

# Matching organizational flexibility demands and employee flexibility – A first step towards an unifying framework for labour flexibility



*Feel the Flexibility “Success is simple. Do what's right, the right way, at the right time.”*  
(Arnold H. Glasgow)

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## **Preface**

I do not like long prefaces so I will keep it short. This thesis is the last part of my master course Business Administration (HRM). I'm very happy with my choice of doing this master course because it was an interesting combination with my earlier bachelor degree in Industrial and Organizational Psychology. Finally I want thank my supervisors for all the support and feedback they gave me.

I dedicate this thesis to my grandpa who unfortunately could not see how I successfully finished my bachelor and master degree in the Netherlands – a country he loved very much.

## Summary

The present research elaborates on perceived organizational flexibility demands and employee flexibility in the context of labour flexibility. Outcomes of this case study suggest that the researched organization confronts their workforce with a certain labour demand consisting of context specific (in this case locational) flexibility aspects. Furthermore the research shows that a proactive personality and Role Breadth Self-Efficacy (RBSE) are positively related to perceived employee flexibility. The research outcomes further show that organizational flexibility demands and employee flexibility go hand in hand. The pre-tested questionnaire was conducted in one small and medium sized enterprise (SME) with 132 employees. The participating organization is a publisher of a regional German newspaper and participated voluntarily but anonymously. In total 47 employees participated in an online survey which comes down to a response rate of 36%. The introduced research instrument and flex matcher enable organizations to assess and match organizational flexibility demands and employee flexibility. Out of this research some interesting new questions arise which should inspire other researchers to conduct more research on labour flexibility.

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## **Matching organizational flexibility demands and employee flexibility – A first step towards a unifying framework**

No success for organizations without a match in organizational flexibility and employee flexibility! To get to the point: organizations strive for higher flexibility in all aspects because these characteristics help them to align and adjust their strategy with the ever-changing environmental context they are operating in (e.g. Kara, Kayis & O’Kane, 2002; Van Dam, 2004; Stavrou, 2005). Organizational flexibility seems to be jointly responsible for the stability, sustainability and success of an organization (Johnson, Scholes & Whittington, 2006). After reviewing several definitions Golden and Powell (2000) suggest that flexibility best could be described as a general “capacity to adapt” (p. 373). Flexibility often appears in many different forms as for example flexibility in products, processes, services, labour, speed, technology, organizational structure or culture (e.g. Volberda, 1997; Johnson et al., 2006). Without being clear about the definition, ingredients and consequences of flexibility, it seems that organizations often use the term flexibility as an all-in-one device suitable for every purpose (Golden & Powell, 2000). As stated by Volberda (1997, p. 169) “The more uncertain the situation, the more an organization will need flexibility as a complement to planning”.

The media debated extensively the bankruptcy of the German Arcandor AG (e.g. “Arcandor meldet weitere Insolvenzen an”, 2009) which highlights some interesting flexibility tools for organizations. Due to pecuniary difficulties Arcandor’s business group (“warehousing”) felt forced to declare bankruptcy. The external and internal causes for going bankrupt (e.g., economic crisis, management errors, slump in sales and imminent acquisitions) should not be evaluated here but the chosen flexibility options offer some interesting insights how organizations try to adapt to their business environment. Already before the filing for bankruptcy, but especially now, certain flexibility options concerning the use of labour have been discussed by Arcandor in order to face the threatening situation. More than 50,000 employees are confronted with changing labour demands and some of them might even lose their jobs. It seems realistic that Arcandor lays-off employees, reduces their salary (e.g. through a shift from full-time to a part-time status), transfers employees to other parts of the business or comparable jobs at better performing locations. Next to other activities (e.g. merging with the Metro group), these flexible adaptations in the factor of labour could be decisive for Arcandor’s and its employees’ “chance of survival” and well-being.

This short but practical example shows that not only organizations but especially employees are the one’s who are confronted with certain flexible labour demands and who must act upon the solutions and ideas suggested by organizations and managers (Volberda, 1997). Volberda (1997) supposes that the desired flexibility or ability to adapt could only be achieved if two different tasks are met. It is the organizational task to design flexibility enhancing activities (e.g. changes in labour demands). The second task depends upon how employees perceive these different demands and if they are able to act upon them as it is intended by the organization. This research views organizational flexibility as the organizational overall “need for flexible labour”. Depending on the kind of organization and the business environment such a need for flexible labour seems to have different design elements and consequences (e.g. locational, numerical or financial considerations for the organization as well as the employee) which will be discussed later. Here it is enough to understand that an organizational “need for flexibility” could lead to different forms of flexible labour which almost certainly have particular restrictions for employees as it is shown by the example of Arcandor.

The supposed dual task approach shows that the flipside of flexibility is represented by the employees’ perspective, which also must be considered in order to get a holistic picture. Different researchers recognize an increasing trend for flexibility within today’s workforce (e.g. Ebberwein, Krieschok, Ulven & Prosser, 2004; Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006).

There seems to be a growing need for employees to be able to develop within an organization (and their career) due to the shifting responsibility from organizational career management towards *self* (employee) career management (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006). Employees will probably value broader job descriptions, flexibility and career development above job security and stability (Kelley, 2007). Especially those employees who are driven by boundary-less career interests should be equipped with personality characteristics of flexibility and adaptability that fit with highly flexible projects, jobs and careers (Ebberwein, et al., 2004). As already indicated by the Arcandor example it might be problematic for employees if certain design considerations for labour flexibility counteract with their own interests. A replacement to another location or a totally different job might not fit the desired career path of an employee. On the other hand employees must manage and balance aspects of their life (e.g. marriage, children and care for dependants) and work at the same time to “create a life that works” (Kossek & Lautsch, 2008).

## 1.2 Central research questions

By starting from the employee point of view this research suggests a framework that investigates different design components which are probably related to perceived organizational flexibility demands and perceived employee flexibility. This leads to the following central research question:

*Which constructs are related to perceived organization flexibility demands (OFD) and perceived employee flexibility (EF) and how could OFD and EF be matched?*

A mismatch in organizational flexibility and employee flexibility can result in detrimental effects which ultimately hinder organizations and employees from being successful (e.g. dissatisfied and unmotivated employees, slow reaction to changing circumstances and long-lasting conflicts and/or performance related problems). Research should work on an “umbrella theory” for flexible labour which shows that organizations and employees can profit from (labour) flexibility if both parties are equally involved in the (labour) game. The present research should be seen as a first step towards an unifying framework. Investigating the organizational need as well as the individual offer for flexibility helps to understand broader dependencies between organizations and individuals without focussing solely on small but nevertheless important pieces (e.g. specific practices or single circumstances concerning labour flexibility).

Next to the expected organizational benefits there are also desirable benefits for employees. Being clear about factors influencing employee flexibility probably helps employees to find the right job or project with respect to their own skills, knowledge and abilities (e.g. Spector, 2006). More insight into the topic probably gives employees the chance to find a better work-life balance because work and life could be managed more flexible. It is not only the organization and the individual worker which enjoys the situation of a flexibility match. It is at least thinkable that specialized groups of workers (e.g. with a high and/or very specialized education) or jobseekers in general benefit from the idea of matching flexibility. Clear and forthright communication about organizations or projects demanding different strengths of flexibility offer the above mentioned groups the opportunity to work on their own flexibility as early as possible. An extrapolation of this idea could even lead to benefits for the entire society. Secure employment relationships should arise from a match in flexibility. Given the context of a fast changing world, secure and stable employment relations do not necessarily mean long-term employment. Security for employees (e.g. general employment security and income) as well as flexibility for organizations could be achieved through good and sustainable employability [and adaptability] of employees (e.g. Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006; Kunda, Barley & Evans, 1999). Wilthagen and Van Velzen (2004) show that EU member

states have different employment regimes with “different modes, combinations and equilibria of flexibility and security” (p.2) which makes it necessary to consider aspects of flexibility *and* security in tandem. In the end a flexibility match should contribute to higher flexibility and security at the micro-level (organization vs. individual) but also on macro-level (higher flexibility and security for all stakeholders of a particular employment regime). More conscious knowledge about how to match organizational flexibility demands and employee flexibility brings together the “right” people with the “right” organization.

### **1.3 Reading guidelines**

Chapter 2 elaborates on the growing interdependency in labour flexibility, constructs which are related to perceived organizational flexibility demands and employee flexibility. Finally a flex matcher tool is introduced. Chapter 3 elaborates on the applied literature review strategy. Then chapter 4 presents the characteristics of the pilot study population, the final study population as well as the operationalization of the research instrument. Chapter 5 deals with the research outcomes. Chapter 6 then finalizes this thesis with a conclusion, implications and recommendations for further research.

## **Chapter 2: Theoretical background**

### **2.1 Interdependency in labour flexibility between organizations and employees**

Ongoing insistence on much more flexible job arrangements truly has implications for the relationship between employer and employee. Among others, Atkinson (2002) researched this changing relationship and introduced some points which contribute to the “psychological contract” literature (e.g. Rousseau, 1995). Atkinson (2002) concludes that the “old” relationship between employee and employer has gone through a shift from traditional bureaucratic structures to more flexible and fluid structures, with a more individual focused relationship. The new contract clearly reflects the need for flexible and highly skilled employees who have little job security but who are “marketable externally” (Atkinson, 2002, p.15). This implies that organizations often view employees as a flexible resource or labour pool. In case of changing environmental conditions or work loads (e.g. seasonal peaks) an organization desires to have a fast fall back in order use employees and their broad skills where and when they need them. The employee’s point of view introduces some additional aspects which should also be considered. A company’s flexibility and commitment to training and development of human capital can be decisive for an employee to join the organization or not (Acton & Golden, 2003). To put it one step further it is even possible to think of “Career flexibility” as (individual) coping strategy for career transitions (Ito & Brotheridge 2001). Ito and Brotheridge (2001) made clear that “Career flexibility” supports employee’s perceived ability to work in other positions within and outside the organization. If an employee desires more flexibility, a switch between jobs within but also outside the organization seems to be an obvious solution to satisfy their own flexibility “need”.

The emphasis on a much more flexible labour market architecture probably already caused strong interdependence in flexibility between organizations and employees. It is at least reasonable that not only organizations but also today’s employees try to adapt to these new labour market challenges. With a longitudinal assessment of reciprocal effects of job conditions and personality Kohn and Schooler (1982) supported the idea that job conditions actually do affect personality but also that personality affects job conditions. If one elaborates on this relationship on a level of flexibility match between organizations and employees, it seems for example arguable that an employee, who is adaptable and equipped with an open minded personality (see McCrae & Costa, 1986), is well situated in job conditions which ask for new and flexible working solutions.

Next to the growing flexibility demands for employers and employees, “higher-order” levels of jurisdiction are thinking actively about different aspects and mechanisms that help to regulate and negotiate the overall demands for flexible labour. Torka and Van Velzen (2007) state that since the 1990s the annual guidelines from the European Union advocate a modification of work including several flexible work arrangements that help to balance flexibility and security aspects for organizations and workers (for an overview see also Wilthagen & Van Velzen, 2004). Wilthagen, Houwerzijl, Houwing and Van Velzen (2005) show that for example the Netherlands were one of the first front-runners who developed a “Dutch law of Flexibility and Security” in order to build up a basis framework to negotiate and balance flexibility and security aspects of different stakeholders (e.g. employers, employees, unions and the state).



## 2.2 Assessing organizational flexibility demands

Some research streams (see table 1) were especially useful to identify the organizational viewpoint of labour flexibility (Stavrou, 2005; Van Dam, 2004; Lepak, Takeuchi & Snell, 2003; Reilly, 1998; Zhang, Vonderembse & Lim, 2003; Wright & Snell, 1998; Kara et al., 2002; Atkinson, 1989; Volberda, 1997; Torcka & Van Velzen, 2007). It was Atkinson (1989, p.9) who stated that “employers are looking for a workforce which can respond quickly, easily and cheaply to change in products and processes which are as yet unknown”. Atkinson (1989) introduced the well known core-periphery model which resembles the shape of an onion. In its most simple definition his model suggests a break-up of the labour force into “core” and “periphery”. Both layers serve different flexibility interest of the organization. The core consists of “full time permanent career employees” where only tasks and responsibility changes but ideally not the amount of permanent employees. Atkinson’s (1989) peripheral layer, which encompasses the core, comprehends a workforce which could be dynamically enlarged or shrunk up with respect to their size.

All in all the reviewed literature distinguishes numerical, functional, financial, temporal and locational flexible labour demands (see table 1) which seem to offer interesting adjusting opportunities for organizations. Numerical flexibility represents the organizational ability to adjust the size of the workforce if it is necessary (e.g. Atkinson, 1989). Functional flexibility deals with the ability to alter and use a particular mix of human capital e.g. through different and broad roles for the employed workforce (e.g. Atkinson, 1989; Kunda et al. 1999; Reilly, 1998). Financial flexibility allows organizations to let wages and incentives rise and fall with economic conditions (Reilly, 1998; Atkinson, 1989). Next to this, temporal flexibility gives organizations the chance to reach a better match between service/production schedules and employee input by using different flex policies (e.g. overtime) influencing the amount of working hours (Reilly, 1998). Locational flexibility can for example be achieved by letting employees work outside the normal workplace (Reilly, 1998). Although not explicitly defined by the above mentioned literature it seems reasonable to distinguish between “inflex” and “outflex” demands which seek to describe two different directions influencing organizational flexibility demands. I developed my own definition for both flexibility directions. The introduced definitions should not be confounded with other terms describing organizational flexibility (see Kalleberg, 2001). Inflex demands may refer to higher order flexibility policies (e.g. flex-policies and flex-rules stemming from the board of directors or a holding). In contrast to inflex demands one could also think of outflex demands (e.g. stemming from law, customers or external suppliers) which probably restrict the use of flexible labour. Furthermore the reader should notice that the definitions of numerical flexibility and temporal flexibility are somewhat alike but still different. While numerical flexibility aims to adjust the *numerical size of the workforce* (e.g. 10 workers instead of 5 or vice versa), temporal flexibility describes the ability to *temporally change the amount of working hours* (e.g. 5 hours instead of 7 or vice versa). Atkinson’s (1989) description of numerical flexibility originally implied both ideas and will be used throughout this research. Torcka and Van Velzen (2007) stress that organizations could achieve different types of labour flexibility “internally” or “externally”. In case of functional flexibility an organization could for example rely on one of their most talented employees (internal) or hire an expert from outside (external) if an additional task or job is added to the organizational portfolio. If not mentioned otherwise this research concentrates on the internal parameters for flexible labour.

After having classified these different design elements for flexible labour it seems interesting to investigate their links with desirable outcomes for the individual as well as the organization. There are some empirical (Van Dam, 2004; Nachbagauer & Riedl, 2002; Zhang et al. 2003) as well as theoretical (Lepak et al., 2003; Torcka & Van Velzen, 2007; Hill, Jacob, Shannon, Brennan, Blanchard & Martinengo, 2008a; Reilly, 1998; Wright & Snell., 1998) studies which try to link isolated aspects of organizational labour flexibility with several outcome variables. It seems that, especially research starting from the organizational point of view lacks (recent and

empirical) evidence for the broader picture of different flexibility manifestations (e.g. bundles of particular work arrangements) which could be related to organizational performance. A recent study from Stavrou (2005) tries to establish an empirical link between bundles of flexible work arrangements and organizational performance in the context of the European Union. The research from Stavrou (2005) distinguishes between “non-standard work patterns” (e.g. flextime), “work away from home” (e.g. tele-working), “non-standard working hours” (e.g. overtime) and “work outsourced” (e.g. external temporary employment). By having a superficial look on the bundles Stavrou (2005) suggests, that “non-standard working hours” and “work outsourced” are especially desirable for employers. In contrast it seems that “non-standard work patterns” and “work away from the office” may be especially favoured by employees.

While the research from Stavrou (2005) especially highlights temporal and numerical flexibility advantages for organizations (non-standard working hours and work outsourced) the research from Torka and Van Velzen (2007) shows that the individual worker can profit from functional flexibility. With respect to the organizational perspective, Torka and Van Velzen (2007) state that functional flexibility offers organizations the opportunity for improvements in quality and innovation. Employees with broad but still sufficient skills could deal with new products or services and contribute to further quality improvements. On the other hand functional flexibility has benefits for employees because it contributes to increased employability of the core workforce (see e.g. Torka & Van Velzen, 2007; Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006).

