate your answer.
- Which factors are impacting on the flourishing of Mr Brown?
- Which interventions can be implemented to address the flourishing of Mr Brown?

services and access to the services of clinical psychologists and psychiatrists can be provided.

DYSFUNCTIONAL BEHAVIOUR AT WORK

Next, various types of dysfunctional behaviour are discussed, including absenteeism, presenteeism, theft, sexual harassment, bullying, and alcohol and drug misuse (Langan-Fox *et al.*, 2007).

Absenteeism

Absenteeism is used as a mechanism to withdraw from aversive situations at work (Hulin, 1991). Absenteeism could be divided into two types, namely absence for medical and non-medical reasons. Sickness absenteeism is defined as absence attributed by the employee to illness or injury and accepted as such by the employer (Searle, 1997). Long-term absence is likely to be associated with medical problems, while short-term absence is likely to be caused by social and personal factors rather than illness. The factors listed in Focus 13.5 might cause absenteeism (Labriola *et al.*, 2006).

Causes of absenteeism

- *Work and role design.* Absenteeism is likely to be higher in contexts where work is boring or roles are unclear.
- *Workload and stress.* Absenteeism is likely to be higher where workload is excessive or where people experience job insecurity and occupational stress.
- *Organization and team size.* Absenteeism tends to be higher in larger organizations and teams.
- *Organizational culture and climate.* Absenteeism tends to be higher if the management style is perceived as aggressive or uncaring.
- *Physical demands.* Absenteeism tends to be higher when a job involves physical demands such as lifting objects and pushing heavy loads.
- *Injuries at work.* A high incidence of work-related injuries may result in absenteeism.
- *Lifestyle factors.* Alcohol and drug-related problems may result in absenteeism.
- *Persistent or recurrent conditions.* Health conditions which are persistent or recurrent may result in absenteeism.
- *Family or domestic commitments.* Employees often experience domestic difficulties which may result in absenteeism.
- *Travel difficulties.* Workers will tend to be more absent when the work location is not easily accessible.

Organizations could do the following to manage the problem of absenteeism: a) communicate the absenteeism policy to all employees; b) optimize recruitment, selection and induction; c) maintain an effective performance management system, rewards and incentives; d) optimize the design of jobs and the organization; and e) implement occupational health initiatives.

Presenteeism

Presenteeism is defined as the practice of coming to work when the individual should not, which results in physically being present at work, but functionally absent (Lu *et al.*, 2013). Presenteeism is less apparent than absenteeism and results because an employee is distracted, tired, depressed or ill (Aronsson and Gustafsson, 2005). Presenteeism is regarded as a measure of lost productivity cost due to employees actually showing up for work, but not being fully engaged and productive mainly because of personal health and life distractions. Three types of presenteeism are shown in Focus 13.6 (Aronsson *et al.*, 2000; Aronsson and Gustafsson, 2005).

Regarding the prevalence of sickness presenteeism, it was shown that up to one-third of employees go back to work without sufficient recovery. Aronsson *et al.* (2003) found that sickness presenteeism was higher in human service professions, including teachers, nurses and social workers, especially when people found it difficult to wind down after work. Kivimaki *et al.* (2005) found that 17 per cent of unhealthy employees in British public service took no sick leave during a three-year follow-up period. The incidence of serious coronary events in that group was, after correction for conventional risk factors, twice as high as that of unhealthy employees with moderate levels of sickness-absence.

Studies showed that presenteeism has negative effects in terms of productivity and economic outcomes, well-being and ill health of employees (Lu *et al.*, 2013). Employees who work at diminished capacity cost their employers an estimated £119–165 billion each year. Presenteeism accounts for 61 per cent of an employee's total lost productivity and medical costs. Loss of productivity is significantly greater from days being at work while sick compared with missed work days due to illness (Middaugh, 2006).

