



MASTER THESIS

# The Role of HR in Stimulating Supervisors and Their Employees to Engage in Innovative Work Behavior

*A Case Study at an Insurance Company*

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## MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

As innovation has become increasingly important for organizations, much research has been done into the role of employees in the innovation process. This is also referred to as the Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) of the employees (e.g. de Jong & den Hartog, 2010; Scott & Bruce, 1994). Workfloor employees are particularly suitable in initiating such innovations, as they are in daily contact with the business operations and therefore know best what could be developed or improved (Bos-Nehles, Renkema, & Janssen, 2017).

According to previous research, there are many factors that could stimulate employees' IWB, such as the organizational climate, different HR policies and practices, and the supervisory support (e.g. Bos-Nehles, et al., 2017; de Jong & den Hartog, 2007; Janssen, 2005). Especially the latter plays an important role, as the supervisor is often the first point of contact for the employee and can motivate and stimulate employees to engage in IWB.

However, previous studies have not yet examined how these supervisors can be supported by the organization, so that they can better stimulate employees in their IWB. Therefore, this research aims to investigate how the supervisor can be supported by the organization by answering the following research question: *What is the role of HR in stimulating supervisors to support their employees' innovative work behavior?*

To answer this research question, a case study has been conducted at a Dutch insurance company. The results from the interviews and diary studies show that different HR policies and practices can increase the supervisors' ability, opportunity and motivation to support and stimulate their employees' innovative behaviors. In particular, workfloor engagement, training and coaching from the management can increase the supervisors' ability to support IWB. Moreover, both intrinsic motivation and non-financial rewards can enhance the supervisors' motivation to support IWB. Finally, the room for support, freedom to support, trust from management, and support from the organization positively influence the supervisors' opportunity to support employees' IWB. By using these HR policies and practices, the supervisors' ability, motivation and opportunity to support employees' innovative behaviors increase, resulting in greater supervisory support for IWB.

## ABSTRACT

**Purpose** – The purpose of this paper is to examine the role of HR in stimulating supervisors' ability, motivation and opportunity to support and stimulate the innovative work behavior of the employees.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The study uses an exploratory case study at a Dutch insurance company with a combination of interviews and diary studies.

**Findings** – The findings show that there are several supporting HR practices that influence the supervisors' ability, motivation and opportunity to support and stimulate the innovative work behavior of the employees.

**Practical implications** – The results of this research allow managers and HR professionals to understand how the supervisor can be supported by the organization in supporting and stimulating employees' innovative work behavior.

**Value** – Previous researchers have shown that both HR and the supervisor play an important role in supporting the employees' innovative work behavior. However, researchers have not yet investigated the role of HR for the supervisor. This research adds to this by presenting a model that specifies how HR can stimulate the supervisors' ability, motivation, and opportunity to support the innovative work behavior of employees.

**Keywords** – Innovative work behavior, HR practices, AMO-framework, supervisory support.

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## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, being able to innovate has become crucial for organizations, as it allows them to create and maintain competitive advantages and it, therefore, contributes to organizational success (Hammond, Neff, Farr, Schwall, & Zhao, 2011). As a result, much research has been done into the role of the individual employee in innovations (e.g. de Jong & den Hartog, 2010; Hoyrup, 2010; Scott & Bruce, 1994). In particular, previous studies have investigated how employees can contribute to innovations through innovative work behavior (IWB) (e.g. Scott & Bruce, 1994), which can be defined as “an individual’s behavior that aims to achieve the initiation and intentional introduction of new and useful ideas, processes, products, or procedures” (de Jong & den Hartog, 2010). Such behaviors can lead to employee-driven innovations, which are ideas, products, and processes that are generated and implemented by employees who are not required to participate in such activities, as it is not part of their primary job (Hoyrup, 2010). Work-floor employees are particularly suitable in initiating such innovations, as they are in frequent contact with daily organizational processes and products, and therefore know best what could be improved or developed (Bos-Nehles, Renkema, & Janssen, 2017).

Previous studies on IWB have investigated a wide array of factors that could stimulate and influence such behaviors. First, different studies have explored the role of the organizational climate in stimulating employees’ innovative behaviors. According to these studies, the innovative climate within the organization can enhance employees’ IWB as it encourages employees to be innovative and it provides the resources and support employees need to engage in IWB (Scott & Bruce, 1994; Heffernan, Harney, Cafferkey, & Dundon, 2016; Bos-Nehles & Veenendaal, 2017). Second, much research has been done into the role of different HR practices in stimulating employees’ IWB. Numerous studies found that different HR practices can positively or negatively influence an employees’ innovative behaviors. For example, Bos-Nehles et al. (2017) and Bos-Nehles & Veenendaal (2017) found that practices such as training & development, autonomy, information sharing, rewards and feedback can increase an employees’ engagement in IWB. However, Bos-Nehles et al. (2017) and Veenendaal & Bondarouk (2015) find that practices such as excess job demands and compensation can negatively influence IWB. Finally, researchers have investigated the role of supervisors in supporting and enhancing employees’ innovative behaviors (e.g. Janssen, 2005; de Jong & den Hartog, 2007; de Jong & den Hartog, 2010; Renkema, Meijerink, & Bondarouk, 2018). In this paper, we refer to supervisors as the first-level manager that is in