A research from Reilly (1998) states that financial flexibility mainly serves the organizational interests because in its truest form it often could be found in wage cuts (sometimes as one-off events) in response to company downturn caused by economic circumstances. Reilly’s (1998) assumption about financial considerations in the factor of labour could be backed up as it was shown with the earlier presented example of the Arcandor AG. Reilly (1998) additionally concludes that locational flexibility supports organizations in order to reduce overhead-costs by using workers as needed. But locational flexibility could also be appealing for employees. Working away from the office (e.g. teleworking) may offer employees the chance to work from a location which fits their own needs (Reilly, 2008; Stavrou, 2005; Eaton, 2003). Obviously different forms of labour flexibility could, but must not be per se, beneficial for the organization as well as the individual worker (Torka & Van Velzen, 2007). Nevertheless, Hill et al. (2008a) clarifies that from an organizational point of view the interests for flexibility often outweigh the flexibility interest of workers. To say it with other words, organizations that are interested in improving their performance through labour flexibility first look at their own flexibility interest instead of looking at the flexibility repertoire of their employees. This implies that organizations probably confront their (core) work force with certain flexibility demands which they could not handle with their actual flexibility.

Organizations often want to react as fast as possible and ignore the process of streamlining their flexibility demands with actual and to be developed employee flexibility. Furthermore it could be that “old” (unused) employee flexibility, which is already present within the organization, gets “lost” because employees are not stimulated to make use of their in-house flexibility. Such a rigorous and fast top-down approach may have detrimental effects as for example a loss in employee motivation.

Perceived organizational flexibility demands set the boundaries for employee’s flexibility enactment. Just to keep track of the different kinds of organizational flexibility demands (OFD), their intended use as well as some typical examples it seems useful to summarize them again (see table 1).

<b>OFD</b>	<b>Intended use and benefits</b>	<b>Examples (e.g. policies) and expected profiteers</b>
<b>Numerical flexibility</b>		
Atkinson (1989)	Organizational ability to adjust the size of the workforce (‘hire and fire’) as well as the amount of worked. React to short term changes in the level of demand for labour.	Use of (temporal) employment agencies, strict hire-fire policies, outsourcing. Probably most appealing for organizations (Stavrou, 2005) but to some extent also desired by employees (Torka & Van Velzen, 2007).
<b>Functional flexibility</b>		
Kunda et al. (1999); Reilly (1998); Atkinson (1989)	Ability to alter and use a particular mix of human capital by using broad job descriptions for the employed workforce. As production methods change the workforce changes activities according to the new production methods.	Job enlargement, job enrichment, multi-functional teams. Probably appealing for organizations as well as employees ( Reilly, 1998; Torka & Van Velzen, 2007).
<b>Financial Flexibility</b>		
Reilly (1998); Atkinson (1989)	Allows organizations to let wages and incentives rise and fall with economic conditions. Often congruent with pay and numeration systems that facilitate operational flexibility (often resulting in tax benefits or short time cost savings).	Assessment based pay, performance related pay, “Kurzarbeit”. Probably most appealing for organizations (Reilly, 1998; Atkinson, 1989).

<b>OFD</b>	<b>Intended use and benefits</b>	<b>Examples (e.g. policies) and expected profiteers</b>
<b>Temporal flexibility</b>		
Reilly (1998)	Match between service/ production schedules and employee input (working hours) by using different flex policies. Often used because of cost advantages.	Overtime, shift-working, flex-time, zero hours` contracts. Probably most appealing for organizations (Stavrou, 2005) but to some extent also interesting for employees (Torka & Van Velzen, 2007).
<b>Locational flexibility</b>		
Reilly (1998)	Letting employees work outside the normal workplace. Locational flexibility reaches from, mobile to partly home based. Advantage of using workers as needed as well as possible reductions in overhead costs.	Teleworking or relocated back-office. Probably appealing for organizations (Reilly, 1998) and employees (Stavrou, 2005; Eaton, 2003).
<b>Inflex</b>		
Own definition	Higher order flexibility needs (internal direction). Flex-policies and flex-rules stemming from the board of directors, work-councils or a holding.	Regulations concerning maximum amount of flexible working hours (e.g. overtime) or holiday restrictions (e.g. vacation maximum)
<b>Outflex</b>		
Own definition	Wishes, rules and policies concerning organizational flexibility (mainly external direction). Stemming from the customer side, suppliers, state or unions.	Time frames/deadlines, feedback sessions, preferred suppliers, employment regulations (e.g. national laws).

Table 1: Organizational flexibility demands, design parameters their intended use as well as some typical examples of how they are used in practice.

### 2.3 Assessing employee flexibility

The development towards employee flexibility is not only a recent trend and was already very visible in the 1980s (Driver, 1982). During the 1980s there was already an educated guess that employees will be less patient and preserving in choosing a special job or career that fits with their flexibility interests (Driver, 1982). Congruent with the earlier assumption of a dual task approach for flexibility (Volberda, 1997) this research assumes that a match between organizational demands for flexibility and employees' flexibility is a necessary condition which probably motivates employees to work as flexible as it is desired by an organization. Organizations may put a certain set of flexible labour demands into the "labour game" which ideally should fit the "flexibility bid" an employee is able to offer. In the following we elaborate on a working definition for employee flexibility. A link with work motivation theories seems to be applicable here because motivation generally refers to "an internal state that induces a person to engage in particular behaviours" (Spector, 2006, p.194). A so called "motive" probably explains why people behave as they do. The feeling of having hunger probably introduces one of the easiest examples. If food is not available people experience a certain "need" (hunger) which motivates them to engage in certain behaviour (seek for food). Spector (2006) reviewed several motivation theories and stated that high ability and high motivation of employees could be linked to good job performance but only if both aspects are not blocked by inadequate organizational circumstances. It seems that the desired flexibility success organizations are striving for could only be achieved if employees have the ability to deal with flexible labour demands *and* if they are motivated to enact upon the inflicted demands.

The assumption that especially employee's needs, interests and desires build up the basis for motivation could probably be traced back to one of the first modern motivation theorists called Murray (1938) (see Larsen and Buss (2005) for additional information). According to Murray (1938) people experience a certain deficit (having no food available) which results in a need (hunger) and is often portrayed as a tension which motivates people to engage in a specific "process" (find food) in order to fulfil the need. Maslow's (1943) "Need hierarchy theory" and Herzberg's (1968) "Two-Factor Theory" of motivation are two other examples of well known motivation theories which share some but not all elements of the original "need" approach (see e.g. Spector, 2006). Based on the theoretical contributions from Herzberg (1968) a "job characteristic theory" for motivation was developed by Hackman and Oldham (1976). Generally this theory assumes that employees differ in their need for meaningful work, responsibility as well as adequate feedback. If the job conditions are congruent with employee's expectations this should lead to employee satisfaction and motivation which ultimately results in better performance at work (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Whereas the theories from Maslow (1938), Herzberg (1968) and Hackman and Oldham (1976) more or less stress a humanistic approach, the motive to develop, grow or flourish what a person wants to become, Murray's (1938) theory is completely based on deficiency motives (Larsen & Buss, 2005). There are several supporters but also critics with respect to both streams (for a first overview see Spector (2006) and Larsen & Buss (2005)) and it is rather unclear if one of both streams should be viewed as the "Holy Grail". The motivational aspect of employee flexibility in this research therefore accounts for "growth" (e.g. career aspirations) as well as "deficiency" (e.g. specific personality dispositions or (un)supportive family situations) aspects in order to elaborate on a comprehensive definition.

*This research portrays employee flexibility as employee's overall offer for flexible labour which derives from their individual ability of being flexible and from individual needs, interests and desires concerning flexibility at work but also outside the organization.*

Within the reviewed literature there are several theoretical (e.g. Hill et al., 2008a, Reilly, 1998; to some extent also Kossek, Lautsch & Eaton, 2004) as well as empirical investigations (Eaton, 2003; Kossek et al., 2004; Pitt-Catsouphes & Matz-Costa, 2008) which try to connect employee (workplace) flexibility with positive outcomes for the individual and ultimately the organization. According to Hill et al. (2008a, p.152) employee workplace flexibility could be defined as “the ability of workers to make choices influencing when, where and for how long they engage in work-related tasks”. The theoretical framework from Hill et al. (2008a) suggests that individual (e.g. age, gender), home and family (e.g. household composition, responsibility for children), workplace (e.g. overtime regulations and availability of flex policies) and community characteristics (e.g. infrastructure, community support) form important antecedents for employee’s flexibility. Hill et al. (2008a) states that the right amount of employee’s workplace flexibility could be beneficial for home and family vitality (e.g. marital satisfaction, care for dependent elders), personal vitality (e.g. health, personal success and life satisfaction), workplace vitality (e.g. higher work performance, lower turnover, job satisfaction) as well as community vitality (e.g. participation in a community organization).

First and foremost the work-life balance literature explicitly suggests that employees’ perceived amount of control over flexibility (e.g. time and place) is decisive for beneficial outcome variables (Eaton, 2003; Kossek et al., 2003; Hill et al. 2008a and 2008b, Pitt-Catsouphes & Matz-Costa, 2008). This suggests that if organizations want to be as flexible as possible it is employees’ perceived access, enactment and use of flexibility that decides how flexible organizations really are. This view seems to be congruent with the dual task approach for organizational flexibility which was already introduced in the beginning (see Voldberda, 1997). Formality (e.g. formal vs. informal) together with autonomy to use flexibility policies seem to be an important predictor for the well being of the employee but also the organization (e.g. Eaton, 2003; Hill et al., 2008a). These empirical contributions from Eaton (2003) also stress the main elements for the earlier mentioned concept of workplace characteristics (Hill et al., 2008a). Other literature streams (e.g. flow management, manufacturing flexibility or operational management) cover nearly the same point even if they do not mention it that explicitly (Rotondo & Perrewé, 2000; Nachbagauer & Riedl, 2002; Lepak et al. 2003; Kelly and Kalev, 2006; Kara et al., 2002). Some researchers (Hill et al., 2008a, p.151; Lepak et al. 2003, Reilly, 1998) indicate that organizational flexibility and worker flexibility could have positive “between-domain effects” for organizations and individuals but the between-domain effects are either not further investigated (Stavrou, 2005; Hill et al., 2008a, p.151; Lepak et al. 2003; Stavrou, 2005), only theoretically constructed (Reilly, 1998) or focus only on one of both sides (e.g. Hill et al. 2008a and 2008b; Eaton, 2003; Pitt-Catasouphes & Matz-Costa, 2008).

As indicated earlier, organizational flexibility demands and employee flexibility seem to be interwoven. This research assumes that individual, home and family, workplace and community characteristics are important variables which may be related to perceived employee flexibility. To be congruent with earlier anticipated individual factors, which probably influence employee flexibility, it is indispensable to supplement the dimensions suggested by Hill et al. (2008) with additional factors covering personality and career aspects.

Personality characteristics that actively foster flexibility and adaptability could be advantageous for today’s employees and organizations (e.g. Ebberwein et al., 2004; van Dam, 2004). Adaptable and flexible employees become critical determinants for organizational success because work becomes more decentralised and dynamic (Crant, 2000). Crant (2000) states that organizations clearly need workers who are able to engage in proactive behaviour. He defines proactive behaviour as the ability of “taking initiative in improving current circumstances or creating new ones; it involves challenging the status quo rather than passively adapting to present conditions.” (Crant, 2000, p. 436). Compatibility between the idea of proactive behaviour and employee (workplace) flexibility is truly not dismissible. Personality

dispositions which contribute to proactivity and ultimately help individuals to adapt to changing circumstances should clearly belong to the assessment of employee's overall flexibility. By reviewing six different research streams Crant (2000) was able to identify individual personality differences which account for the construct of proactive behaviour. Two similar constructs (proactive personality and personal initiative), which are characterized as relatively stable dispositions, contribute to the construct of proactive behaviour. Both constructs describe individual dispositions like taking initiative, improving circumstances and challenging the status quo rather than passively adapting. These dispositions could be seen as an active approach for individuals to cope with dynamic and continuous environmental changes. A study from Schyns, Torka and Gössling (2007) researched a similar construct which is called "preparedness for change". Schyns (2001, p. 218) defines that aforementioned construct as the "wish to acquire higher task demands (i.e. greater complexity) in the sense that employees have thought about change but have not yet acted to seek change". While the constructs suggested by Crant (2000) assess whether change is actively pursued and within the possibilities of the employee, the construct of preparedness for change (Schyns et al., 2007) does not emphasize the same active approach. Given the research context, which sees employee flexibility as an active approach towards adaptation, the present research restricts to the constructs suggested by Crant (2000). Generally Crant (2000) suggests to use the construct of proactive personality in case of quantitative research while the personal initiative construct seems to be better situated within qualitative research settings. Based on the quantitative approach of this research the proactive personality construct is used.

Next to the stable dispositions Crant (2000) found two additional constructs (role breadth self-efficacy and taking charge) which are more situation specific and less stable in describing proactive behaviour. Role Breadth Self-Efficacy (RBSE) deals with the perceived ability of carrying out broader and more proactive behaviour as well as the willingness to take broader roles in order to react to environmental dynamism. RBSE may change with environmental changes and experience at work. In the same vein the construct of taking charge covers situation specific behaviour which is change oriented and geared towards improvement and especially deals with functional changes in "how to do work". All four constructs, which together form the construct of proactive behaviour, are positively related to job-performance, career success, job attitudes, feeling of control and innovation (for further information see Crant, 2000). It is again a study from Schyns and Von Collani (2002) which researched a similar construct called "occupational self-efficacy". According to Schyns and Von Collani (2002, p. 227) occupational self-efficacy deals with "one's belief in one's own ability and competence to perform successfully and effectively in situations and across different tasks in a job". Especially RBSE and occupational self-efficacy seem to be very similar in nature. The present research sticks to RBSE and taking charge in order to grasp the concept of proactive behaviour as it is defined by Crant (2000).

Next to the personality characteristics it seems interesting to discuss how different career aspirations could be related to employee flexibility. With respect to employee career aspirations this research constrains to 1) traditional career aspirations, 2) protean career aspirations and 3) boundary-less career aspirations to cover the most common and modern concepts (see for example Lazarova & Cerdin, 2007).

Traditional career aspirations could probably be best described by employees having now interest in "hopping around jobs" (low mobility preference) but who are interested in "life-long employment relationships" with organizationally directed career paths (Briscoe, Hall & Frautschy DeMuth, 2006; Rotondo & Perrewé, 2000). These employees probably desire more fixed and pre-planned career pathways with no locational replacement. Traditional career aspirations do not really fit with highly flexible labour demands and changing employment arrangements.

The protean career construct seeks to describe career aspirations in terms of value-driven as well as self-directed (vs. organizational-directed) approaches towards a desired career path

(Rotondo & Perrewé, 2000). Workers following a protean career approach steer their (subjective) career success through their own values and self-directed behaviour (Briscoe et al., 2006). Employees striving for a protean career probably need the right amount of flexibility “to be adaptive in terms of performance and learning” (Lazarova & Cerdin, 2007, p. 407). A protean career aspiration together with a lack of control in flexibility (e.g. high organizational flexibility demands vs. very narrow job assignments and routine work) might hinder employees to be self-directed which ultimately results in employees blaming themselves for not fulfilled career aspirations.

Boundary-less career interests of employees offer another viewpoint which seems to have some theoretical overlap with protean careers (Lazarova & Cerdin, 2007). Protean and boundary-less career aspirations clearly show some overlap with respect to their emphasis on continuous learning, adaptation ability, different role boundaries and definitions of career success (Lazarova & Cerdin, 2007). Nevertheless both concepts could be distinguished from each other. Unlike the protean career construct the concept of boundary-less career could be best described by employees “seek[ing] external direction and assistance in behavioural career management” (Briscoe et al., 2006, p.31). Through identification and nurturing of interesting relationships with external parties (e.g. other employers), which are clearly situated outside the boundaries of the “home organization”, employees try to satisfy their boundary-less mindset. As indicated earlier, especially those employees who are interested in boundary-less careers should be equipped with personality characteristics of adaptability and flexibility (Ebberwein et al., 2004). If one puts flexibility into the context of boundary-less careers one might be prone to conclude that as much flexibility as possible should be given to these employees. A huge amount of flexibility at work probably allows this group of employees the maximum experimentation and alternation which supports their particular career needs. Maybe it is even wise to define their job description and workplace as flexible as possible because Ito & Brotheridge (2001) made clear that flexibility could be seen as coping mechanism for career transitions which keeps employees in good mood. If a boundary-less mindset of an employee is not fulfilled they will probably not blame themselves but may even start to search for a new job outside their “home organization” more eagerly than they ever did before.