FOCUS 13.6

Types of presenteeism

- *Sickness presenteeism.* Employees go to work despite complaints and ill health. It does not entail that the employee pretends to be ill to avoid job duties or is misusing company time at work.
- *Insecurity-commitment presenteeism.* Employees put in excessive work hours as an expression of commitment or a way of coping with job insecurity.
- *Disengagement presenteeism.* Employees do not invest energy in a focused way in their work, mainly because they face demands and lack personal and/or job resources.

Presenteeism is caused by high work load, time pressure, work/home interference, low replaceability, understaffing, conflicting demands, lack of resources and low control over pace of work (Aronsson and Gustafsson, 2005). Presenteeism can be managed by focusing on individual as well as organizational interventions (see Focus 13.7).

The availability of resources could counter the negative effects of presenteeism of well-being of employees. Lu *et al.* (2013) found that supervisor support is an important resource which buffers the effects of presenteeism on exhaustion.

Theft

There are as many signs of theft as there are ways to steal. Certain conditions or incidents may not be the result of carelessness or incompetence but indications that theft is in progress. Inventory or product found near employee exits, sensitive documents discovered in copying machines and employees in key positions who refuse to take time off have been signs of past theft and may be indications of existing dishonesty.

All organizations probably experience some degree of employee theft. The list of items workers steal from their employers is endless, and includes such items as inventory, money, parts, components, supplies, information and customers. It is estimated that 95 per cent of all businesses experience employee theft, and management is seldom aware of the actual extent of losses or even the existence of theft.

FOCUS 13.7

Dealing with presenteeism

- Conduct anonymous wellness surveys and ask employees to offer suggestions for improvement.
- Present health and wellness awareness training to supervisors and employees.
- Create access to physical fitness facilities.
- Direct employees to utilize confidential employee assistance programmes.
- Use the services of disability specialists to assist employees with chronic injuries to modify their work techniques.
- Include a disease management specialist to support individuals who are experiencing a chronic condition.
- Discourage overtime and promote the importance of lunch breaks and annual holidays.
- Attend to work/life balance programmes.
- Explore community resources to provide support (e.g. sick child care).
- Consider work from home as an option.
- Provide the necessary job resources (e.g. a clear role and responsibilities, fair pay and security, interpersonal contact and supportive supervision).

It is very difficult for a manager to accept the possibility that workers that he or she hired, trusts and works beside are capable of engaging in theft. Consequently, various misconceptions about the problem exist, for example:

- Most theft is caused by non-employees.
- Well-paid and/or senior employees are trustworthy/loyal and do not steal.
- Honest employees can be counted on to report employee theft.
- Employee theft is conspicuous and can be detected in its early stages, and it is not necessary to formally inform employees that theft will not be tolerated.

Reasons for theft which are reported by employees include the following:

- The opportunity of theft presented itself through lax policies and controls and management indifference.
- Management (rather than employees' financial needs) created opportunities for theft.
- Management was stealing so it is acceptable for employees to steal as well.
- Employees are underpaid and are only taking what they deserve.
- Everybody does it.
- The organization makes a large profit and workers deserve some of it.
- The organization angered the worker.

It is crucial to understand the reasons for worker theft and to initiate sound loss-prevention measures. The following steps should be taken:

- Identify possible existing theft and potential opportunities or risks to potential theft. Immediately develop a plan to eliminate or reduce exposure to these risks.
- Educate supervisors, managers and the general employee population as to the impact employee theft has on them and how they are the key to solving the problem.
- Develop a loss-prevention programme that ensures an ongoing effort to prevent and detect dishonest activity.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as any sexually based behaviour that is knowingly unwanted and 1) has an adverse effect on a person's employment status, 2) interferes with a person's job performance, or 3) creates a hostile or intimidating work environment. This definition is drawn from laws that were written to protect victims of sexual harassment. Points one and two are known as 'quid pro quo' sexual harassment, which means that the victim is punished somehow as a result of saying no. The third point refers to situations in which either the direct behaviour or surrounding behaviour of perpetrators creates personal stress or a situation in which one would not want to work. Sexual harassment consists of three components, namely: a) gender harassment, i.e. hostile or insulting attitudes or behaviour; b) unwanted sexual attention; c) sexual coercion, i.e. sexual co-operation linked to job outcomes (Gelfand *et al.*, 1995).