direct contact with the employees, often also referred to as the line manager. According to different studies, these supervisors play a crucial role in IWB as they can stimulate employees to engage in IWB, motivate those who develop new ideas, and support employees who have provided new ideas (e.g. de Jong & den Hartog, 2007; Bos-Nehles, Bondarouk, & Nijenhuis, 2017). Moreover, research has shown that supervisors act as an ‘intermediary’ for IWB, as they filter and transfer employees’ ideas to higher-level actors in the organization (Janssen, 2005; Renkema, et al., 2018). There are different theories that can explain these roles of the supervisor in IWB. For example, Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS) theory argues that employees who feel supported by their supervisors will reciprocate by higher commitment and extrarole behaviors, such as innovation (Yang, Hao, & Song, 2020). Supervisors can support employees by giving employees autonomy or by allowing them to make important decisions, which is also positively related to IWB (de Jong & den Hartog, 2010). However, according to leader-member exchange (LMX) theory, the extent to which supervisors can support employees is influenced by the relationship between the supervisor and employee and the extent to which supervisors support and respect employees ideas (Scott & Bruce, 1994; Janssen, 2005; Yuan & Woodman, 2010).

Hence, according to previous literature, the extent to which employees can and will engage in IWB is strongly influenced by their supervisors. Nevertheless, although studies show how employees’ IWB can be stimulated and how supervisors play a role in this, previous studies have not yet investigated how these supervisors can be supported by the organization, so that they will become better able to support and stimulate employees engagement in IWB. In particular, little is known about how different HR policies and practices can support the supervisors in improving and enhancing their employees’ IWB. As previous studies already found that different HR practices can support employees in IWB (e.g. Bos-Nehles et al., 2017; Bos-Nehles & Veenendaal, 2017), it may be expected that those HR policies and practices can form a similar role for supervisors as such practices might support supervisors in enhancing and stimulating their employees’ IWB. For example, the role training & development has for employees in increasing their knowledge and skills for IWB (e.g. Bos-Nehles et al., 2017) may be similar for supervisors, as training & development will likely increase the supervisors’ skills and knowledge that allow them to successfully support and motivate their subordinates’ innovative behaviors. Hence, gaining more knowledge on how different HR policies and practices can support supervisors in stimulating their employees’ IWB is of great importance, as it will allow organizations to motivate and



stimulate their supervisors in supporting their subordinates' innovative behaviors. For this reason, the aim of this research is to investigate the role of different HR policies and practices in supporting and stimulating supervisors, so that these supervisors will become better able at supporting and stimulating their employees' IWB. As such, we aim to answer the following research question: *What is the role of HR policies and practices in stimulating supervisors to support their employees' innovative work behavior?* To do so, we draw upon the AMO-model, which argues that HR policies and practices can enhance people's ability, motivation or opportunity (Marin-Garcia & Tomas, 2016). By using the AMO-model, we can distinguish between those HR policies and practices that stimulate the supervisors' ability, motivation or opportunity to stimulate and support their employees' IWB.

By answering this research question, this study offers three contributions to the existing literature on HR and IWB. First, the results of the study show how organizations facilitate and support the effectiveness of supervisors in performing HRM tasks and activities, as described in the people management literature (e.g. Knies & Leisink, 2014). Second, by drawing upon the AMO-model, this study uncovers the support that supervisors need to increase their ability, motivation, and opportunity to stimulate their employees' IWB. Lastly, this paper empirically supports previous literature on the role of supervisors in IWB. In addition, this research adds to the practice as gaining knowledge on the role of HR policies and practices in supporting supervisors will give organizations relevant insights into how they can support their supervisors in stimulating employees' IWB.

The structure of this paper is as follows. First, a theoretical background to employees' innovative work behaviors and the roles of HR and supervisors in stimulating this will be provided. Based on this, a theoretical framework will be established. Next, the methods used in this study will be described, which will be followed by the results. To conclude, the implications and limitations of this study will be discussed.

## THEORY

### Innovative Work Behavior

Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) is a construct that has been defined in numerous ways by different researchers. For example, Yuan and Woodman (2010) define IWB as “an employee’s intentional introduction or application of new ideas, products, processes, and procedures to his or her work role, work unit, or organization”. Kleysen and Street (2001) point out that IWB should aim to produce “beneficial novelty”, which includes the development of new products, ideas, or technologies; changes in administrative procedures; or the application of new ideas and technologies to work processes to significantly enhance their efficiency and effectiveness. This organizational usefulness is also acknowledged by de Jong & den Hartog (2010), who define IWB as the “individual’s behavior that aims to achieve the initiation and intentional introduction (within a work role, group or organization) of new and useful ideas, processes, products, or procedures” (de Jong & den Hartog, 2010, p. 2). Furthermore, Hoyrup (2010) denotes that IWB should be voluntary, suggesting that participating in IWB lies outside the boundaries of the employees’ primary job responsibilities. Moreover, according to Hoyrup (2010), these innovations can take on any level of intensity - they can be both radical and incremental.