Both, proactive personality characteristics and career aspirations seem to offer important insights. Briscoe et al. (2006) found a high and significant correlation between the constructs of proactive personality and protean as well as boundary-less career attitudes. This implies that personality characteristics as well as career aspirations should be included in the assessment of employee flexibility. Table 2 gives an overview of the discussed aspects concerning the measurement of employee flexibility.



<b>Category</b>	<b>Factor</b>	<b>Mode of functioning</b>
<b>Personality characteristics</b>		
Crant (2002); Bateman & Crant (1993)	Proactive personality (very similar to personal initiative but less researched and only measurable by means of interviews)	A relative stable disposition. Taking initiative, improving circumstances, challenging status quo rather than passively adapting. Active approach to cope with dynamic and continuous environmental change. Affects job-performance, career success, job attitudes, feeling of control and innovation.
Crant (2002); Parker (1998)	Role breadth self- efficacy (RBSE)	Situation specific, not that stable. Perceived capability of carrying out broader and more proactive behaviour, willingness to take a broader role in order to react to dynamism. RBSE may change with environmental changes and workers experience. Affects job- performance, career success, job attitudes, feeling of control and innovation.
Crant (2002); Morrison & Phelps (1999)	Taking charge	Resulting in situation specific behaviour which is change oriented and geared towards improvement. Deals with functional changes in “how to do work”.
<b>Individual Characteristics</b>		
Hill et al. (2008b); Pitt- Catsouphes & Matz-Costa (2008)	Employee age	Employee engagement as a function of flexibility fit and age. Employees experiencing a match in flexibility and are older than 45 years seem to be more engaged than their younger colleagues.
Hill et al. (2008a and 2008b); Eaton (2003)	Gender, income, education	Suggested by Hill et al. (2008a and 2008b) as control variables for employee flexibility.
e.g. Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden (2006); Lazarova & Cerdin (2007)	Career aspiration	Traditional, boundary-less or protean career aspirations have consequences for flexibility.

Home Family characteristics		
Hill et al. (2008a)	Marital status, number of children, responsibility children, household composition (e.g. dual earner)	Suggested as potential antecedents for employee workplace flexibility.
Community Characteristics		
Hill et al. (2008a)	Infrastructure (e.g. availability child care, transportation systems, broadband communication)	Suggested as potential antecedents for employee workplace flexibility.
Workplace Characteristics		
Hill et al. (2008a); Eaton (2003)	Perceived ability to use flex-policies (e.g. flex-time, teleworking, seasonal hours, day-off) in order to respond to different organizational flexibility demands and own needs.	Employee's perceived amount of control over flexibility (e.g. time and place) seems to be decisive for flexibility and potential outcome variables.

**Table 2:** Summary of different aspects concerning the measurement of employee flexibility.

## 2.4 How to match flexibility?

To elaborate on the topic of how to match flexibility in theory this research refers to Person-Organization (P-O) fit literature (e.g. Verquer, Beehr & Wagner, 2003; Cable and Judge, 1996; O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991; Amos & Weathington, 2008). A meta-analysis from Verquer et al. (2003) defines P-O fit based on three characteristics. Generally the P-O fit literature assumes that compatibility between people and organizations occurs:

- a) if at least one of both (individual or organization) provides what the other needs
- b) if both share fundamental characteristics
- c) if b) or a) is met.

In order to meet the ideal situation of shared fundamental characteristics (b) the meta-analysis recommends the use of subjective and/or perceptual measures which directly assess the value-congruence (matching individual and organizational values for certain aspects) between individuals and organizations. Direct and straightforward questions as "To what degree do you feel your values match or fit this organization and the current employees in this organization" (see for example Cable & Judge, 1996) resulted in increased effect sizes and more adequate measures of P-O fit. A study from Cable and Judge (1996) assessed the relationship between P-O fit and job choice. After controlling for job attractiveness and demographic similarity (with the organizational recruiter), they were able to show that a fit is not only important for job seekers but also for individuals who are already working for the organization. These individuals reported lower intentions for turnover and better work attitudes if a fit was present (Cable & Judge, 1996). Additionally Amos and Weathington (2008) showed that a fit in value-congruence resulted in employee's overall satisfaction with the organization. As many researches before (see meta-analysis from Verquer et al., 2003 and Amos & Weathington, 2008) Cable and Judge (1996) used items from the "Organizational Culture Profile" (OCP). The OCP is one of the most used and validated instruments (Verquer et al., 2003; Cable and Judge, 1996; O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991) which examines the value-congruence between organizations and individuals (mainly within the context of job-seeking). It seems very interesting that one of the 54 items of the OCP is termed as "adaptability". Value congruence in adaptability, flexibility and/or agility seems to be one aspect of a fit.

By taking together the insights and recommendations from the P-O fit literature it seems possible to use them as binding mechanism for organizational flexibility demands and employee flexibility. Employee motivation and satisfaction will arise if employee's possess the right amount of flexibility which help them to enact upon the inflicted flexible labour demands. These employees should ideally be satisfied with their job, highly committed to the organization and should not consider to quit their job. Furthermore Hill et al. (2008a) stressed that the right amount of workplace flexibility could contribute to higher productiveness at work. A study from Eaton (2003) generally supports this idea and showed that employee's ability to use and control flexibility at work contributes to self-ratings of productivity. Next to potential gains in productivity Crant (2000) states that certain personality dispositions could be influential for employee's adaption "capabilities" which ultimately contribute to the innovation capacity of organizations. Torcka & Van Velzen (2007) refer to the point that in the future especially the "internal manoeuvrability" (functional flexibility) of the workforce may regain importance because organizations need to innovate and flexibilize simultaneously if they want to survive against their (foreign) competitors which have a huge repertoire of cheap labour. It is again the organizational design task which should implement appropriate flexible working conditions which are in line with (available) employee flexibility. Flexible work arrangements may then not be "an independent goal, but a means to achieve other strategic targets such as cost effectiveness, quality and innovation" (Torcka & Van Velzen, 2007, p. 110).

### **2.4.1 Match or mismatch – The flexibility matcher**

After having discussed a possible linking mechanism for organizational flexibility demands and employee flexibility there is at least one question that remains unanswered: How to define and detect a flexibility (mis)match? To define a continuum for employee flexibility capabilities this research borrows a theory from Chan (1996). The continuum for organizational flexibility demands is based on Burns and Stalker's (1961) theory of mechanistic and organic organizations.

Chan (1996) researched the concept of cognitive misfit by using a fixed organizational setting (engineering vs. R&D) and the Kirton Adaption-Innovation inventory in order to define employee's cognitive style as well as the P-O fit. Chan (1996) states that employee's cognitive style is a stable and preferred style of problem solving and decision making (work-context level) which is independent from cognitive ability (e.g. intelligence). An employee who prefers the adaptation style may experience a misfit in an R&D environment (predominantly described by an innovation style). Furthermore Chan (1996) states that individuals are unlikely to change their cognitive style to accommodate to the predominant style demands stemming from the organization/job. Individuals experiencing a misfit will be frustrated and negative outcomes will be likely (e.g. dissatisfaction, loss of motivation and commitment). An extrapolation of these assumptions into the research context opens the door for interesting theoretical considerations. Similar to employee's preferred cognitive style (adaptor vs. innovator) it could be possible to classify employee flexibility on a relatively stable continuum between "low" and "high" flex-performer. It is assumed that this dimension is to some extent stable because the anticipated antecedents for employee flexibility (see table 2) are more or less static (e.g. personality dispositions) and generally could not be changed that easily (e.g. amount of children, household composition). A proactive employee who has a high mobility preference, a boundary-less mindset and no family obligations is a prototype for a very flexible employee compared to a more "passive" employee with a low mobility preference (traditional career aspiration) and high family obligations (e.g. responsibility for children). Congruent with the assumption from Chan (1996), it is assumed that employee's flexibility is most difficult to change but the organizational design task has several opportunities to foster the interplay between organizational flexibility demands and employee flexibility.

Burns and Stalker's (1961) theory of mechanistic and organic organizations probably offers an adequate continuum to classify organizational flexibility demands. Burns and Stalker (1961) state that organizations need different systems (e.g. control, information conveyance and authorization) in order to react to different strength of environmental dynamism. Mechanistic structures best fit in relatively stable conditions with high "top-down" control by managers and more routine jobs (Burns & Stalker, 1961). A mechanistic organizational structure does not necessarily need high (e.g. functional or locational) labour flexibility because of the stable business environment they are operating in. A link with relatively low organizational flexibility demands is therefore reasonable. Unlike mechanistic structures, organic organizational structures should best fit with organizations operating in highly turbulent environments (Burns & Stalker, 1961). These organizations strive for high task accomplishment and innovation by using a "bottom-up" approach (Burns & Stalker, 1961). Tasks and jobs, which must be continuously negotiated, redefined and adapted, vary according to the given environmental circumstances the organization is operating in. It seems rather obvious that organic organizational systems rely upon high labour flexibility (high organizational flexibility demands) in order to face and adapt to the challenges they encounter from their business environment. The new information age may also higher organizational demands for locational

flexibility. “Working 24/7 - no matter where you are” no longer seems to be a fiction but a real opportunity (Hayes, Pisano, Upton & Wheelwright, 2005).

Depending on the actual (dis)equilibrium of organizational flexibility demands and employee flexibility (low/high organizational flexibility demands vs. low/high employee flexibility) the following flex matcher tool could be developed.

### The Flex matcher

	Low organizational flexibility demands	High organizational flexibility demands
High employee flexibility	<p><b>Organization-Flex-Mismatch</b> Especially high-flex performers could suffer from the given situation because they sell themselves below their own skills and abilities. New flexibility options should be considered. In some cases it could be necessary to reassign employees to other tasks/projects if the organization does not want to lose their most flexible employees. Probably most common for organizations which “switched” from a dynamic market into a stable market environment.</p>	<p><b>High-Flex-Match</b> The organization as well as the employee should be satisfied with the current level of flexibility. Both parties should possess an adequate flexibility repertoire. Probably most common for organizations which successfully operate in highly turbulent environments where the majority of work tasks must be frequently adapted to changing circumstances.</p>
Low employee flexibility	<p><b>Low-Flex-Match</b> The organization as well as the employee should be satisfied with the current level of flexibility. Probably most common for organizations which operate in stable environments where the majority of work is predefined or based on routine tasks. If organizations desire to enter a dynamic market they should try to use unused flexibility of their current employees and/or look for high flex-performers which are already there.</p>	<p><b>Employee-Flex-Mismatch</b> The organization as well as the employee should be dissatisfied with the current level of flexibility. The nature of work should be adapted according to employee flexibility (e.g. higher workplace flexibility <i>or a</i> less flexibility demanding job). In some cases it could be necessary to replace employees who are low-flex performers. Probably most common for organizations which cannot deal adequately with the environmental dynamism.</p>

Three things are important to note here. First, the categorization of organizational flexibility demands and employee flexibility should be seen as a continuum because organizations and employees clearly differ in their strength of flexibility. Second, it is important to restrict the match or mismatch between the organization and the employee not only to a cognitive component. It should be seen as an overall binding mechanism between individuals and organizations. This binding mechanism can have affective (e.g. commitment), cognitive (e.g. style of problem solving) as well as behavioural (e.g. innovative behaviour) components. Third, both dimensions are not definitely fixed in the long run because the situation for an organization (e.g. new markets, products or services) and the employee (e.g. finding a partner, having children, getting sick) can change over time.

## **Chapter 3: Method**

### **3.1 Literature review strategy**

In order to identify the relevant literature for this study, this research made use of several different review strategies at the same time. Keywords such as: organizational flexibility, labour flexibility, organizational demands for flexibility, employee flexibility (capabilities), flexibility fit and several other combinations of those keywords were used to identify adequate research articles. By using Google Scholar and the University online applications (e.g. Scopus and Web of Science) it was possible to concentrate on recent articles (mainly 2000-2009). The relevance of the articles was further evaluated by reading the abstract and if necessary the introduction, method and/or conclusion part. Extraordinary attention was devoted to meta-analysis or overview studies to get a comprehensive overview of relevant literature. Sometimes it was necessary to go beyond the intended timeline in order to get a better feeling for the theoretical and empirical contributions. Google's "cited by" or "similar article" function was used several times to see how theory was applied in different research settings. Next to this, some authors, theories and articles were cited and recommended more often than others. Those contributions were reviewed no matter how recent they are. The literature review resulted in more than 40 relevant articles. Most of the reviewed articles stem from peer-reviewed journals which assure a certain level of quality and scope.

### **3.2 Research Design**

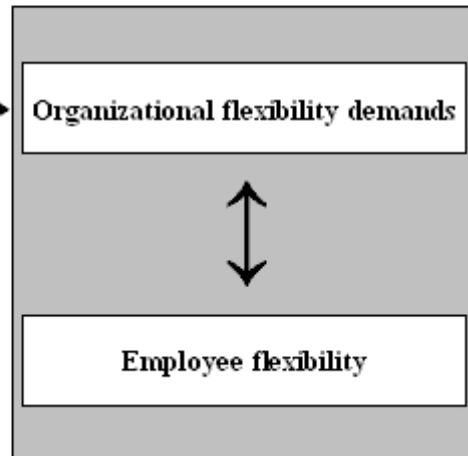
This research aims to test if different constructs are related to perceived organizational flexibility demands and perceived employee flexibility. The present research has a survey-research design which is based on a standardized (online) questionnaire for employees. Figure 1 summarizes the constructed research model. A pilot-study was conducted to test validity and reliability of the used measurement instruments. The next step consisted of a standardized invitation which asked four organizations to participate within the final research. In case of participation a short intake conversation took place in order to discuss the following research steps. Afterwards the organization was provided with the final questionnaire. All questionnaires could be filled in anonymously and did not allow any inferences to individual employees. Standardization was assured through a standardized contact letter and standardized protocols for the intake conversation.

### 3.3 Research Model

Organizational flexibility



Dual task approach for flexibility



Employee flexibility

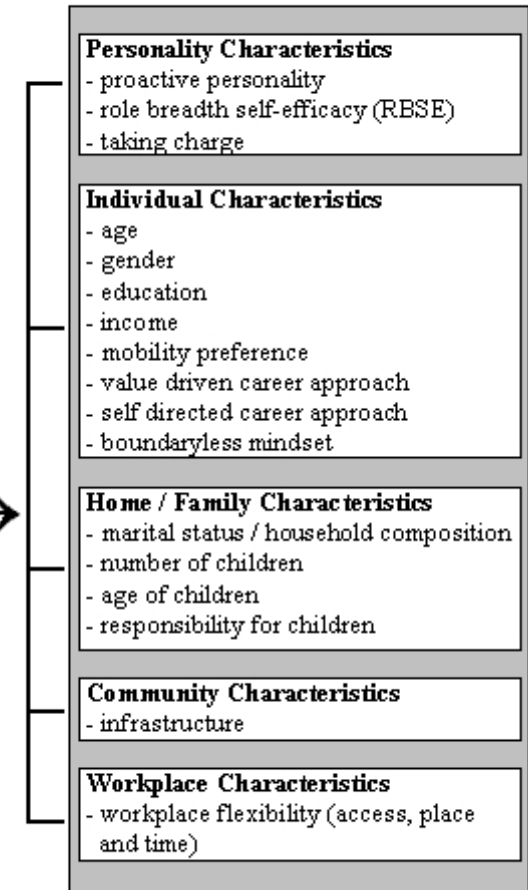


Figure 1. Research model for organizational flexibility demands end employee flexibility.

## **Chapter 4: Data and measurement instruments**

### **4.1 Characteristics of the pilot study population**

The population of the pilot study consisted of employees who hold down a regular job in Germany, the Netherlands or elsewhere within the European Union (no seasonal workers, vacation workers or freelancers). The researcher invited German-speaking computer scientists, engineers and university marketing personnel to take part within the pilot study. All participants were asked to participate anonymously and voluntarily in an online questionnaire. Invitation took place by a standardized e-mail or through standardized online posts in bulletin boards. Therefore the researcher was not able to calculate the response-rate for the pilot study. In the end 46 people participated. Male persons were clearly overrepresented (72%). The youngest participant was 20 years old whereas the oldest participant was 47 years old. The mean age was 30 years while most of the participants (37%) had an age between 24-26 years. A relatively low educational background (“Hauptschule” and Realschule”) was indicated by 11% whereas 46 % indicated a somewhat higher level (“Gymnasium or apprenticeship”) and 43% of participants indicated that they had a high educational level (university or college). With respect to their employment relation 11% indicated that they were temporally employed, 67% were part-time employed and 22% were full-time employed. The distribution of tenure showed that more than 54% employees work for their current organizations between 1 and 3 years. Most of the participants were allowed to make overtime (67%), 11% indicated that they were not allowed to make overtime and 22% experienced no clear rules concerning the use of overtime hours. Questions concerning the actual household composition revealed that 48% percent of the employees were single, 11% had a spouse that is not working, 17% had a spouse that is working part-time and 24% had a spouse who works full-time. Most of the participants had no children (74%), 2% indicated that they have children above age 18, 13% had children under age 18 and 11% had children under age 6. About 7% indicated that they are (financially) responsible for 1 child, 2 children (11%) or even 3 children (11%).