Sexual harassment is a widespread problem in the workplace. The numbers of 28 per cent and 90 per cent reflect the ends of a range of the percentage of women reporting being sexually harassed. The percentage of men reporting being harassed in the workplace is between 14 and 18 per cent (Fitzgerald, 1995; Schneider *et al.*, 1997). Harassment is more likely to be perceived when:

- the target is female and the perpetrator is male;
- the target has less power than the perpetrator;
- the behaviour is repeated;
- the target has requested for the behaviour to stop;
- negative consequences follow;
- the target suffers emotional or stress-related symptoms;
- the organization has been 'soft' on perpetrators in the past.

Although both men and women are reporting that sexual harassment is less likely today than it was five or ten years ago, the number of lawsuits being filed for harassment is increasing. One reason for this is that people's perceptions of what harassment is have changed. As public awareness of sexual harassment increases, more and more people are likely to interpret a broader range of behaviours as offensive or illegal. For example, in the late 1970s, a female worker was repeatedly threatened with rape and even grabbed in the crotch by male co-workers. But when she sued, a judge at that time ruled that it was not sexual harassment because it was simply part of the regular horseplay that went on between co-workers. In the 1990s, a male graduate student had to remove a picture of his wife in a bikini from his desk because the placement of the picture there offended female office mates.

Self-reported sexual harassment is related to headaches, sleep disturbances and psychosomatic symptoms such as reduced self-esteem, increased anger, stress, anxiety, fear and depression (Fitzgerald *et al.*, 1997).

The role of work and organizational psychologists is to help organizations develop effective policies and procedures on sexual harassment. They should also be instrumental in designing training programmes to promote:

- a general awareness of sexual harassment;
- communication skills so that sexual harassment could be avoided before it happens;
- conflict resolution skills to address harassment when it occurs.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as 'those repeated actions and practices that are directed to one or more workers, which are all unwanted by the victim, which may be done deliberately or unconsciously, but clearly cause humiliation, offence and distress, and that may interfere with job performance and/or cause an unpleasant working environment' (Einarsen, 1999: 17). According to Einarsen *et al.* (2003), bullying at work means:

harassing, offending, socially excluding someone or negatively affecting someone's work tasks. In order for the label of bullying (or mobbing) to be applied to a particular activity, interaction or process it has to occur repeatedly and regularly

(e.g. weekly) and over a period of time (e.g. six months). Bullying is an escalating process in the course of which the person confronted ends up in an inferior position and becomes the target of negative social acts. A conflict cannot be called bullying if the incident is an isolated event or if two parties of approximately equal 'strength' are in conflict.

The incidence of bullying varies depending on the country and the definition of the frequency of bullying. Leymann (1990) reported that 25 per cent of Swedish workers experienced 'mobbing' at some point in their lives, while Rayner (1997) found that 50 per cent of UK workers have experienced mobbing at some point in their lives. Leymann (1990) reported an incidence of 3.5 per cent in Sweden (measured as once a week for six months). Jennifer *et al.* (2003) found that 33.7 per cent of a sample of employees in Europe reported that they were bullied at work, although only 20 per cent identified themselves as victims.

Focus 13.8 provides explanations for bullying.

Bullying may result in: a) physical symptoms, e.g. sweating, shaking and feeling sick; b) psychological symptoms, e.g. anxiety, panic attacks, depression, anger and loss of self-confidence (Hoel *et al.*, 2004). Victims of bullying experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (Mikkelsen and Einarsen, 2002).

Organizations need to be proactive in dealing with bullying. Employers should put in place policies emphasizing that bullying will not be allowed. Such policies should detail the possible consequences of bullying (e.g. disciplinary action) and should be communicated to the entire workforce. Organizations should also provide training to managers, human resources staff and workers on identifying and managing bullying. Workers who complain about bullying should be treated in a sensitive way and supported by the organization. A measure of bullying should be developed and validated. Causes of bullying in workers who obtain high scores on this measure should be carefully analysed and it could then be dealt with (Notelaers *et al.*, 2006).