In this paper, we use a combination of the aforementioned definitions. As such, we view IWB as *all employees’ behaviors aimed at the generation, introduction, and implementation of new ideas, products, processes, and procedures that are outside the employee’s general job responsibilities, and of benefit to the organization.*

Previous literature found that IWB is a multidimensional construct (e.g. de Jong & den Hartog, 2010; Scott & Bruce, 1994). However, different studies have identified different stages. For example, Scott & Bruce (1994) distinguish between three stages. In the first stage, the employee recognizes the problem and generates the idea. After this, the individual seeks sponsors for his or her idea and builds a coalition of supporters. In the final stage, the individual produces a prototype of the idea. Dorenbosch, van Engen, and Verhagen (2005) identified two main stages: creativity-oriented work behavior and implementation-oriented work behavior. In the creativity-oriented stage, ideas are being generated, and in the implementation-oriented stage, these ideas are developed and implemented. De Jong and den Hartog (2010) and Messmann and Mulder (2012) distinguish between four dimensions of IWB: idea exploration, idea generation, idea championing, and idea realization. During the

idea exploration stage, the employee looks for problems in the current work context and identifies potential opportunities for change and improvement. After this, the employee generates new ideas that provide a solution to these problems. During the idea championing stage, the employee promotes his or her idea to others in the organization and builds a coalition with those who support the idea. The final stage, idea implementation, involves experimenting with the idea, creating a prototype of the idea, and finally implementing the idea into the organization. Because idea exploration and idea generation are closely related, in this paper we choose to combine the two into one stage. Therefore, we distinguish between three stages: idea generation, idea promotion, and idea implementation. These three stages are based on those introduced by Scott and Bruce (1994), de Jong and den Hartog (2010) and Massmann and Mulder (2012). In the idea generation phase, the employee recognizes problems or opportunities for improvement and creates ideas that provide a solution to these problems. In the idea championing phase, the employee promotes his or her ideas, finds support from others within the organization, and forms a coalition with those who support the idea. In the idea implementation phase, the idea is being tested, improved and implemented into the organization.

Now that we have described IWB and identified the different stages it consists of, we can continue to further elaborate on the role of the supervisor in IWB.

### **The role of supervisors in IWB**

According to previous studies, supervisors are key actors in stimulating and supporting employees in their IWB (e.g. de Jong & den Hartog, 2007; Yuan & Woodman, 2010; Bos-Nehles, Bondarouk, & Nijenhuis, 2017; Janssen, 2005). According to different studies, supervisors can motivate and encourage employees to engage in IWB and support employees with the development and implementation of their ideas (Yuan & Woodman, 2010; Bos-Nehles, Bondarouk, & Nijenhuis, 2017). Furthermore, supervisors act as an ‘intermediary’ in IWB, as they filter and select which employees’ ideas will be further developed and implemented, and transfer these selected ideas to actors higher in the organizational hierarchy (Janssen, 2005; Renkema, et al, 2018). However, the extent to which supervisors can support and stimulate employees in their IWB is influenced by the relationship between the supervisor and employee (e.g. Yuan & Woodman, 2010), and the responses of the supervisor to the employee’s ideas, as employees are more likely to engage in IWB when they perceive these responses as supportive and respectful (Janssen, 2005). There are several theories that can

explain these roles of the supervisor in IWB. In particular, Perceived Supervisor Support (PSS) and Perceived Organizational Support (POS) theory can explain the effects of the supervisor's support on IWB, and Leader Member Exchange (LMX) theory can explain the influence of the supervisor – employee relationship.

### *Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS)*

Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS) can be defined as the employee's "general views concerning the degree to which supervisors value their contributions and care about their well-being" (Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, & Rhoades, 2002, p. 565). This PSS stems from Perceived Organizational Support (POS) theory, which argues that an employee who feels supported by the organization will reciprocate by higher commitment and engagement (Eisenberger, Hutington, Hutchingson, & Sowa, 1986; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). According to POS theory, high levels of organizational support create feelings of obligation, which results in extrarole activities and behaviors that support organizational goals (Wayne, et al, 1997). As supervisors are often viewed as representatives of the organization, PSS has similar effects on employee's engagement and commitment as POS (Eisenberger et al, 2002). Employees' perception that the organization values their contribution and commitment lead them to believe that supervisors, as representatives of this organization, will value this too (Eisenberger et al, 2002). As a result, when employees receive favorable support from the supervisor – for example in terms of rewards, autonomy and resources – they will reciprocate the favor by contributing to organizational goals such as innovation (Yang et al., 2020). Moreover, this perceived supervisory support in terms of resources, autonomy and other supporting factors also help employees in generating and developing new ideas and therefore also positively influence employees' IWB (Skerlavaj, Cerne, & Dysvik, 2014).

### *Leader-member exchange*

Leader-member exchange (LMX) theory is another theory that explains the role of supervisors in stimulating IWB. According to LMX theory, different types of relationships between leaders and their subordinates exist. These relationships are characterized by effort, resources, information, and emotional support (Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne, 1997). When this relationship between the supervisor and employee is of high-quality, the employee may

receive rewards such as greater amount of resources, decision-making involvement, freedom, and authority, which in return results in greater loyalty and commitment (Basu & Green, 1997; Wang, Fang, Qureshi, & Janssen, 2015). Due to this increased loyalty and commitment, employees are more likely to be motivated to engage in IWB (Basu & Green, 1997).