### **4.2 Characteristics of the final study population**

The final questionnaire was conducted in one small and medium sized enterprise (SME) with 132 employees. In total five organizations were invited to participate in this research but only one organization agreed to take part. Reasons for rejection (2 times) and spontaneous withdrawal (2 times) were the changing and threatening economic conditions (2 times mentioned), the amount of time an organization had to invest in order to get an adequate sample of participants (1 time mentioned) and the overall amount of time and planning the employees/organization had to invest in order to fill in the questionnaires (1 time mentioned). The participating organization is a publisher of a regional German newspaper and is organized as a limited partnership with a limited liability company as general partner. To keep anonymity the participating organization asked the researcher to keep the name of the newspaper and the firm secret. With a print-run of about 25,300 newspapers it reaches about 79,000 readers a day (no newspaper on Sundays). Besides the local news the newspaper also deals with nationwide (Germany) as well as international news. The researcher found a flat organizational structure with an informal character which fits within the organizational matrix structure. A local newspaper, which keeps his eyes and ears open on the local, nationwide and international markets, needs fast and flexible reactions from its employees. All employees must adapt to the given circumstances if the newspaper wants to be successful. Several flexibility demands are imposed on every employee within the organization. Employees are confronted with numerical (e.g. amount of workers working on a project), temporal (e.g.



flexible hours working in case of (un)foreseen events; overtime), functional (e.g. producing local, nationwide and international news), locational (e.g. reporting from different locations) and financial (e.g. adjustments in salary because of changing environmental conditions and a possible shift from full-time to part-time) flexibility demands. Furthermore there are strong internal (e.g. deadlines for certain projects) as well as external (e.g. fast changing customer demands) flexibility demands which especially influence the work of a newspaper publisher. All of the 132 employees were asked to participate anonymously and voluntarily in an online questionnaire. Invitation took place by a standardized e-mail. In the end 47 employees participated in the online survey. The response rate is 36% while three questionnaires were not completed (probably caused by a broken internet connection) so the researcher decided to exclude them. A meta-analysis from Cook, Heath and Thompson (2000) indicates that a response rate between 30% en 40% is quite common for online questionnaires. As in the pre-test sample, male participants were overrepresented (68%). The youngest participant was 20 years old whereas the oldest participant was 59 years old. The mean age was 41 while the distribution resembles a normal curve. About 30 % of the participants had a relatively high educational background (Gymnasium) or an apprenticeship (30%). From the remaining candidates 16% had a high educational background (university or college). With respect to their employment 73% of the participants indicated that they work part-time while 25% work full-time and 1 employee was temporally employed. The distribution of tenure does not resemble an normal curve . About 55% percent of the employees indicated that they are employed for up to 10 years. Out of all respondent 93% indicated that they are allowed to make overtime, 7% claimed that there are no rules concerning overtime. Questions concerning the actual household composition revealed that 18% were single, 18% had a non working spouse, 34% had a spouse who is working part-time and 30% had a spouse who is full-time working. Most of the participants (34%) had no children, 27% had children above age 18, 21% had children below age 18 and 18% had children below the age of 6. About 18% indicated that they are (financial) responsible for 1 child, 2 children (32%) or even 3 three children (9%).

### **4.3 Statistical procedures and data analyses**

To analyse the gained observations this research made use of reliability analysis, factor analysis, correlation- and regression analysis. Item pools referring to newly developed constructs and scales were extensively discussed (content), improved (content and formulation) and translated (from English to German) with the help of three native speakers. Afterwards these items were factor analysed by principal component analyses (explorative and if necessary also confirmative) in order to asses which items of the entire item pool adequately load on the latent factor. Items we recoded if necessary (e.g. negative formulated) and item factor loadings below 0.3 were excluded from the scale. Afterwards a reliability analysis (Cronbach´s alpha) revealed if the constructed scales were able to withstand certain reliability criteria. If not mentioned otherwise, items which showed poor reliability (total scale alpha below 0.7) were deleted from the scale. The final scales were then constructed by summing up all relevant items and dividing them by their amount of items respectively. By following this procedure the minimum conditions for adequate reliability and validity could be guaranteed (DeVellis, 2003).

#### 4.4 Measurement instruments overview

The questionnaire embodies different sub-scales which measure the variables of interests separately. Likert scales were consequently used throughout the different subsets of existing items claimed for different response formats/lengths. Every subscale started with a short example which explains the categorizations of the response format. Table 4 gives an overview of the implemented scales, their response formats, amount of (initial) items, alphas (pre-test and final study), means and standard deviations.

Constructs	Response Format (Likert Scale)	Initial item pool	Number of Items (final)	$\alpha$ pre-test	$\alpha$ final study	Mean final study	SD final study
Numerical flexibility	6-point	7	4	0.74	0.6	2.65	1.09
Functional flexibility	6-point	7	6	0.78	0.78	4.63	1.01
Financial flexibility	6-point	5	4	0.72	0.8	1.86	1.12
Locational flexibility	6-point	7	6	0.88	0.77	2.77	1.12
Inflex	6-point	7	3	0.71	0.73	4.51	1.14
Outflex	6-point	6	3	0.61	0.73	3.49	1.15
OFD	10-point	1	1	-	-	7.5	1.85
Proactive personality	7-point	17	16	0.90	0.90	4.50	0.94
Role-breath self efficacy	5-point	10	10	0.88	0.89	3.64	0.69
Taking charge	6-point	10	10	0.85	0.96	3.70	1.19
Mobility preference	5-point	5	5	0.76	0.73	3.22	0.84
Protean career (value)	5-point	4	4	0.62	0.69	2.96	0.82
Protean career (self)	5-point	8	8	0.83	0.84	3.81	0.74
Boundary-less mindset	5-point	8	8	0.83	0.73	3.55	0.76
Community characteristics	6-point	3	-	0.85	0.37	2.09	0.99
Workplace characteristics	6-point	3	3	0.76	0.80	3.36	1.39
EF	10-point	1	1	-	-	8.16	1.24
Social desirability	5-point	10	5	0.73	0.72	2.09	0.83

**Table 4.** Overview of constructs and scales.

#### 4.5 Instruments concerning organizational flexibility demands

##### Numerical (and temporal) flexibility demands

To operationalize the construct of numerical flexibility demands this research made use of 7 items which asked employees about their perception concerning numerical demands at work. Three researches (all native German speakers) checked the items for content, formulation and translation. The researchers agreed that 4 items adequately represent the idea of numerical flexibility demands while 3 items cover temporal flexibility demands. Respondents must indicate on a 6-point Likert scale if they disagree or agree with the statements. The response range allowed answers ranging from 1= “absolutely disagree” to 6= “absolutely agree”. An explorative factor analyses (principal component) on the data of the pilot study revealed two factors with eigenvalues of 2.8 and 1.3 and high cross loadings of items. An additional confirmative factor analysis (principal component), with one underlying factor, showed that

item factor loadings were in the range of 0.47 to 0.77. These findings support Atkinson's (1989) definition of numerical flexibility which inherits aspects of numerical and temporal adjustments. The constructed scale gained good reliability for the pilot study ( $\alpha = 0.74$ ). For the final study an unacceptable alpha of 0.5 was found. The analysis showed that the items concerning temporal flexibility had a poor reliability. Therefore the researcher decided to stick to questions concerning numerical flexibility only. The scale for numerical flexibility ultimately had an alpha of 0.6. The following items were used:

“Depending on the actual work load my organization alters the amount of workers working on a task/project” (10), “I experience high fluctuation in the amount of workers working on tasks or projects” (11), “My organization relies on temporal agencies if they need additional manpower” (12), “Generally the amount of workers working on a project/task is not changed” (13, R).

#### Functional flexibility demands

To operationalize the construct of functional flexibility demands this research made use of 6 items which asked employees about their perception concerning functional demands at work. These items were again checked for content, formulation and translation. The researchers agreed that 7 items adequately represent the idea of functional flexibility. Respondents must indicate on a 6-point Likert scale if they disagree or agree with the statements. The response range allowed answers ranging from 1= “absolutely disagree” to 6= “absolutely agree”. An explorative factor analyses (principal component) on the data of the pilot study revealed two factors with eigenvalues of 2.99 and 1.17. An additional confirmative factor analysis (principal component), with one underlying factor, showed that one item (“In general, I'm working in a multifunctional team or project structure”) had a factor loading below 0.3 and had to be deleted from the scale. The one factor solution then had an eigenvalue of 2.93 and showed item factor loadings in the range of 0.5 to 0.80. The constructed scale reached good reliability for the pilot study ( $\alpha = 0.78$ ). In the final study population the scale reached the same alpha of 0.78. The following items were used: “My job is very diverse” (14), “I have to use a lot of different skills because of different job tasks” (15), “My tasks do not change very often” (16, R). “In general I only need one special ability to do my work” (17, R), “Within my job I'm responsible for different tasks” (18), “My work tasks generally adapt to changed circumstances (e.g. new service or product)” (19).

#### Financial flexibility demands

To operationalize the construct of financial flexibility demands this research made use of 4 items which asked employees about their perception concerning financial demands at work. Again three researchers checked the items for content, formulation and translation. The researchers agreed that an item pool of 5 items adequately represent the idea of financial flexibility. Respondents must indicate on a 6-point Likert scale if they disagree or agree with the statements. The response range allowed answers ranging from 1= “absolutely disagree” to 6= “absolutely agree”. An explorative factor analyses (principal component) on the data of the pilot study revealed one factor with an eigenvalue of 2.66 and item factor loadings in the range of 0.6 to 0.86. The reliability analysis showed that one negatively worded item (“My paid salary is always the same – it is fixed”) had to be deleted in order to achieve a reliable scale ( $\alpha = 0.72$ ). In the final study population the constructed scale reached an alpha of 0.8. The following items were used: “My salary is directly linked to the economic success of my organization” (20), “In good of bad times my organization can adapt my salary” (21), “Due to changing workloads and adaptations in working hours I regularly experience salary adaptations or negotiations.” (22). “Unique achievement in tasks or projects is rewarded with a bonus which I would not get otherwise” (23). “

### Locational flexibility demands

To operationalize the construct of locational flexibility demands this research made use of 6 items which asked employees about their perception concerning locational demands at work. Again three researches checked the items for content, formulation and translation. The researchers agreed that an item pool of 7 items adequately represent the idea of locational flexibility. Respondents must indicate on a 6-point Likert scale if they disagree or agree with the statements. The response range allowed answers ranging from 1= “absolutely disagree” to 6= “absolutely agree”. An explorative factor analyses (principal component) on the data of the pilot study revealed one factor with an eigenvalue of 3.78. One item (“My organization asks me to work outside the normal workplace”) had an item factor loading below 0.3 and was deleted from the scale. The resting items load on one factor with an eigenvalue of 3.76 and item factor loadings in the range of 0.4 to 0.85. The reliability analysis of the scale showed good reliability ( $\alpha = 0.88$ ) for the pilot study data. In the final study population the scale reached an alpha of 0.77. The following items were used: “My organizations expects me to be flexible with respect to locational demands (e.g. working away from office)” (27), “My place of work (location) never changes” (28, R), “My place of work depends upon where I’m needed” (29), “In general my job can be described mobile and portable.” (30). “Most of the time I work at other locations than my home organization” 31), “The location where I have to work is fixed (predefined territory)” (32, R).

### Inflex demands

To operationalize the construct of inflex demands this research made use of 5 items which asked employees about their perception concerning internal working regulations (e.g. maximum amount of flex hours) at work. These items were again checked for content, formulation and translation. The researchers agreed that an item pool of 7 items adequately represent the idea of inflex demands. Respondents must indicate on a 6-point Likert scale if they disagree or agree with the statements. The response range allowed answers ranging from 1= “absolutely disagree” to 6= “absolutely agree”. An explorative factor analyses (principal component) on the data of the pilot study revealed three factors with eigenvalues of 2.55, 1.23 and 1.20. An additional confirmative factor analysis (principal component), with one underlying factor, showed that two items had factor loadings below 0.3 and had to be deleted from the scale (“The organization clearly stipulates how flexible I’m allowed to work” and “There are clear regulations or policies with respect to the use of vacations”). The one factor solution then had had an eigenvalue of 2.53 and showed item factor loadings in the range of 0.39 to 0.89. The constructed scale reached good reliability for the pilot study ( $\alpha = 0.71$ ). For the final study population the scale two additional items had to be deleted (“Internal regulations allow me to divide my working time according to what is really needed”, and “Internal regulations allow me to divide my working time according to what is really needed”) in order to reach an alpha of 0.73. The following items were used: “The policy of my organization hinders me to arrange my work in a flexible manner” (33), “If it is necessary I can adjust my work in a flexible manner without violating organizational rules.” (35,R), “Internal regulations allow me to flexibly arrange my working time” (36, R).

### Outflex demands

To operationalize the construct of outflex demands this research made use of 4 items which asked employees about their perception concerning external working demands (e.g. laws, customers or agreements with work unions). The initial item pool was again checked for content, formulation and translation. The researchers agreed that an item pool of 6 items adequately represent the idea of outflex demands. Respondents must indicate on a 6-point

Likert scale if they disagree or agree with the statements. The response range allowed answers ranging from 1= “absolutely disagree” to 6= “absolutely agree”. An explorative factor analyses on the data of the pilot study revealed two factors with eigenvalues of 1.97 and 1.30. An additional confirmative factor analysis (principal component), with one underlying factor, showed two items (“In general, external parties do not hinder me to be flexible at work” and “In general, external parties, which are outside my home organization, do not significantly influence how I plan my work”) which had relatively low factor loadings of 0.31 and 0.36 while the other items all had factor loadings above 0.5. The deletion of these 2 items was further supported by the reliability analysis. For the pilot study the scale reached an alpha of 0.61 which is problematic but still allows the researcher to check the scale reliability within the final population. For the final study population it was necessary reduce the scale by another item (“In general, external parties do not hinder me to find flexible solutions at work”) in order to reach an alpha of 0.73. The following items were used: “Generally, customer wishes or demands (e.g. deadlines) are asking me for flexible reactions” (38), “Generally, my flexibility at work is constrained by customer demands” (39), “Even if I want to adapt to certain circumstances in a flexible manner my freedom of action is limited by external parties (e.g. customers, employers, labour unions etc.)”. (40) “Customer demands are always superior to organizational demands” (41).

#### Organizational flexibility demands (OFD)

The criterion variable OFD was measured by one item which asked employees to indicate the overall strength of flexibility they are confronted with at work. A 10-point Likert scale allowed answers ranging from 1=“low demands” to 10=“high demands”. The following item was used: “In the following please indicate the strength of the overall flexibility demands on a scale from 1 to 10 (10 is highest)” (42).

## **4.6 Instruments concerning employee flexibility**

#### Proactive Personality

To operationalize the construct of proactive personality the research made use of 16 items originally written by Bateman and Crant (1993). Respondents must indicate on a 7-point Likert scale if they disagree or agree with the statements. The response range allowed answers ranging from 1=“strongly disagree” to 7=“strongly agree”. In Bateman and Crant’s (1993) study the construct achieved good validity. Concerning the reliability, the present analysis of the scale revealed an alpha of 0.90 for the pilot study. This seems to be comparable to the high alphas (.80 and above) found by Bateman and Crant (1993). By deleting one item (“I tend to let others take the initiative to start new projects”) from the original scale, the alpha improved from 0.84 to 0.90 while at the same time the scale could be shortened. For the final population the scale had an alpha of 0.90. One example item is: “If I believe in an idea, no obstacle will prevent me from making it happen”.