Explanations for bullying

- Bullying as a personal phenomenon. Personal factors of victims and perpetrators have been related to bullying. Victims might be targeted because they have high self-esteem or because they are overachievers (Brodsky, 1976). The personality (e.g. aggression) of a bully is also regarded as a reason for bullying (Randall, 1997).
- Bullying as an interpersonal phenomenon. Social factors have been related to bullying. Victims perceive envy as one of the reasons why they were bullied (Einarsen, 1999).
- Bullying as an organizational phenomenon. Organizational factors could explain why bullying occurs. Work situations characterized by uncertainty, authoritarian situations, role ambiguity and poor work relationships seem to contribute to bullying (Leymann, 1990; Zapf, 1999).

Alcohol and drug misuse

All over the world substances such as alcohol and other drugs are often used by people of working age. The misuse of two substances, namely alcohol and nicotine, is often associated with negative health effects. However, both prescription drugs (e.g. morphine, anxiolytics, painkillers) and illegal drugs (e.g. cocaine, heroine and amphetamines) are also often misused.

Alcohol dependence and abuse

Alcohol abuse occurs in all societies. Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant and intoxicant. Its use and abuse is one of the major sources of health and socialization problems (Snyman and Sommers, 1999). Alcoholism is a syndrome consisting of two phases, namely problem drinking and alcohol addiction. Problem drinking is the repetitive use of alcohol, often to alleviate emotional problems, such as anxiety. Alcohol addiction is a true addiction similar to that which occurs following the repeated use of other sedative-hypnotics (Tierney *et al.*, 1999). Drinking more than two drinks per day for men (more than fifteen drinks per week) or one drink per day for women (more than twelve drinks per week) increases the risk of developing dependence on alcohol.

Complications of alcoholism include liver disorders, gastrointestinal problems, cardiovascular problems, diabetes complications, hormonal disturbances, birth defects, bone loss, neurological complications and an increased risk of cancer. Other complications of alcoholism and alcohol abuse may include domestic abuse and divorce, poor performance at work, increased likelihood of motor vehicle fatalities and arrest for drunken driving, greater susceptibility to accidental injuries from other causes, and higher incidence of suicide and crime (Snyman and Sommers, 1999; Tierney *et al.*, 1999).

Substance and drug abuse

Two general aspects are common to most types of drug dependence, namely psychological dependence and physical dependence. Psychological dependence involves feelings of satisfaction and a desire to repeat the administration of the drug to produce pleasure or avoid discomfort. This mental state is a powerful factor involved in the chronic use of psychotropic drugs, and with some drugs psychological dependence may be the only factor involved in intense craving and compulsive use. Physical dependence is defined as a state of adaptation to a drug, accompanied by the development of tolerance and manifested by a withdrawal syndrome.

The development of drug dependence is complex and unclear. The psychology of the individual and drug availability determine the choice of addicting drug, and the pattern and frequency of use. Drug dependency is partly related to cultural patterns and socioeconomic classes. Factors involved in the mechanisms leading to drug abuse include sadness, low self-esteem, and social alienation and environmental stress, particularly if accompanied by feelings of impotence to effect change or accomplish goals.

Other psychoactive substances

Two other commonly used substances, namely nicotine and caffeine, may cause physical dependence. Withdrawal from caffeine (more than 250 mg/day) can produce headaches, irritability, lethargy and occasionally nausea. Abstinence symptoms from nicotine include irritability, anxiety, craving, insomnia, tremor and lethargy. Withdrawal symptoms may continue for four to six weeks, and craving may persist for many months.