Furthermore, since developing innovative ideas require additional resources and freedom at work, a high-quality relationship increases the employee's ability to engage in IWB (Scott & Bruce, 1994; Yuan & Woodman, 2010). As such, the extent to which supervisors can stimulate and support employees in their IWB depends on the relationship between the supervisor and the employee. (e.g. Basu & Green, 1997; Scott & Bruce, 1994; Yuan & Woodman, 2010).

Concluding, supervisors play a crucial role in stimulating and supporting employees' IWB. This supporting role of the supervisor can be explained by Perceived Supervisory Support (PSS) theory, which argues that when employees perceive their supervisor as supportive, they will reciprocate through commitment and extrarole activities such as innovative behaviors (e.g. Eisenberger et al., 2002; Yang et al., 2018). However, the extent to which supervisors can stimulate employees in their IWB depends on the relationship between the supervisor and the employee (Janssen, 2005; Reuvers et al., 2008; Sherf, Tangirala, Venkataramani, 2017; Yuan & Woodman, 2010), which is explained in Leader Member Exchange (LMX) theory.

Although these theories explain why some supervisors are more likely to succeed at taking employees' ideas into consideration than others, they do not explain how the organization can stimulate supervisors to support their employees' innovative ideas. Therefore, it is important to look beyond the previously mentioned theories in order to explain how supervisors can be stimulated by the organization in supporting their employees' IWB. One way through which an organization may be able to stimulate their supervisors in supporting their employees' IWB is through the organization's HR policies and practices. Therefore, in the next section, we will elaborate on the role of HR policies and practices in IWB.

### **The role of HR policies and practices in IWB**

In the previous section, we identified the crucial role supervisors play in supporting employees in their IWB. However, little is still known about how these supervisors can be supported by the organization, even though they need this support to improve their ability to

stimulate their employees' innovative behavior. As previously highlighted, it can be expected that HR policies and practices can provide this support. Therefore, this section elaborates on the role of different HR policies and practices in IWB.

#### *The role of HR in stimulating employees' IWB*

Although previous studies have not yet considered the role of HR for the supervisor in IWB, much research has been done into the role of HR in stimulating employees to engage in IWB (e.g. Bos-Nehles, et al., 2017; Prieto & Pérez-Santana, 2013). According to previous literature, these HR policies and practices have the potential to stimulate employees to engage in IWB, as such practices can signal employees that IWB is valued by the organization (Abstein & Spieth, 2014; Bos-Nehles & Veenendaal, 2017). Furthermore, such policies and practices can be used to identify, develop, and reward employees that engage in IWB (Bos-Nehles & Veenendaal, 2017). Previous literature have identified numerous HR practices that can affect an employee's IWB (e.g. Bos-Nehles, et al., 2017; Bos-Nehles & Veenendaal, 2017; Prieto & Pérez-Santana, 2013). For example, previous studies found that rewards can have both a positive and negative effect on an employee's IWB, as it can either pressure employees to engage in IWB (negative effect), or build relationships between the employer and employee (positive effect) (Bos-Nehles, et al., 2017; Sanders, Moorkamp, Torka, Groeneveld & Groeneveld, 2010). Other studies found that training and development can help employees, as training and development enhances relationships between employers and employees and improves an employee's teamwork skills, creative work skills, and general job knowledge and skills, which can then be used to engage in IWB (Prieto & Pérez-Santana, 2013). Other HR policies and practices that were found to affect an employee's IWB are job autonomy, job complexity, feedback, information sharing and organizational support (Bos-Nehles, et al., 2017; Bos-Nehles & Veenendaal, 2017; Prieto & Pérez-Santana, 2013)

#### *The role of HR for the supervisor in stimulating their employees' IWB*

It can be expected that HR can have similar effects for supervisors when supporting their employees' IWB. Drawing from social exchange theory, individuals are interested in participating and investing in rewarding relationships, after which they become obliged to return benefits or favors (Kehoe & Wright, 2013). HR policies and practices also stimulate such social exchanges, as such policies and practices signal a willingness to invest in individuals as well as a recognition of the individual's commitment and contributions to the

organization (Gould-Williams, 2007). This is particularly the case for ‘high commitment’ HR practices, which include recruitment and selection, job design, and incentive practices that focus on developing employees’ long-term investment in the organization (McClean & Collins, 2011). Hence, based on social exchange theory, when supervisors receive signals through HR practices that support IWB, it can be expected that they will become more likely to support and stimulate employees in their IWB. For example, when the supervisor receives rewards for supporting employees’ IWB, this supervisor may return the favor by actually supporting and stimulating employee IWB. Furthermore, as with employees, training and development might increase the supervisor’s knowledge and skills with regard to providing support for IWB. As such, it can be expected that training and development also improves supervisor support for employees’ IWB. However, previous research has not yet investigated such roles of different HR policies and practices for supporting supervisors. As such, the previously mentioned examples have yet to be researched. Therefore, the aim of this study is to further investigate the role of such HR policies and practices in supporting supervisors when stimulating their employees’ IWB.