#### Role breadth self-efficacy (RBSE)

To operationalize the construct of RBSE the research made use of 10 items originally written by Parker (1998). Respondents must indicate on a 5-point Likert scale how confident they feel to perform certain activities. The response range allowed answers ranging from 1=“not at all confident” to 5=“very confident”. In Parker’s (1998) study the construct achieved good validity. Concerning the reliability, the present analysis of the scale revealed an alpha of 0.88

for the pilot study and an alpha of 0.89 for the final study population. Parker (1998) found an alpha of 0.96 which generally supports the reliability of the scale. One example item is: “How confident do you feel when you analyse a long-term problem to find a solution “.

#### Taking charge

To operationalize the construct of taking charge the research made use of 10 items originally written by Morrison and Phelps (1999). The scale is usually assessed by co-workers but Crant (2000) suggested that the items could be easily reformulated to ask individuals directly. Instead of beginning with “this person” the questions could directly address the person in question (“I”). The researcher reformulated the items as suggested and used a 6-point Likert scale as response format. The response range allowed answers ranging from 1=“strongly disagree” to 5=“strongly agree”. Generally Morrison and Phelps (1999) were able to show good validity for the construct of taking charge. Concerning the reliability, the present analysis of the newly constructed scale revealed an alpha of 0.85 for the pilot study and an alpha of 0.96 for the final study population. For the original version of the scale Morrison and Phelps (1999) found an alpha of 0.93 which generally supports the reliability of the scale. One example item is: “I often try to change how my job is executed in order to be more effective.“.

#### Mobility preference

To operationalize the mobility preference construct this research made use of 5 items originally written by Briscoe et al. (2006). Respondents must indicate on a 5-point Likert scale if they disagree or agree with the statements. The response range allowed answers ranging from 1=“strongly disagree” to 5=“strongly agree”. In Briscoe’s et al (2006) study the construct achieved good validity. Concerning the reliability, the present analysis of the scale revealed an alpha of 0.76 for the pilot study and an alpha of 0.73 for the final study population. Briscoe et al (2006) found an alpha of 0.75 which is comparable to alpha found within the present study. One example item is: “In my ideal career, I would work for only one organization. (reverse coded)”.

#### Protean career approach

To operationalize the construct of a protean career this research made use of 12 items originally written by Briscoe et al. (2006). The scale consists of two item-subsets which measure a value-driven (4 items) as well as self-directed (8 items) career approach. Respondents must indicate on a 5-point Likert scale if they disagree or agree with the statements. The response range allowed answers ranging from 1=“strongly disagree” to 5=“strongly agree”. In Briscoe’s et al (2006) study both sub-scales achieved good validity but the factor analyses revealed some items with relatively low loadings (slightly below 0.3). The present analysis of the pilot-study data revealed an alpha of 0.62 for the value-driven scale and an alpha of 0.83 for the self-directed scale. For the final study population the value-driven scale gained an alpha of 0.69 and for the self-directed scale an alpha of 0.84. There were no items with factor loadings below 0.3. The relatively low alpha for the value-driven scale seems to be problematic but does not necessarily exclude the protean career construct from the analysis. Briscoe et al (2006) found an alpha of .69 for the value-driven scale and an alpha of .81 for the self-directed and showed that, if both aspects are interpreted in the same context, the construct of a protean career is still covered adequately. One example item for the self-driven approach is: “I’m responsible for my success or failure in my career.”. An example item for the value-driven subset is: “What’s most important to me is how I feel about my career success, not how other people feel.“.

### Boundary-less mindset

To operationalize the construct of a boundary-less mindset this research made use of 8 items originally written by Briscoe, Hall and deMuth (2006). Respondents must indicate on a 5-point Likert scale if they disagree or agree with the statements. The response range allowed answers ranging from 1="strongly disagree" to 5="strongly agree". Briscoe's et al (2006) study showed that the scale and the construct are reliable and valid. The reliability analysis of the pilot-study data revealed an alpha of 0.83. For the final study population the scale reached an alpha of 0.73. One example item is: "I enjoy working with people outside of my organization."

### Community characteristics

To operationalize the construct of flexibility supporting community characteristics the researcher formulated items based on theoretical suggestions from Hill et al. (2008a). Hill et al. (2008a) stated that the community infrastructure (e.g. transportations systems), traffic jams and other aspects of employee's community (e.g. norms and rules) could be influential for workplace flexibility. Three researches then checked the items for content, formulation and translation and ultimately agreed that a total amount of 3 items adequately represent the suggested aspects. Respondents must indicate on a 6-point Likert scale if they disagree or agree with the statements. The response range allowed answers ranging from 1= "absolutely disagree" to 6= "absolutely agree". An explorative factor analyses (principal component) on the data of the pilot study revealed one factor with an eigenvalue of 1.86 and item factor loadings in the range of 0.66 to 0.85. A reliability analysis for the pilot study population showed good reliability ( $\alpha =0.85$ ) for the present scale. The reliability analyses for the final study population indicated an alpha of 0.37. Based on the low reliability of the scale the scale was excluded from the final analysis. The following items were used in the pilot study: "Generally the infrastructure of my home allows me to arrange my work in a flexible manner (e.g. transport connection, spread of housing)" (92, R), "The traffic situation at my home location (e.g. traffic jams) hinder me to work in a flexible manner" (93), "I have to deal with people (friends, spouse e.g.) who do not accept that I'm planning my work in a flexible manner" (94).

### Workplace characteristics

To operationalize the construct of flexibility supporting workplace characteristics the researcher formulated items based on suggestions from Hill et al. (2008a) and Eaton (2003). Hill et al. (2008a) and Eaton (2003) stated that workplace flexibility is high if employees have access to flex policies which decide when, where and for how long they engage in work related tasks. Three researches then checked the items for content, formulation and translation and ultimately agreed that a total amount of 3 items adequately represent the suggested aspects. Respondents must indicate on a 6-point Likert scale if they disagree or agree with the statements. The response range allowed answers ranging from 1= "absolutely disagree" to 6= "absolutely agree". An explorative factor analyses (principal component) on the data of the pilot study revealed one factor with an eigenvalue of 2.05 and item factor loadings in the range of 0.74 to 0.89. A reliability analysis for the pilot study population showed good reliability ( $\alpha =0.76$ ) for the present scale. For the final study population the scale reached an alpha of 0.8. The following items were used: "In general, I can decide when (start and end time) to engage in work-related tasks." I'm allowed to define start and end time of my work" (95), "I can decide the place where to work on my own" (96), "Generally I can decide how long much time spend on a particular task" (97),

### Employee flexibility (EF)

The criterion variable perceived EF was measured by one item which asked employees to indicate the overall strength of their own flexibility. A 10-point Likert scale allowed answers ranging from 1="low" to 10="high". The following item was used: "In the following please indicate the overall strength of your own flexibility on a scale from 1 to 10 (10 is highest)" (141).

## **4.7 Additional variables**

As suggested by Hill et al. (2008a) employees were additionally asked to indicate some individual- and family characteristics as: age, gender, educational status, marital status/household composition (e.g. single, dual-earner, single-earner etc.), amount and age of children (under age 6, above age 6, under age 18 and above age 18), (financial) responsibility for children and monthly net-income (only available for the pilot-study). Next to this employees were asked to indicate if they are allowed to make overtime which ultimately comes down to the ability to use flex policies concerning the working hours. Furthermore a cross-validated version of the Marlow-Crowne Social Desirability Scale from Strahan and Gerbasi (1972) was used. The purpose of this questionnaire was to check if employees gave social desirable answers. The scale consists of 10 items and asks respondents to indicate on a 5-point Likert scale if they disagree or agree with the presented statements. The response range allowed answers ranging from 1="strongly disagree" to 5="strongly agree". The reliability analysis for the pilot-study data revealed an alpha of 0.73 for the present scale. For the final study population the scale reached an alpha of 0.72 while 5 items ("I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake", "I always try to practice what I preach", "I never resent being asked to return a favour", "I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own" and "I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings") could be deleted to reach a shorter scale. The reliability for the translated scale (English into German) seems to be fairly similar to the results found by Strahan and Gerbasi (1972). One example item is: "At times I have really insisted on having things my own way" (R, 51).

A MANCOVA analysis, with age, gender, educational status, marital status, amount and age of children as control variables shows that social desirability is not significantly related to the indicators of OFD ( $F_{(15)}=0.598$ ,  $p= 0.842$ ) and EF ( $F_{(15)}=0.512$ ,  $p= 0.904$ ).



## Chapter 5: Results

### 5.1 Correlational analysis

The correlation analysis revealed a modest positive but highly significant correlation between the criterion variables OF and EF ( $r = 0.503, p=0.001$ ). A full correlation table could be found in the Annex. Some noteworthy correlations are listed below.

#### OFD

A correlation analysis revealed a significant correlation between the score for the criterion variable OFD and the measures of locational flexibility ( $r = 0.551, p<0.01$ ) as well as numerical flexibility ( $r = 0.313, p<0.05$ ). Furthermore OFD significantly correlates with the measure for a proactive personality ( $r = 0.524, p<0.01$ ), RBSE ( $r = 0.469, p<0.01$ ), taking charge ( $r = 0.402, p<0.01$ ), boundaryless mindest ( $r = 0.403, p<0.01$ ) and the measure for workplace characteristics ( $r = 0.558, p<0.01$ ).

#### EF

The score for the criterion variable EF shows a significant correlation with the measure for locational flexibility ( $r = 0.350, p<0.05$ ), proactive personality ( $r = 0.506, p<0.01$ ), RBSE ( $r = 0.611, p<0.01$ ), taking charge ( $r = 0.374, p<0.05$ ), boundaryless mindset ( $r = 0.364, p<0.05$ ) and the measure for workplace characteristics ( $r = 0.319, p<0.05$ ).

#### Ssocial desirability

With respect to the measure of social desirability the researcher found a significant positive correlation with outflex demands ( $r = 0.413, p<0.01$ ) and the measure for community characteristics ( $r = 0.317, p<0.05$ ). No significant correlation could be found between the scores for social desirability and the criterion variables OFD ( $r = 0.131, p>0.05$ ) and EF ( $r = -0.187, p>0.05$ ).

### 5.2 Regression model for perceived organizational flexibility demands

	$\beta$	B	Standard Error
(Intercept)		2.007	1.677
Numerical flex	.193	.326	.240
Functional flex	.101	.185	.261
Financial Flex	-.132	-.219	.228
Locational Flex	.392*	.646*	.257
Inflex	.162	.262	.226
Outflex	.202	.326	.227
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.299		

\* $p < .05$

The construct of locational flexibility shows a positive and significant main effect on organizational flexibility demands ( $\beta=0.392, p=0.017$ ). There are no significant effects for the constructs of numerical, functional, financial, inflex and outflex flexibility. The negative effect of financial flexibility ( $\beta= -.132$ ) is worth mentioning, too.

### 5.3 Regression model for perceived employee flexibility

		$\beta$	B	Standard Error
1	(Intercept)		2,955	,897
	Proactive Personality	,380**	,501**	,204
	RBSE	,516***	,928***	,236
	Taking Charge	-,112	-,117	,167
2	(Intercept)		2,193	1,905
	Proactive Personality	,398*	,525*	,236
	RBSE	,462*	,832*	,282
	Taking Charge	-,073	-,076	,208
	Age	,103	,014	,020
	Gender	,188	,494	,335
	Education	-,056	-,035	,093
	Mobility Preference	-,026	-,038	,216
	Value-driven career	-,113	-,171	,208
	Self-driven career	-,074	-,123	,264
	Boundaryless mindset	,163	,265	,266
3	(Intercept)		1,977	1,963
	Proactive Personality	,374*	,493*	,236
	RBSE	,440*	,791*	,280
	Taking Charge	-,153	-,159	,215
	Age	,176	,025	,021
	Gender	,190	,498	,377
	Education	-,089	-,056	,093
	Mobility Preference	-,020	-,029	,213
	Value-driven career	-,156	-,235	,209
	Self-driven career	-,080	-,134	,260
	Boundaryless mindset	,229	,373	,272
	Workplace Characteristics	,003	,003	,136
	Marital status	,116	,133	,178
	Number of children	-,280	-,330	,172
	Community Characteristics	,076	,095	,171
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>		.326		

\* $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Proactive personality ( $\beta=0.440$ ,  $p<0.045$ ) and RBSE ( $\beta=0.448$ ,  $p<0.021$ ) show positive and significant main effects on employee flexibility. There were no significant effects for the other constructs. Education, number of children and the measures for taking charge, mobility preference, a value-driven and self-driven career are negatively related to the criterion variable EF.

## Chapter 6: Conclusions & recommendations

### 6.1 Conclusions

Out of a long list with very different design elements for perceived OFD it becomes clear that locational flexibility demands have the strongest impact, at least in this research context. The research outcomes does not support Atkinson's (1989) core periphery model. One reason could be that the researched organization especially needs locational flexibility, which is not part of the original Atkinson (1989) model, to run their business successfully. Another reason might be that Atkinson's model (1989) has gone (to some extent) out of date. Today certain context variables may require context specific flexibility tools within the 'flexible labour game'. The newspaper publishing company, which participated in this research, clearly encounters specific locational flexibility demands in their day to day business. It is not amazing that a newspaper publishing company and in general the editors are confronted with (high) locational flexibility demands which are nowadays quite usual in a world with fast moving media coverage. Fast development of the internet and mobile devices further foster these developments.

A labour flexibility game clearly needs more participants than purely the organization and its managing board of directors. Flexibility demands go hand in hand with employee flexibility and both aspects should always be considered in tandem. Outcomes suggest that employee flexibility consist of two components. On the one hand it seems that a proactive personality, which is a relatively stable personality disposition, could discriminate between high flex performers and low flex performers. On the other hand it seems that employee's role breadth self-efficacy, which much more depends on the situational context, is important, too. High flex performers should have access to certain flex policies (e.g. being allowed to work from other locations than the main office) and should be able to decide "where" they engage in work related tasks in order to deal with high locational flexibility demands.. Only then they can get the necessary confidence or self-efficacy to make use of their own flexibility enhancing potential. Even if RBSE is seen as a personality disposition it clearly has a strong situation specific component which should not be ignored. It is absolutely wonderful if an employee has a certain proactive predisposition and is willing to take a "broader role" but such an employee cannot improve the (organizational) overall flexibility if he is "not allowed" or even hindered to make use of his flexibility enhancing knowledge, skills and abilities. This might also explain why RBSE is portrayed as a less stable personality disposition, which can change according to the given situation and work experience (Crant, 2000). Very proactive employees (scoring high on proactive personality) can find some way to bypass obstacles (e.g. inadequate flex policies) for some time – but in the long run these employees might suffer from dissatisfaction, a high intention to leave or they just do their "standard job" until it is time to retire. Therefore the researched organization should constantly monitor and improve access to flex policies (e.g. working from home or elsewhere, overtime or flex time). Flexibility enhancing tools (e.g. handhelds, mobile internet connection, VPN connections) probably improve the situation for high flex performers suffering from a flexibility disequilibrium. The introduced research instrument and flexmatcher tool should enable the researched organization to identify certain flexibility disequilibria (Organization-Flex-Mismatch and Employee-Flex-Mismatch) as well as flexibility equilibria (High-Flex-Match and Low-Flex-Match). Especially disequilibria call for action but in the case of flexibility equilibria it also advisable to continuously think about how the organization can bring out the best in employees. To a certain degree it seems even possible to visualize (dis-)equilibria on an individual employee basis by using a calculation based on difference scores (OFD minus EF and vice versa). Understandably the researched organizations did not agree to discuss such sensitive data within this research setting.

## **6.2 Implications and recommendations for further research**

It is important to note that this research made use of a relatively small research population which did not allow the researcher to generalize across a wider dimension. In total five organizations were invited to participate in this research but only one organization agreed to take part. It is assumed that organizations used the so called “financial crisis” as an “excuse” to withdraw from the research. Some organizations stated that there were no free resources anymore because everyone had to be extremely focused on how to “survive the financial crisis”. Nevertheless this specific research context offers a unique chance for a first case study. Pretested instruments and a good response rate make it at least possible to generalize across the researched organization. It is self-evident that context specific variables as for example the kind and size of the company as well as the home country can play an influential role. Even if functional, financial, numerical/temporal, inflex and outflex flexibility demands were less relevant in this research context (possibly also caused by the small research population) they can get relevant in other organizational settings. It seems for example that the participants of the final study population did not encounter any problems between their family setting and working life because the actual working environment probably allows them to find a good balance between life and work. Furthermore the region where the organization is located is not known for infrastructural problems. The transport connection is good and traffic jams are absolutely uncommon. These factors might get relevant if the context changes. Of course this research is only a snap-shot of the current situation and needs to be replicated. Most of the applied instruments should be further developed and cross-validated with other organizations and in other countries. A shortening of the questionnaire is also advisable because this minimizes the amount of time an organizations has to invest in order to participate in such a research setting. The quantitative approach of this research should be replenished with qualitative methods (e.g. structured interviews). Anyway this research was able to show how organizational flexibility demands and employee flexibility could be assessed and matched.