SUMMARY

- Human well-being is a multidimensional process that involves intellectual, social, emotional and physical health.
- Work-related well-being consists of two states, namely distress and eustress. Distress is defined as a negative psychological response to a stressor, as indicated by the presence of negative psychological states. Eustress is defined as a positive psychological response to a stressor, as indicated by the presence of positive psychological states.
- Remarkable changes have occurred in the world of work over the last few decades, which might result in distress or eustress.
- The work-related well-being of individuals could be affected by outside forces (e.g. the rate of social and technological change, the family, race, sex, social class and community and environmental factors), organizational factors (e.g. role demands, responsibility for others, interpersonal demands, organizational structure, the nature of specific jobs, physical job conditions, organizational support, growth opportunities, social support, advancement opportunities and job security) and individual factors (e.g. perception, job experience, sense of coherence, self-efficacy, locus of control, optimism, hardiness and coping).
- High levels of occupational distress and low levels of eustress could lead to physical, psychological, behavioural and/or work performance effects.
- Guidelines to ensure well-being at work include attention to ergonomics, assessment and evaluation of employees, job redesign and work changes, implementing effective leadership, providing training, changing the organizational structure and climate, job security, attending to career development, clarifying roles and implementing employee wellness programmes. Employee wellness programmes focus on physical and mental wellness. Regarding physical wellness, services can be provided for people to take part in fitness programmes, to lose weight, to control their diets, to quit smoking and to control their intake of alcohol and drugs. Regarding mental wellness, counselling services and access to the services of clinical psychologists and psychiatrists can be provided.
- Various types of dysfunctional behaviour are distinguished, including absenteeism, presenteeism, theft, sexual harassment, bullying, and alcohol and drug misuse.

KEY CONCEPTS AND TERMS

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • Absenteeism | • Job demands | • Psychological need satisfaction |
| • Alcohol abuse | • Job resources | • Purpose |
| • Bullying | • Languishing | • Self-efficacy |
| • Burnout | • Locus of control | • Sexual harassment |
| • Coping | • Meaningfulness | • Social support |
| • Dysfunctional behaviour | • Occupational distress | • Theft |
| • Engagement | • Optimism | • Work-related well-being |
| • Ergonomics | • Presenteeism | |
| • Flourishing | • Psychological hardiness | |

SAMPLE ESSAY TITLES

- Is all (work) stress necessarily bad?
- What (potential) sources of stress, burnout and flourishing are associated with the fact that an organization is an open system?
- How would you know whether individuals in institutions are flourishing?
- Explain the concept of psychological capital and describe the four components of psychological capital.
- How can purpose and meaning be promoted in organizations?
- What is employee engagement?
- What are the antecedents of work engagement?
- How would you apply self-determination theory to explain flourishing in institutions?
- How should a strength-based approach be implemented in organizations?
- What role do job demands and job resources play in the well-being of employees?
- What are the most important effects of distress?

FURTHER READING**Books**

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- Rothmann, S. (2013). 'From happiness to flourishing at work: A southern African perspective.' In M.P. Wissing (ed.), *Well-being Research in South Africa: Cross-cultural Advances in Positive Psychology* – Vol. 4. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer, 123–152.
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14

Organizational design, development and culture

This chapter introduces the reader to organizational design, development and culture. The first section focuses on organizational design. The term is defined and the dimensions of organizational design are discussed. Furthermore, types of organizational structures are distinguished. The consequences of a poor organizational structure are also shown. The chapter then proceeds to organizational development. The importance and characteristics of organizational development are discussed. We look at the stages in organization development. We focus on the management of change in terms of three steps, namely unfreezing, movement and refreezing. The last section focuses on organizational culture. The concept is defined, and the components and a typology thereof are described. Lastly, the development and change of organizational culture are summarized.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

When you have completed this chapter you should be able to:

- 1 Define the terms organizational design, organization development and organizational culture.
- 2 Describe the dimensions of organizational design, the types of structures and the consequences of a poor structure.
- 3 Motivate the importance of organization development.
- 4 Identify the characteristics of organization development and the different subsystems in organizations.
- 5 Discuss the stages in organization development.
- 6 Apply a three-phase model (unfreezing–change–refreezing) to change in organizations.
- 7 Define organizational culture by referring to the components thereof.
- 8 Explain a typology of organizational culture.
- 9 Summarize how organizational culture develops and changes.