Next to this role of HR for the supervisor in supporting IWB, supervisors also play an important role in HR. In particular, supervisors are increasingly responsible for the implementation of HR policies and practices (e.g. Bos-Nehles, van Riemsdijk, & Looise, 2013). As previously highlighted, some of these HR policies and practices can influence an employee’s engagement in IWB. As such, the supervisor not only plays an important role in stimulating their employees to engage in IWB, but also to support these employees through the implementation of HR policies and practices that can help the employees in engaging in IWB. However, the extent to which supervisors can implement these HR policies and practices are influenced by their ability, motivation, and opportunities (AMO) to implement such practices (Bos-Nehles et al., 2013). Therefore, the extent to which employees are able to engage in IWB is also influenced by the AMO of the supervisors.

#### *The supervisor’s AMO to explain their role in HR*

According to Bos-Nehles, et al. (2013), the success of an organization’s HRM depends not only on the presence of effective policies and practices, but also on the implementation of these policies and practices. Moreover, previous literature highlights that an organization’s supervisors are increasingly responsible for this implementation of HR practices (e.g. Alfes, Truss, Soane, Rees, & Gatenby; 2013; Shipton, Sanders, Atkinson, Frenkel, 2016). However,

the extent to which these line managers are able to implement HR policies and practices depends on their ability, motivation, and opportunities (AMO) (Bos-Nehles, et al., 2013).

*Ability* can be defined as “an acquired or natural capacity that enables an individual to perform a particular task successfully” (Martin-Garcia & Martinez Tomas, 2016). Hence, it refers to the skills, experience and knowledge needed. In this case, ability refers to the competences needed by the line manager to implement HR policies and practices on the work floor. In particular, the line manager needs relevant skills and knowledge of HR to successfully implement HR practices, which can be developed through training (Bos-Nehles, et al., 2013).

*Motivation* relates to the extent to which an individual wants to engage in a particular task (Martin-Garcia & Martinez Tomas, 2016). As such, the effectiveness of the implementation of HR practices is influenced by the motivation line managers have to carry out HR responsibilities (Bos-Nehles, Trullen, & Bondarouk, 2018). According to previous literature, line managers’ motivation to perform HR tasks can be stimulated by financial incentives such as rewards (Martin-Garcia & Martinez Tomas, 2016) or the extent to which the HR role is included in line manager’s performance appraisal (Bos-Nehles, et al., 2013).

*Opportunity* can be defined as the circumstances that allow to perform a task (Martin-Garcia & Martinez Tomas, 2016). When line managers are not offered the opportunity to perform HR work, they will not be able to do so (Bos-Nehles, et al., 2018). The opportunity to implement HR practices can be improved through time availability, support from HR professionals, and clear HR policies and procedures (Bos-Nehles, et al., 2013; Bos-Nehles, et al., 2018).

Thus, the extent to which supervisors can support their employees in engaging in IWB is partly determined by their ability, motivation, and opportunity to implement HR practices that can stimulate the employee’s IWB. These can be improved through ability- motivation- and opportunity-enhancing HR practices, such as training (ability-enhancing), rewards (motivation-enhancing), and support (opportunity-enhancing).

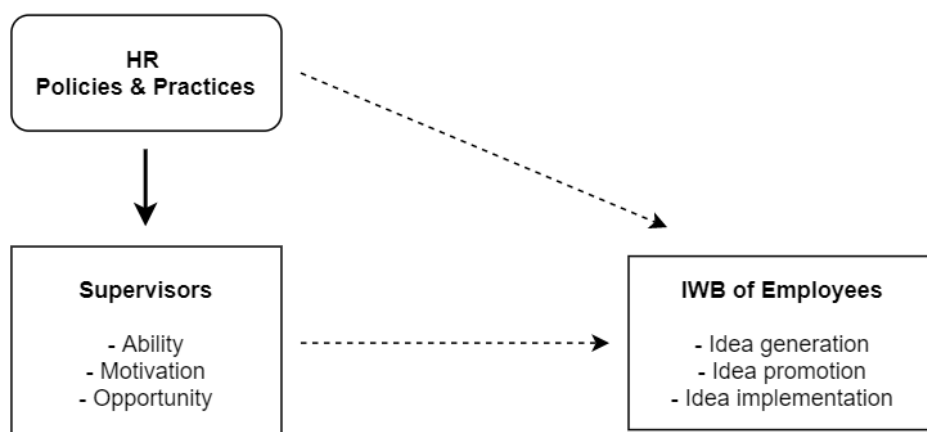
## **Research framework**

Concluding, previous research has shown that supervisors plays a crucial role in supporting and stimulating employees in their IWB (e.g. Scott & Bruce, 1994; de Jong & den Hartog,