By having a look in the nearby future it is possible that flexibility becomes one of the most important success factors for many organizations. As stated earlier organizations can use their improved flexibility to compete with (foreign) competitors which often have a huge repertoire of cheap labour. Explicit knowledge about what an organization needs in terms of labour flexibility could not only help high educated job candidates to choose the right organization and career. Public employment agencies should use knowledge about how to match flexibility in order to find adequate jobs for unemployed people. Imagine how much money and time could be saved if job vacancies could already clearly indicate (e.g. by using a scale) how much functional and locational flexibility is needed for the job? A vacancy which honestly translates organizational flexibility demands in desired employee skills and abilities may protect organizations and job applicants from unnecessary, expensive and embarrassing job interviews as well as costly assessment centres. Much more research is needed to support these first findings and ideas. Moreover several new questions and ideas emerged out of this research. Is there any interaction effect between OFD and EF with respect to outcome variables as for example employee satisfaction, employee’s intention to stay with the organization, customer satisfaction (response time) or overall organizational productivity? Is there a certain trend for specific organizational flexibility labour demands and can research support employees and employers at the same time? Are there ethical limitations for measuring employee’s flexibility? Matching labour flexibility is a very fruitful topic which certainly should play an on-going and important role in science and practice. This research is

a first step towards a unifying framework for labour flexibility which should help all stakeholders (e.g. organizations, unions, employees but also researchers) not only to refine but also to think about new possibilities concerning labour flexibility within the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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## Annex: Correlation Table

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
1. OFD	1																							
2. EF	,503**	1																						
3. Numerical flex	,313*	,218	1																					
4. Functiona flex	,260	,260	,088	1																				
5. Financial flex	,073	-,060	,327*	,042	1																			
6. Locational flex	,551**	,350*	,291	,340*	,254	1																		
7. Inflex	,270	,221	-,049	,266	,048	,307*	1																	
8. Outflex	,298*	,053	,242	-,142	,152	,260	-,114	1																
9. Proactive Personality	,524**	,506**	,284	,449**	,178	,276	,239	,276	1															
10. RBSE	,469**	,611**	,178	,380*	,034	,344*	,322*	,051	,386**	1														
11. Taking charge	,402**	,374*	,291	,515**	,290	,544**	,382*	,117	,658**	,458**	1													
12. Age	-,086	-,028	-,089	-,156	-,113	-,097	-,014	-,102	-,307*	,041	-,256	1												
13. Gender	-,267	,111	,065	-,222	-,037	-,205	-,134	-,067	-,138	-,015	-,131	-,052	1											
14. Education	,070	,067	-,023	,327*	-,290	-,012	,237	,000	,081	,116	-,029	-,087	-,073	1										
15. Boundaryless mobility	-,095	,019	,185	,158	,020	,068	,075	-,169	,094	,013	,292	,075	,005	-,372*	1									
16. Protean career value	-,056	-,091	,102	,071	-,050	-,136	,208	,176	,072	,016	-,067	,011	-,042	,172	-,227	1								
17. Protean career self	-,017	,038	,359*	,095	,328*	,158	,112	,036	,170	,138	,420**	-,176	,088	-,173	,243	,227	1							
18. Boundaryless mindset	,403**	,364*	,143	,279	,104	,297	,441**	,233	,446**	,366*	,394**	-,317*	-,144	,365*	-,067	,077	,255	1						
19. Marital status	,029	,152	,253	-,012	,120	,026	,030	,120	,011	,152	,006	,125	,434**	,125	-,024	,087	-,022	,037	1					
20. Number of children	,036	-,208	,079	-,209	,125	-,140	-,104	,084	-,203	-,076	-,296	,240	,175	-,029	-,002	-,083	-,137	,012	,388**	1				
21. Community charact.	,029	,069	,016	-,136	-,133	,012	-,105	,370*	,189	-,102	,005	-,382*	-,079	-,022	-,049	,056	,024	,155	-,201	-,163	1			
22. Workplace characteristics	,558**	,319*	,199	,313*	-,008	,356*	,518**	-,181	,368*	,479**	,363*	-,018	-,035	,163	,133	,147	,250	,380*	-,006	-,055	-,117	1		
23. Social Desireability	,131	-,187	,030	,102	,170	,179	-,011	,413**	,165	-,005	,283	-,124	-,016	-,056	,272	-,084	,269	,219	-,073	,140	,317*	,115	1	

\* Correlation  $p < 0.05$

\*\* Correlation  $p < 0.01$

## **Annex : Questionnaire**

Dieser Fragebogen untersucht Flexibilitätsansprüche und Flexibilitätsfähigkeiten von Betrieben und Mitarbeitern. Das Ausfüllen des Fragebogens nimmt ca. 20 Minuten in Anspruch und sollte nach Möglichkeit nicht unterbrochen werden. Alle Informationen werden anonym zusammengetragen und erlauben keinerlei Rückschlüsse auf einzelne Personen oder Personengruppen. Es zählt Ihre persönliche und ehrliche Einschätzung. Es gibt keine "richtige" oder "falsche" Antwort. Beim Ausfüllen denken Sie bitte nur an sich selbst und die Flexibilität die Sie in Ihrem Arbeitsumfeld erfahren.

**Beachten Sie die jeweiligen Instruktionen der einzelnen Fragenblöcke. Bitte kreuzen Sie jeweils nur eine Antwortmöglichkeit an und achten darauf, dass Sie alle Fragen beantworten. Im Zweifelsfall wählen Sie bitte immer die Antwort die am ehesten Ihrer Meinung entspricht. Wenn Sie sich versehen haben, umkreisen Sie bitte die korrekte Antwort. Sie können jetzt mit der Beantwortung der Fragen beginnen.**

**1) Sind Sie männlich oder weiblich?**

- männlich
- weiblich

**2) Bitte tragen Sie Ihr Alter (in Jahren) in das entsprechende Feld ein.**

\_\_\_\_ Jahre

**3) Bitte geben Sie Ihren höchsten Ausbildungsgrad an.**

Beispiel: Sie haben die Realschule besucht und anschließend eine Ausbildung abgeschlossen.

Wählen Sie in diesem Fall bitte "Ausbildung".

- Hauptschule
- Realschule
- Gymnasium (Abitur)
- Fachoberschule (FOS)
- Ausbildung
- Fachhochschule
- Universität
- Sonstige

**4) Wählen Sie bitte das entsprechende Arbeitsverhältnis aus.**

- Zeitlich beschränktes Arbeitsverhältnis ("Zeitarbeit")
- Teilzeit Beschäftigungsverhältnis
- Vollzeit Beschäftigungsverhältnis

**5) Bitte wählen Sie Ihren Familienstand bzw. Einkommenssituation**

- Single/ allein lebend
- Ich habe einen Ehegatten/ Partner der nicht arbeitet
- Ich habe einen Ehegatten/ Partner der Teilzeit arbeitet

Ich habe einen Ehegatten/ Partner der Vollzeit arbeitet

**6) Bitte wählen sie Ihren elterlichen Status.**

**Gehen Sie dabei gegebenenfalls vom jüngsten Kind aus.**

Beispiel: Sie haben ein Kind (15 Jahre) und ein weiteres Kind (5 Jahre). Wählen Sie bitte "Ich habe mindestens 1 Kind das jünger ist als 6 Jahre"

- Ich habe keine Kinder
- Ich habe mindestens 1 Kind das älter ist als 18 Jahre
- Ich habe mindestens 1 Kind das jünger ist als 18 Jahre
- Ich habe mindestens 1 Kind das jünger ist als 6 Jahre

**7) Anzahl der Kinder für die Sie (und ggf. Ihr Partner) verantwortlich sind.**

**Tragen Sie bitte eine Zahl in das entsprechende Feld ein.**

\_\_\_\_\_ Kinder

**8) Sind Sie berechtigt in Ihrem Job Überstunden zu machen?**

- Ja
- Nein
- Keine klare Richtlinie

**9) Wie viele Jahre sind Sie bei Ihrem jetzigen Betrieb angestellt?**

**Bitte in das entsprechende Feld die gerundeten Jahre als Zahl eintragen.**

\_\_\_\_\_ Jahre

---

**Geben Sie im Folgenden an in wie weit Sie mit den folgenden Aussprachen übereinstimmen. Die 6 Antwortmöglichkeiten ermöglichen Antworten zwischen 1= "Ich stimme absolut nicht überein" (äußerst linke Auswahl) bis hin zu 6= "Ich stimme absolut überein" (äußerst rechte Auswahl).**

Beispiel: Meine Arbeit ist abwechslungsreich.



Empfinden Sie Ihre Arbeit als nicht abwechslungsreich kreuzen Sie bitte „1“ (Ich stimme absolut nicht überein) an. Wenn Sie Ihre Arbeit als sehr abwechslungsreich erfahren, kreuzen Sie bitte die „6“ (Ich stimme absolut überein) an.

---

**10) Abhängig vom aktuellen Arbeitsaufkommen wird in meinem Betrieb die Anzahl der Mitarbeiter, die an einem Projekt oder einer Aufgabe arbeiten, erhöht oder verringert.**



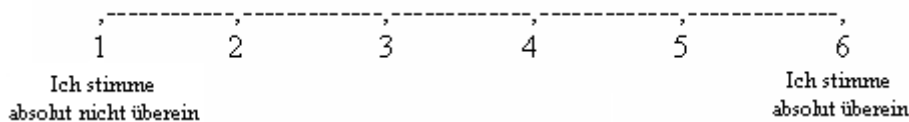
**11) Ich erfahre starke Fluktuation/Veränderungen bezüglich der Anzahl Mitarbeiter die an einer Aufgabe oder einem Projekt arbeiten.**



**12) Mein Betrieb setzt extra Arbeitskräfte (z.B. Zeitarbeiter) ein wenn es nötig ist.**



**13) Generell arbeitet immer dieselbe Anzahl von Mitarbeitern an einer Aufgabe oder einem Projekt.**



**14) Mein Job beinhaltet verschiedenste Aufgabenbereiche.**



**15) Ich muss verschiedenste Fähigkeiten einsetzen um den Aufgabenbereichen meines Jobs gerecht zu werden.**



**16) Mein Aufgabenbereich ändert sich selten.**



**17) Im Allgemeinen benötige ich nur eine spezielle Fähigkeit zur Ausübung meiner Arbeit.**



**18) Innerhalb meines Jobs bin ich verantwortlich für verschiedene Aufgaben und Rollen.**



**19) Im Allgemeinen passen sich meine Arbeitsaufgaben den verändernden Umständen an (z.B. neue Produktionsmethoden, neue Produkte/neuer Service).**



**20) Mein Gehalt ist direkt gekoppelt an die wirtschaftlichen Umstände meines Betriebes.**



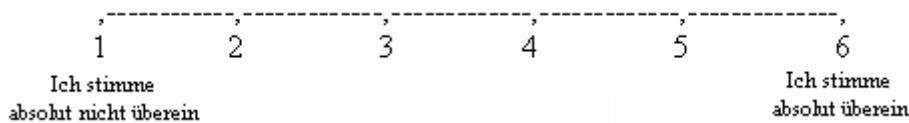
**21) In guten oder schlechten Zeiten passt der Betrieb mein Gehalt entsprechend den Gegebenheiten an.**



**22) Durch wechselnde Arbeitslast erlebe ich gelegentliche Anpassung/Verhandlungen bezüglich meines Lohns.**



**23) Besondere Arbeitsleistung (bei einem Auftrag oder einem Projekt) wird mit einem Bonus entlohnt den ich sonst nicht erhalte würde.**



**24) Abhängig von der Arbeitslast muss ich meine Arbeitsstunden erhöhen oder vermindern.**



**25) Mein Arbeitgeber verlangt von mir flexible Arbeitszeiten.**

Beispiel: 5 Stunden am Montag aber nur 1 Stunde am Dienstag



**26) Meine Arbeitszeiten hängen in keinsten Weise zusammen mit der aktuellen Arbeitslast.**



**27) Mein Betrieb erwartet von mir Flexibilität bezüglich meiner Mobilität und meines Arbeitsplatzes.**



**28) Mein Arbeitsort bzw. Arbeitsplatz ändert sich nie.**



**29) An welchem Ort ich arbeite hängt davon ab wo ich gebraucht werde.**



**30) Im Allgemeinen lässt sich meine Arbeit als "mobil" und "portabel" (tragbar) beschreiben.**



**31) Meistens arbeite ich außerhalb meines Betriebes.**



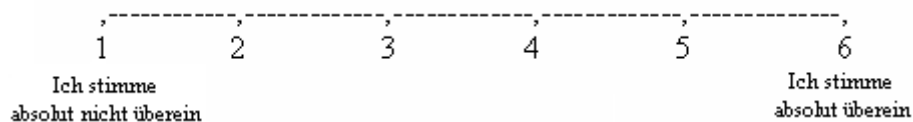
**32) In meinem Betrieb habe ich einen räumlich festgelegten Arbeitsplatz.**

Beispiel: Büro, Werkbank, Flur.



**33) Spezielle Vorgaben meines Betriebes verhindern, dass ich meine Arbeitszeit flexibel gestalten kann.**

Beispiel: Keine flexible Arbeitszeitregelung möglich, keine Gleitzeit



**34) Interne Bestimmungen meines Betriebes erlauben mir meine Arbeitszeit flexibel einzuteilen.**



**35) Wenn es nötig ist kann ich meine Arbeit flexibel einteilen ohne gegen Regeln zu verstoßen.**



**36) Mein Betrieb legt deutlich fest wie flexibel ich arbeiten darf/kann.**



**37) In meinem Betrieb gibt es klare Regeln bezüglich der Anfrage von Urlaubstagen.**  
Beispiel: Keine Urlaubstage in Zeiträumen mit hoher Arbeitslast



**38) Kundenwünsche und Ansprüche (beispielsweise Terminvereinbarungen und Fristen) erfordern flexible Reaktionen von mir.**



**39) Im Allgemeinen, wird meine Flexibilität bei der Arbeit eingeschränkt durch Kundenansprüche.**

Beispiele für Kundenansprüche: bestimmte Zulieferer, Produkte und/oder Prozeduren





**40) Selbst wenn ich mich veränderten Umständen flexibel anpassen möchte wird mein Handlungsspielraum durch externe Parteien beschränkt.**

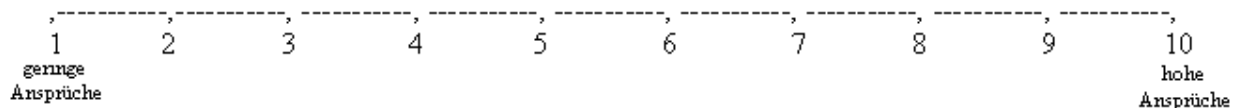
Beispiele für externe Parteien: Kunden, Arbeitgeber-, Arbeitnehmergewerkschaften, staatliche Institutionen, externe Firmen/Betriebe.