2007). In particular, according to perceived supervisory support (POS) theory, the extent to which the employee feels supported by the supervisor determines the extent to which the employee is willing to engage in extrarole activities such as IWB (Eisenberger et al., 2002). In addition, the relationship between the supervisor and employee plays an important role for the employees' innovative behaviors too (e.g. Yuan & Woodman, 2010). Although these factors explain why some supervisors are better able at stimulating their employees' ideas than others, they do not explain how these supervisors can be supported by the organization. One way through which the organization can support their supervisors in stimulating the employees' IWB is through their HR policies and practices. Previous literature already recognized the importance of HR policies and practices for the employee, as such policies and practices can stimulate employees to engage in IWB and support those employees that come up with new ideas (Bos-Nehles, et al., 2017). Moreover, previous studies have highlighted that supervisors play an important role in the implementation of HR practices within the organization. However, the extent to which they can implement such practices depends on their ability, motivation, and opportunity (AMO) to implement these practices (Bos-Nehles et al., 2013). Although previous studies have investigated the role of HR in stimulating IWB and the role of the supervisor in implementing HR policies and practices, researchers have not yet focused on the role of such HR policies and practices for the supervisor. Gaining insights into whether and how such HR policies and practices can support the supervisor in stimulating their employees' IWB is important, as it can allow organizations to better understand how they can support their supervisors, so that they can become better at supporting the employees' IWB. To investigate this role of HR, we will draw upon the following research framework:

**Figure 1: Research Framework**



## METHODOLOGY

### Research design

To investigate the role of HR in supporting leaders in enhancing their employees' IWB, an exploratory case study was conducted. An exploratory case study allows us to extend our understanding of complex social phenomena (Ogawa & Malen, 1991; Yin, 2003).

Furthermore, case studies allow for investigating a phenomenon in its real-life context (Yin, 2003). Moreover, since case studies focus on an entire real-life context instead of only a few variables, this method offers a rich and detailed explanation of all the factors involved (Ogawa & Malen, 1991; Yin, 2003). Exploratory case studies are particularly suitable when there is a lack of detailed previous research and/or hypotheses that can be tested, as exploratory case studies analyze the phenomenon studied in the real-life context (Mills, Durepos, & Wiebe, 2010). Since previous research have not yet investigated the role of HR for the supervisor in stimulating employees' IWB, and it is not yet known which HR policies and practices specifically can provide support to the supervisor, conducting an exploratory case study allows us to investigate all potential roles HR could play in providing support to supervisors in stimulating their employees' IWB. Furthermore, an exploratory case study will allow us to gain a rich and detailed understanding of all possible roles HR could play in stimulating supervisors in IWB. Moreover, an exploratory case study provides us with the opportunity to focus on the real-life context, which increases the practical relevance of this study. In the next section, the case used in this study will be introduced.

### The Case

To assure that the case chosen for this study fits the aim of the research, a checklist of criteria that the company needs to meet was established:

- I. The company needs to be at least medium-sized (> 50 employees), so that enough research participants can be found within different hierarchical levels.
- II. The company's structure needs to be hierarchical, meaning that it needs to have supervisors who oversee the employees and an HR department that oversees the supervisors - there cannot be a self-leading structure, as this does not allow us to study the role of HR for the supervisor.

- III. The company needs to have a climate that allows for innovative behaviors from employees – when there is no room for innovations initiated by employees, we cannot study the role of the supervisor and HR in stimulating such innovations.

Next, a company was chosen based on the aforementioned criteria. The company selected is an insurance company from the Netherlands, in this research referred to as “Insurance Company”. Insurance Company’s goal is to help each other by sharing risks that you cannot or do not want to bear alone. The company’s structure combines both centralized and decentralized structures, as Insurance Company is divided into several regions, but also has a centralized headquarters. Furthermore, each region operates according to a hierarchical structure with its own board of directors, managers, and supervisors to oversee the employees. Moreover, each region has its own functional areas such as HR, finance, and marketing. In total, the insurance company has between 2,000 and 3,000 employees.

Insurance Company is rapidly changing from one that only offers insurances into one that also provides services and products that will help their customers in preventing and limiting their risks. To conform to these new strategies, the company’s employees need to change as well. In particular, they need to be more flexible, willing to change, and innovative. Therefore, the company allows for innovations from employees, suggesting that their employees are likely to be engaging in IWB. The company also acknowledges the importance of supervisors in stimulating IWB. However, this is still perceived as challenging by the supervisors, as they are unaware of how they can stimulate their workers in developing new ideas, or how they can benefit from supporting employees’ IWB. Therefore, the company aims to gain insights into how they can stimulate supervisors to oversee and stimulate IWB through HR.

### **Data collection methods**

Data was collected at one of Insurance Company’s regional divisions in the period between April 2020 and July 2020. At this regional division, multiple data sources were used for the study, including interviews, diary studies, and different Insurance Company documents and reports. Interviews were conducted with employees, their supervisors, the managers, and the HR manager. The diary studies were only executed by the supervisors and managers who were in direct contact with the employees. By using multiple data collection methods –

interviews and diary studies – and multiple data sources – individuals from different levels in the organizational hierarchy – triangulation was ensured (Patton, 1999). By achieving triangulation, reliability and validity of this research were also ensured, as concepts were tested across different groups and through different methods (Golafshani, 2003).

### *Interviews*

At Insurance Company, 17 in-depth interviews were conducted with different types of interviewees including the HR manager, other managers, supervisors, and employees. Table 1 explains the reasoning behind the selection of different types of interviewees. Interviews were conducted at four different divisions within the company: Business Operations, Business Insurances, Private Insurances, and Fire Insurances. Within each of these divisions, interviews were conducted with one manager, one supervisor and several employees. The interviewed employees are the ones directly operating at the workfloor, and have various tasks, such as selling new insurance policies, maintaining the current customer base, handling claims, and/or performing administrative tasks. Table 2 provides an overview of all interviews that were conducted. The total amount of interviews was determined based on data saturation. When data saturation is achieved, depth of information is achieved. This means that further data collection will not provide additional information and will not lead to new insights, making additional data collection unnecessary (Fusch & Ness, 2015). As such, saturation was achieved when the interviews no longer provided us with new information. By achieving data saturation, the validity of this study was improved (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Prior to the interviews, an interview protocol was established, in which the interview questions were already described. The interview protocols can be found in Appendix A. In addition to these questions, probing techniques were used to ask for further explanations and clarifications. As such, the interview structure can be viewed as semi-structured.

During the interviews with the employees, questions about their innovative behaviors and the supervisory support in this were asked. For example, it was asked how often they provided new ideas, and how they perceived their supervisor's support in this. During the interviews with the supervisors, questions were asked about their role in supporting employees' innovative behaviors and about the extent to which the company assisted them in providing such support. For example, it was asked how they think they can better support employees in generating and developing innovative ideas, and to what extent different HR

practices could support them in becoming better able to stimulate and support employees' IWB.

**Table 1: Interview types and reasoning**

Type of interviewee	Reasoning
<b>HR Manager</b>	To gain insights into the current HR practices employed by the organization to stimulate and support IWB from the employees, and the HR practices employed to support the supervisors in stimulating their employees' IWB.
<b>Managers</b>	To gain insights into the extent to which employees engage in IWB at the organization, and to gain more insights into the role supervisors play in this and how they are supported by the organization and managers.
<b>Supervisors</b>	To gain insights into the role of the supervisors in stimulating and supporting IWB, and to gain a better understanding of how they feel supported by the organization and HR.
<b>Employees</b>	To gain insights from the workforce on how employees can engage in the innovation process of the organization, and how they are supported and/or hindered by their supervisors and by the organization.

**Table 2: Overview of the Interviews**

Tag	Name	Length of interview
<b>HR department</b> HRM1	HR Manager	15 minutes
<b>Management</b> M1 M2 M3	Manager Division A Manager Division B Manager Division C	37 minutes 16 minutes 32 minutes
<b>Supervisors</b> S1 S2 S3 S4	Supervisor Division A Supervisor Division B Supervisor Division C Supervisor Division D	17 minutes 22 minutes 42 minutes 21 minutes
<b>Employees</b> E1 E2 E3 E4 E5 E6 E7 E8 E9	Employee Division A 1 Employee Division A 2 Employee Division B 1 Employee Division B 2 Employee Division B 3 Employee Division C 1 Employee Division C 2 Employee Division C 3 Employee Division D 1	34 minutes 19 minutes 23 minutes 20 minutes 16 minutes 31 minutes 14 minutes 26 minutes 24 minutes

### *Diary studies*

In additions to these interviews, 4 supervisors and managers that were previously interviewed also participated in a diary study. The diary study only included supervisors and managers, as the aim of the diary study was to gain more insights into the role of the supervisor in stimulating employees' IWB and the extent to which organizational support was necessary in this. This goal could only be achieved by having supervisors and managers as participants rather than employees. Again, the supervisors and managers that participated in the diary study worked at the four different divisions within the organization: Business Operations, Private Insurance, Business Insurance, and Fire Insurance. Table 3 shows an overview of all participants.

The diary studies were executed at fixed time intervals at the end of each working week for a period of three weeks. Participants were asked to complete three weekly online questionnaires. Each week, four of the same questions were asked about the employees' ideas they encountered in that week, and their responses to such ideas. In addition, participants were asked to write down what they believed could help them in better supporting these employees. The complete diary studies questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

The main benefit of performing such a diary study is that it is of longitudinal design, which provides the opportunity to study a particular phenomenon for a longer period, and can, therefore, detect differences in the phenomenon over time (Caruana, Roman, Hernández-Sánchez, & Solli, 2015; Lavrakas, 2008). Such a longitudinal study is particularly suitable for studying IWB, as previous studies already highlighted that IWB is not a one-dimensional construct, but rather consists out of different steps (e.g. De Jong & den Hartog, 2010; Dorenbosch, et al., 2005; Scott & Bruce, 1994). Hence, by conducting a longitudinal study, the reseracher can gain insights into the differences between the different stages of IWB. Therefore, conducting a diary study allowed us to study the roles that the supervisor has during these different stages of IWB, and whether HR policies and practices for the supervisor differ between these different stages.