**41) Vergleicht man Kundenansprüche und die Ansprüche der eigenen Organization haben Kunden immer die oberste Priorität.**

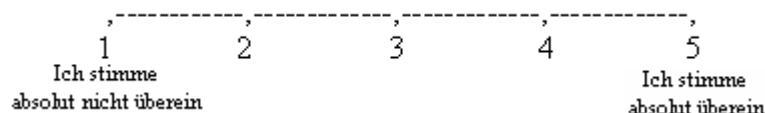


**42) Bitte bewerten Sie im Folgenden die Stärke der gesamten Flexibilitätsanforderungen die ihr Betrieb an Sie stellt auf einer Skala von 1-10. Eine "1" (äußerst linke Auswahl) gibt an, dass Sie die Flexibilitätsanforderungen Ihres Betriebes als gering erfahren. Eine "10" (äußerst rechte Auswahl) gibt an, dass Sie die Flexibilitätsanforderungen hoch einschätzen.**

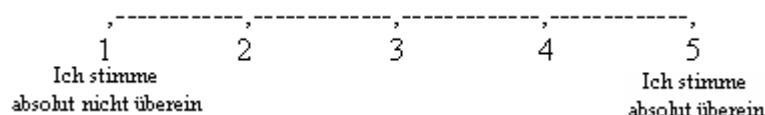


**Geben Sie im Folgenden an in wie weit Sie mit den Aussprachen übereinstimmen. Die 5 Antwortmöglichkeiten ermöglichen Antworten zwischen 1= "Ich stimme absolut nicht überein" (äußerst linke Auswahl) bis hin zu 5= "Ich stimme absolut überein" (äußerst rechte Auswahl).**

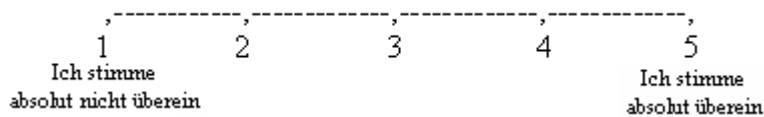
**43) Ich bin immer bereit es zuzugeben wenn ich einen Fehler gemacht habe.**



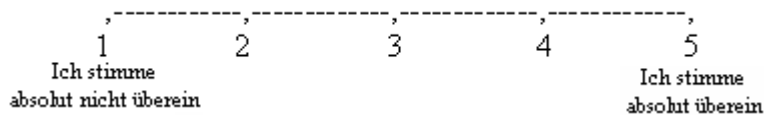
**44) Ich probiere immer das Anzuwenden was ich selbst predige.**



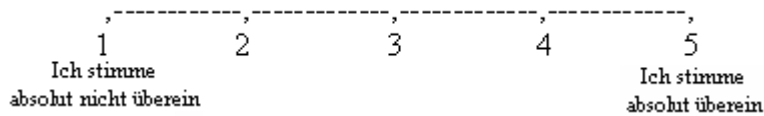
45) Mir stößt es nicht auf wenn ich um einen Gefallen gefragt werde.



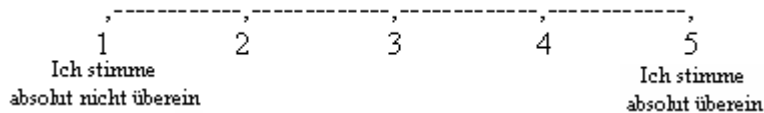
46) Ich bin niemals verärgert gewesen wenn Menschen Gedanken äußerten, die sich sehr unterscheiden von meinen Ansichten.



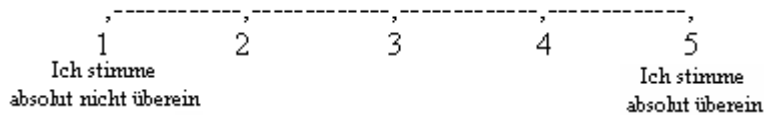
47) Ich habe niemals absichtlich etwas gesagt das die Gefühle eines Anderen verletzt.



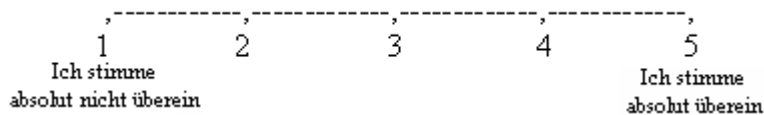
48) Hin und wieder neige ich dazu Klatsch und Tratsch zu verbreiten.



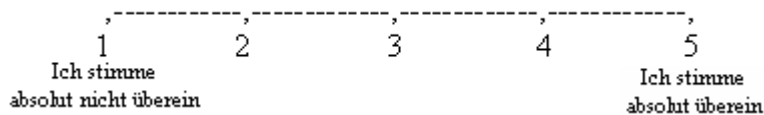
49) Es gab Anlässe bei denen ich jemanden ausgenutzt habe.



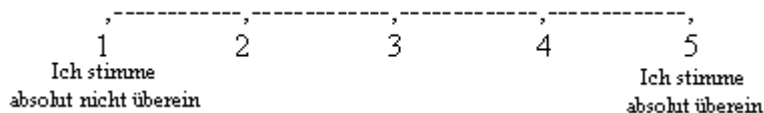
50) Manchmal versuche ich zu verlangen anstatt zu vergeben und vergessen.



51) Ab und zu habe ich geradezu darauf bestanden meinen eigenen Kopf durchzusetzen.

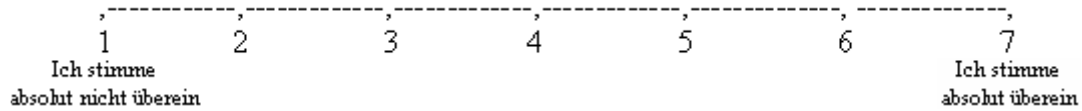


52) Es hat Anlässe gegeben bei denen ich am liebsten Sachen zertrümmert hätte.

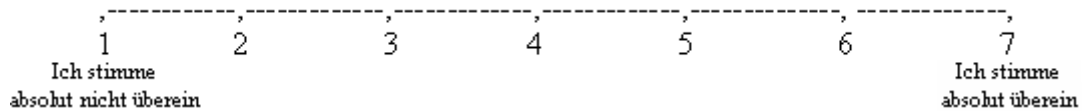


Geben Sie an in wie weit Sie mit den folgenden Aussprachen übereinstimmen. Die 7 Antwortmöglichkeiten ermöglichen Antworten zwischen 1= "Ich stimme absolut nicht überein" (äußerst linke Auswahl) bis hin zu 7= "Ich stimme absolut überein" (äußerst rechte Auswahl).

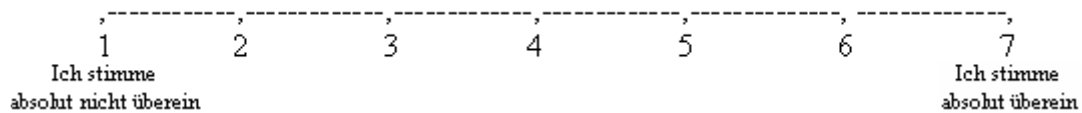
76) Ich bin fortwährend auf der Suche nach neuen Ideen die mein Leben verbessern können.



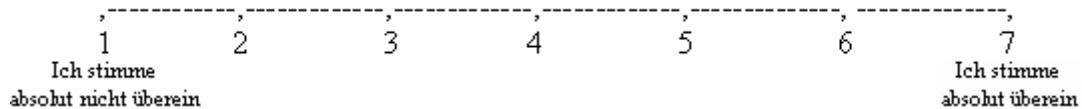
77) Ich fühle mich dazu angehalten die Gemeinschaft und möglicherweise auch die Welt zu verbessern.



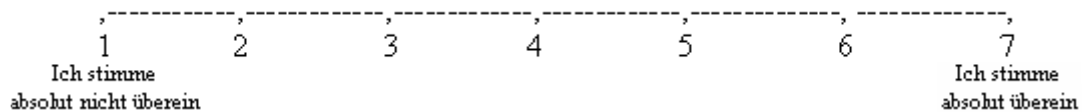
78) Egal wo ich mich befinde, ich bin immer eine starke Kraft wenn es darum geht etwas konstruktiv zu verändern.



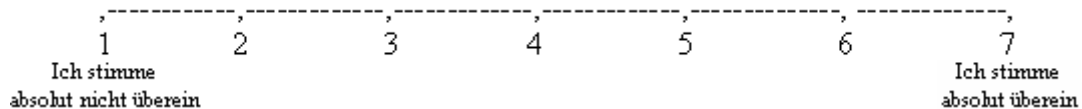
79) Ich habe Spaß daran mich Hindernissen zu stellen und Sie zu überwinden wenn es Um meine Ideen geht.



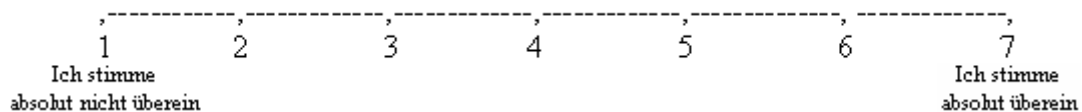
80) Es gibt nichts aufregenderes als zu sehen wie meine Ideen in die Realität umgesetzt werden.



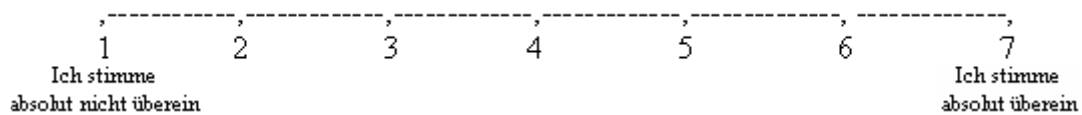
81) Wenn ich etwas sehe was mir nicht gefällt, besser ich es aus.



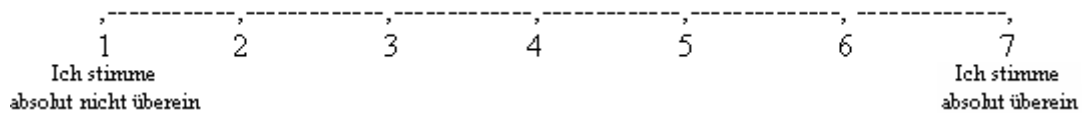
82) Ganz egal wie die Chancen stehen, wenn ich an etwas glaube, dann Sorge ich dafür das es auch umgesetzt wird.



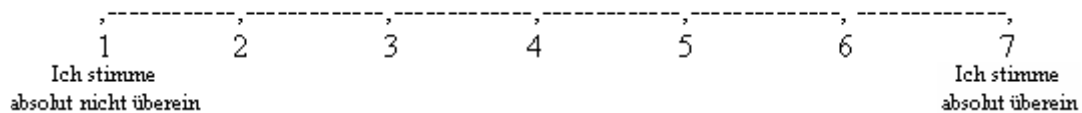
**83) Ich liebe es für meine Ideen zu kämpfen auch wenn andere sich mir entgegenstellen.**



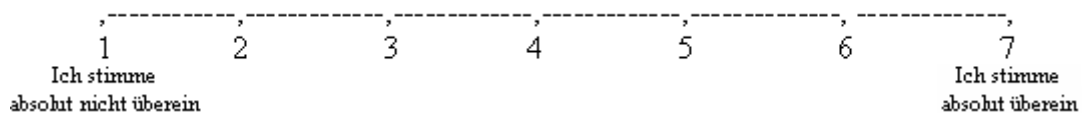
**84) Ich bin ein Meister im erkennen von Möglichkeiten.**



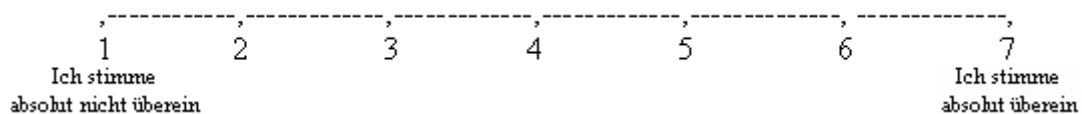
**85) Ich suche immer nach besseren Möglichkeiten um Dinge zu erledigen.**



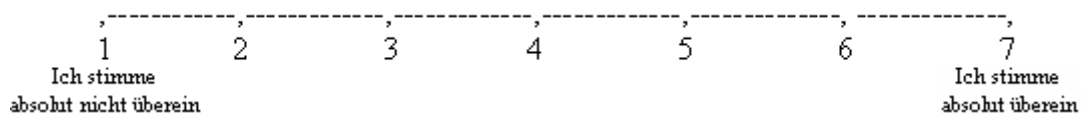
**86) Wenn ich an eine Idee glaube, dann hindert mich kein Hindernis an der Umsetzung.**



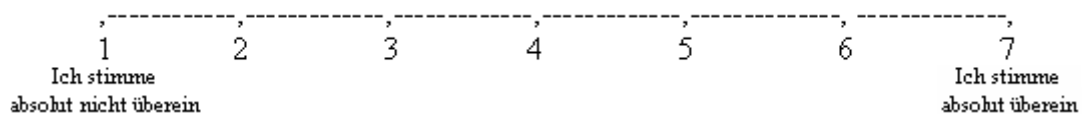
**87) Ich liebe es den gegenwärtigen Stand der Dinge in Frage zu stellen.**



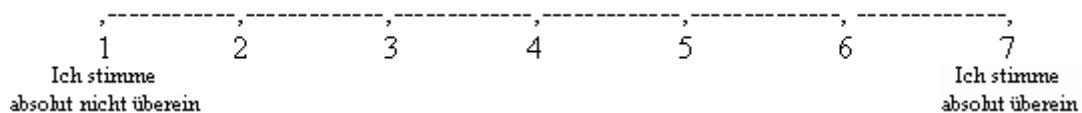
**88) Wenn ich ein Problem habe, gehe ich es frontal an.**



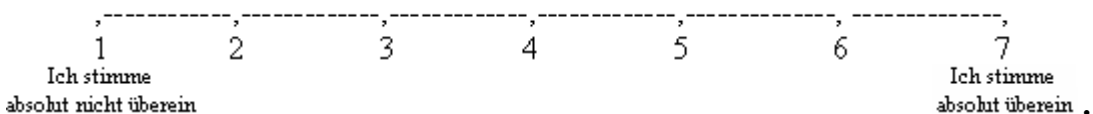
**89) Ich bin gut darin Probleme in Möglichkeiten umzuwandeln.**



**90) Ich kann eine Möglichkeit früh erkennen, lange bevor andere es können.**



**91) Wenn ich sehe das jemand in Schwierigkeiten ist, helfe ich aus so gut ich kann.**



Geben Sie an in wie weit Sie mit den folgenden Aussprachen übereinstimmen. Die 6 Antwortmöglichkeiten ermöglichen Antworten zwischen 1= "Ich stimme absolut nicht überein" (äußerst linke Auswahl) bis hin zu 6= "Ich stimme absolut überein" (äußerst rechte Auswahl).

92) Im Allgemeinen, erlaubt mir die Infrastruktur meines Wohnortes (z.B. Verkehrsanbindung, Wohnungsangebot, Kindergartenplätze) flexibel zu arbeiten.



93) Die Verkehrssituation (z.B. Hohe Staugefahr) hindert mich daran so flexibel zu arbeiten wie ich es mir wünschen würde.



94) Innerhalb meiner Umgebung gibt es Menschen (z.B. Familie, Freunde, Verwandte) die kein Verständnis dafür zeigen, dass ich meine Arbeit(szeit) flexibel plane.



95) Im Allgemeinen kann ich selbst entscheiden wann (Start und Endzeit) ich mit meinen Arbeitsaufgaben beginne.



96) Im Allgemeinen kann ich selbst entscheiden an welchem Ort ich arbeite.



97) Im Allgemeinen kann ich selbst entscheiden wie lange ich an etwas arbeite.



98) In meinem Job probiere ich oft verbesserte Arbeitsprozesse aus.



**99) Ich probiere oft die Art und Weise wie mein Job ausgeführt wird zu verändern um effektiver zu sein.**



**100) In meinem Arbeitsbereich oder meiner Abteilung stelle ich oft verbesserte Arbeitsprozesse vor.**



**101) Ich probiere oft neue Arbeitsmethoden einzuführen die effektiver sind für den Betrieb.**



**102) Ich versuche oft Regeln und Verfahren zu verändern wenn sie unproduktiv oder unsinnig sind.**



**103) Ich mache oft konstruktive Verbesserungsvorschläge um die Abläufe innerhalb des Betriebes zu verbessern.**



**104) Ich probiere oft einen fehlerhaften Arbeitsablauf oder eine fehlerhafte Handhabung zu korrigieren.**



**105) Ich probiere oft überflüssige und unnötige Arbeitsschritte zu eliminieren.**



**106) Ich probiere oft neue Lösungen für dringliche betriebliche Probleme durchzusetzen.**



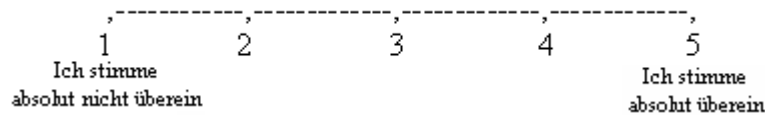
**107) Ich probiere oft neue Strukturen, Technologien oder Ansätze um die Leistungsfähigkeit zu verbessern.**



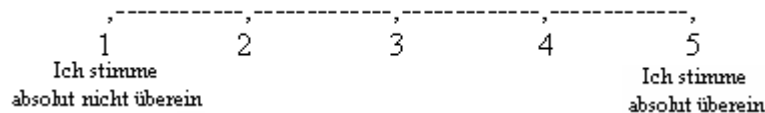
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**Geben Sie an in wie weit Sie mit den folgenden Aussprachen übereinstimmen. Die 5 Antwortmöglichkeiten ermöglichen Antworten zwischen 1= "Ich stimme absolut nicht überein" (äußerst linke Auswahl) bis hin zu 5= "Ich stimme absolut überein" (äußerst rechte Auswahl).**

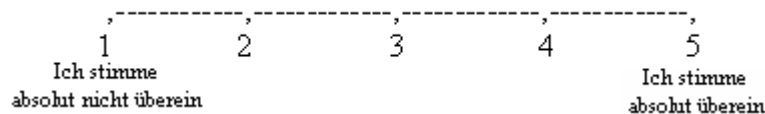
**108) Ich bin selbst zuständig für meine Berufslaufbahn.**



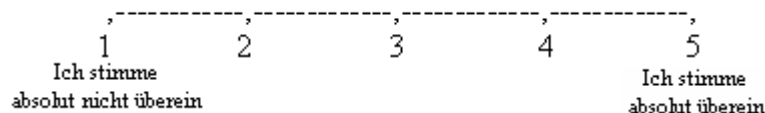
**109) Letztendlich verlasse ich mich auch mich selbst wenn es um das Voranbringen meiner Karriere geht.**



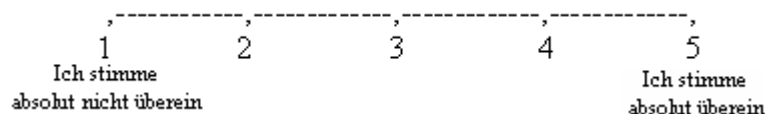
**110) Ich bin selbst verantwortlich für den Erfolg oder Misserfolg meiner Berufslaufbahn.**



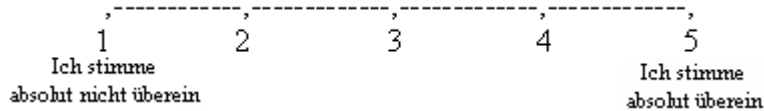
**111) Wenn es um meine Karriere geht, dann bin ich absolut "ich selbst".**



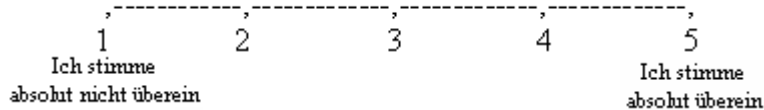
**112) Im Allgemeinen habe ich eine sehr unabhängige, selbst gesteuerte Berufslaufbahn.**



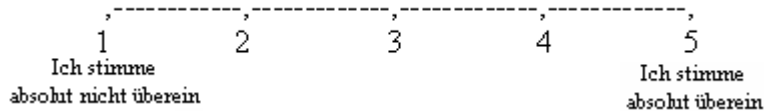
**113) Die Freiheit selbst über meine Berufslaufbahn zu entscheiden ist eines meiner wichtigsten Werte.**



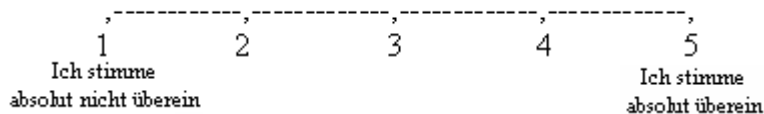
**114) Wenn mein Betrieb mich fragte etwas zu tun was meinen eigenen Vorstellungen nicht entsprach, folgte ich stets meinen eigenen Grundsätzen.**



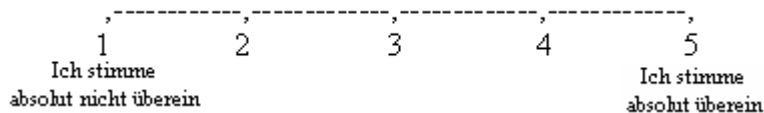
**115) In der Vergangenheit habe ich mich für meine eigenen Grundsätze entschieden wenn mein Betrieb etwas von mir verlangte mit dem ich nicht einverstanden war.**



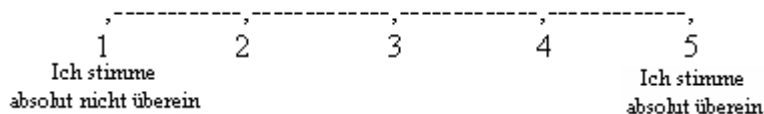
**116) Es ist für mich nicht wichtig was andere Leute über meine Karriereschritte denken.**



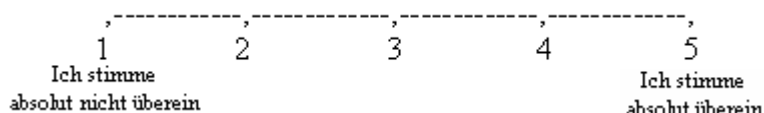
**117) Für mich ist es am wichtigsten, wie ich selbst meinen Karriere Erfolg wahrnehme – wie andere Personen meine Karriere wahrnehmen ist nicht wichtig.**



**118) Ich habe Spaß daran mit Menschen außerhalb meines Betriebs zu arbeiten.**

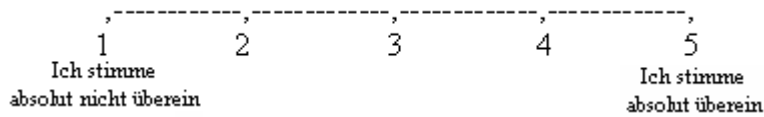


**119) Ich habe Spaß an Arbeitsaufgaben bei denen ich mit Menschen aus anderen Betrieben zusammenarbeite.**

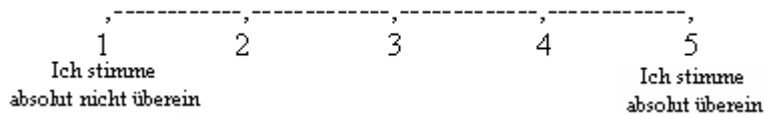




**120) Ich habe Spaß an Arbeitsaufgaben die das Arbeiten außerhalb meines Betriebes verlangen.**

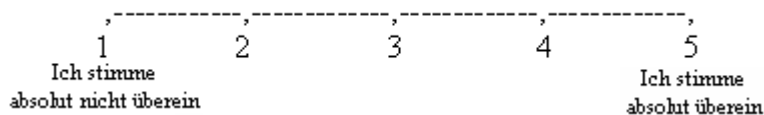


**121) Ich mag Arbeitsaufgaben die verlangen, dass ich außerhalb meiner Abteilung arbeite.**

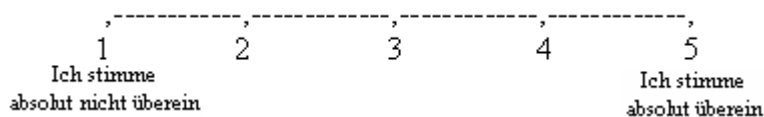


Bitte auf Seite 18 fortfahren!

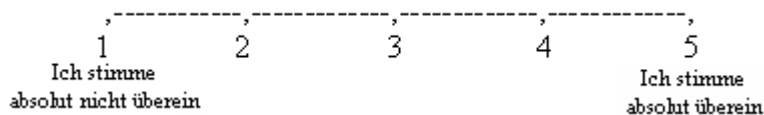
**122) Mir würde es gefallen an Projekten zu arbeiten bei denen Mitarbeiter von verschiedenen Betrieben mitwirken.**



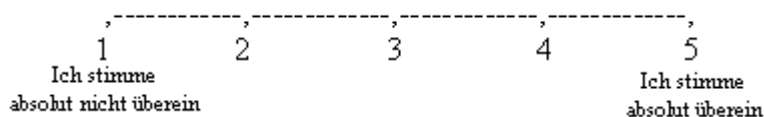
**123) In der Vergangenheit habe ich Möglichkeiten bedacht die es mir erlauben außerhalb meines Betriebs zu arbeiten.**



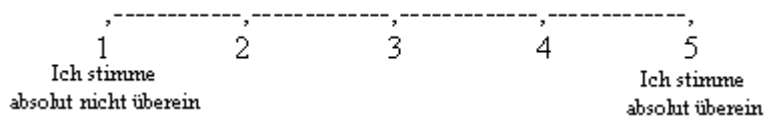
**124) Neue Erfahrungen und Situation finde ich aufregend.**



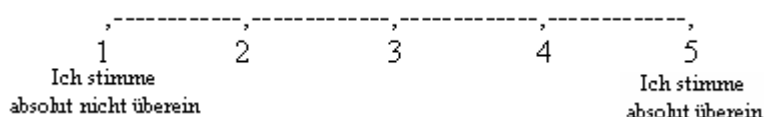
**125) Ich suche Arbeitsaufgaben die es mir erlauben etwas Neues zu lernen.**



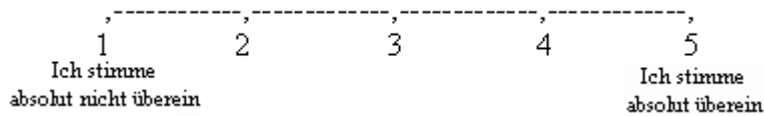
**126) Wenn mein Betrieb lebenslange Beschäftigung anbieten würde, dann würde ich mich niemals nach Arbeit in einem anderen Betrieb umsehen.**



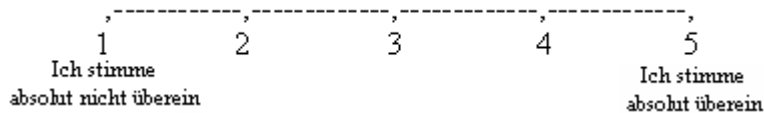
**127) Zu meiner Idealvorstellung einer Karriere würde gehören, dass ich nur für einen Betrieb arbeite.**



**128) Ich würde mir sehr verloren vorkommen wenn ich nicht für meinen Betrieb arbeiten könnte.**

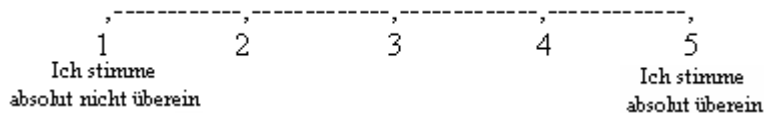


**129) Ich mag die Vorhersehbarkeit die entsteht wenn ich durchgehend für den Selben Betrieb arbeite.**



Bitte auf der nächsten Seite fortfahren!

**130) Ich ziehe es vor in dem Betrieb zu bleiben den ich kenne anstatt nach einer anderen Anstellung zu suchen.**

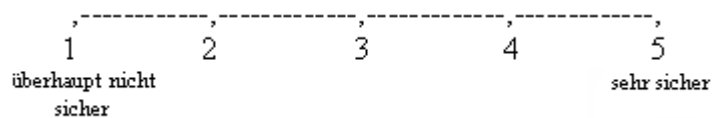


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**Bitte geben Sie im Folgenden an in wie sicher Sie sich fühlen bei der Ausführung der unten genannten Tätigkeiten. Die 5 Antwortmöglichkeiten ermöglichen Antworten zwischen "überhaupt nicht sicher" (äußerst linke Auswahl) bis hin zu "sehr sicher" (äußerst rechte Auswahl).**

**Die Frage "Wie sicher fühlen Sie sich wenn Sie..." geht immer vorab.**

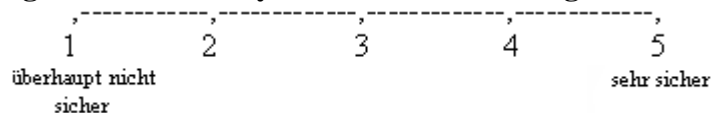
Beispiel: "Intensive Kundengespräche führen"



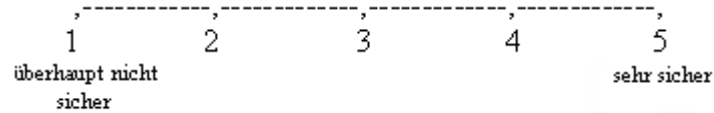
Wenn Sie sich bei intensiven Kundengesprächen sehr sicher fühlen wählen Sie "sehr sicher" (äußerst rechte Auswahl) als Antwort.

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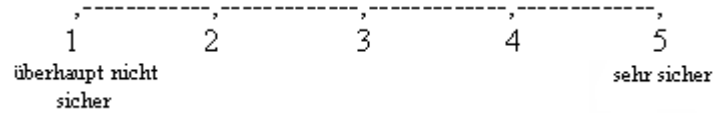
**131) ...ein langfristiges Problem analysieren um eine Lösung zu finden.**



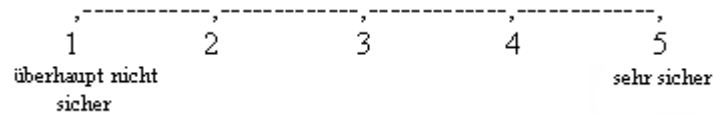
**132) ...ihren Arbeitsbereich vor Führungskräften repräsentieren.**



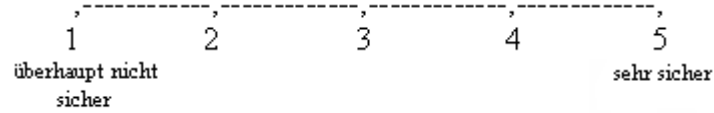
**133) ... neuen Arbeitsabläufe für Ihren Arbeitsbereich entwerfen.**



**134) ...Verbesserungsvorschläge für Ihren Arbeitsbereich gegenüber der Geschäftsleitung machen.**

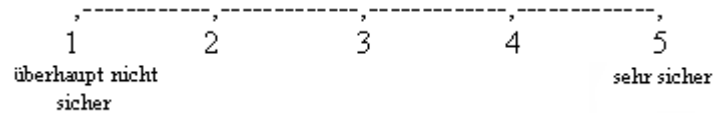


**135) ...einen Beitrag geben in einer Diskussionen über die betriebliche Strategiewaehrung.**

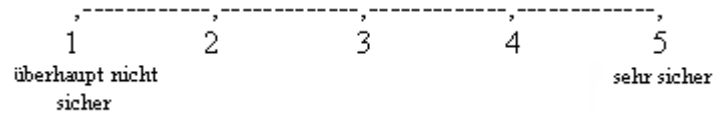


Bitte auf Seite 20 fortfahren!

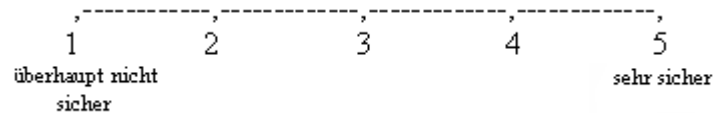
**136) ...einen Finanzierungsvorschlag (z.B. für ein Projekt, oder einen Auftrag) innerhalb ihres Arbeitsfeldes schreiben.**



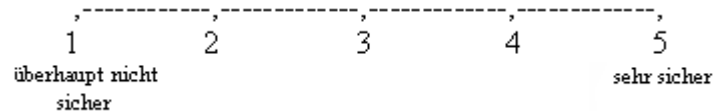
**137) ... dabei helfen Sollvorgaben/Ziele für Ihren Arbeitsbereich festzulegen.**



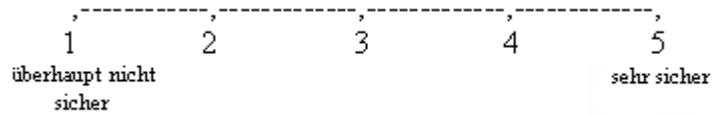
**138) ... Menschen außerhalb ihres Betriebes (z.B. Zulieferer, Kunden) kontaktieren um Probleme zu besprechen.**



**139) ... Informationen präsentieren vor einer Gruppe Arbeitskollegen.**



**140) ...Menschen aus anderen Abteilungen kontaktieren um vorzuschlagen gewisse Dinge anders zu handhaben.**



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**Bitte bewerten Sie im Folgenden die Stärke Ihrer persönlichen Flexibilität Fähigkeiten auf einer Skala von 1-10. Eine "1" (äußerst linke Auswahl) gibt an, dass Sie Ihre Flexibilität Fähigkeiten im Allgemeinen als gering einschätzen. Eine "10" (äußerst rechte Auswahl) gibt an, dass Sie Ihre Flexibilität Fähigkeiten als hoch einschätzen.**

**141) Bitte bewerten Sie jetzt die Stärke Ihrer persönlichen Flexibilität Fähigkeiten.**