**Table 3: Diary study participants**

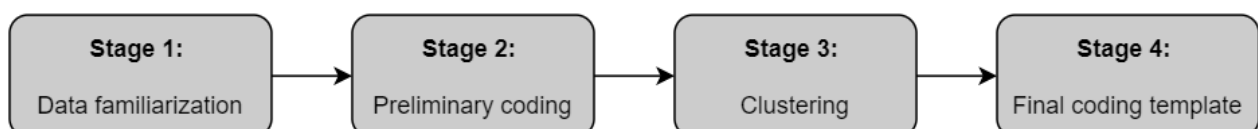
Division	Name	Tag	Details of diary study
A	Manager Divison A	M1	3 weeks long, every Friday
B	Supervisor Divison B	S2	3 weeks long, every Friday
C	Manager Division C	M3	3 weeks long, every Friday
D	Supervisor Division D	S4	3 weeks long, every Friday

## Data analysis

To analyze the interviews, the records were transcribed, after which they were analyzed using Atlas.ti. Similarly, the diary studies were also analyzed with Atlas.ti using the same technique as for the interviews. To code the interviews and diary studies, we used the template analysis technique. With this technique, the researcher establishes a priori themes and codes, which are then compared to the actual data. When coding, the researcher uses these a priori themes and codes and complements those with additional a posteriori codes if necessary. To use the template analysis technique, the researcher has to establish a coding template before conducting and analyzing the data. This coding template can then be used for coding and writing up the data (King & Brooks, 2017). As such, we developed our coding template before conducting the data analysis. This coding template was based on the literature and includes the topics IWB, supervisor support, HR policies and practices, and the supervisor's AMO. The coding template used for this study can be found in Appendix .

The actual coding process consisted of four stages, which is illustrated in Figure 2 on page 22. First, during the transcription of the data, we made initial notes and highlights to important parts of texts to familiarize ourselves with the data. Second, the data was imported into Atlas.ti, where we carried out preliminary coding. In this stage, we marked segments of texts and coded them according to the a priori themes and codes of the coding template. If necessary, we supplemented these with additional a posteriori codes for parts of texts that were perceived of importance but did not match codes or themes in the initial coding template. This preliminary coding process led to a total of 380 codes. Examples of such codes can be found in Appendix C. Third, the codes established in step two were divided into clusters. This led to a total of 56 clusters. Each of these clusters were then divided into the four concepts: IWB, supervisory support, HR policies and practices, and supervisor and HR (AMO). Each of these clusters, and the concepts they apply to, can be found in Appendix C. In step 4, the final coding template was developed. This was based on the initial coding template created before the data analysis, supplemented by a posteriori codes and clusters. This final coding template can be found in Appendix D.

**Figure 2: Coding process**



## RESULTS

In this section, the results from the analysis of the interviews and diary studies are presented. First, results related to the role of innovation for Insurance Company, and the possibilities for employees to contribute to this, are presented. Next, findings regarding the role of the supervisor in stimulating and supporting employees' IWB are discussed. After this, the results regarding the role of different HR policies and practices in stimulating IWB are presented. Finally, results are presented about the role of HR in supporting the supervisors' Ability, Motivation and Opportunity (AMO-framework) to stimulate the IWB of employees. A summary of these findings can be found in Tables 4 to 7.

**Table 4: Innovation at Insurance Company**

Stage	Description of phase	Example quotes
Idea generation	Employee generates idea	<p><i>"We're constantly working on finding opportunities to make the administration process easier. And that changes and renews every time." [E9]</i></p> <p><i>"This morning I gave an idea. Because in our system, we only have one premium rate for the self-employed, even though they are very broad... it can be a hairsalon, or a carpenter... but we only have one rate for all of them. So we need to change this in our system, or in our way of working." [E1]</i></p>
	Employee comes up with small innovation	<p><i>"At a low level, they [the employees] come up with many ideas, but then you're talking about small things. But on the level of robotisation, apps, software... less." [S4]</i></p>
Idea promotion	Employee promotes idea to supervisor	<p><i>"When I have a new idea, I explain it to my supervisor. Or I can make a plan for it, and explain this plan to my supervisor." [E4]</i></p> <p><i>"If we want to change something in our work, or in a proces... then we have to convince our supervisor of our idea." [E5]</i></p>
	Employee promotes idea to colleagues	<p><i>"Well, you have... everyone has different opinions. That's for sure. But you have to be open in your communication with each other. And that happens here. When someone has an idea, we always discuss it openly within our team." [E3]</i></p>
Idea implementation	Idea is implemented	<p><i>"One of my ideas was that you should not endlessly put a customer through. So if you can answer the question, even though it is not part of your department [...] And you see now that there is more connection between the departments."</i></p>
	Idea implementation is hindered	<p><i>"Hindered would be that you are stuck with certain IT systems that we have to work with. And then sometimes certain ideas are just not possible in the system." [E9]</i></p> <p><i>"Well... rules, laws and regulation [...] sometimes we just have to... we just have to adhere to those policies. And then you can't work around it. So that can hinder idea implementation." [E5]</i></p>



## **Innovation at Insurance Company**

Innovation has become increasingly important for Insurance Company. Changing demands and fierce competition in the markets have made it increasingly important to offer new products and services, and to continuously improve work process and procedures efficiency. As a result, Insurance Company has been investing in innovation in numerous ways. First of all, the central organization has set up an innovation team, which is involved in nation-wide innovations. This innovation team develops innovations that are implemented at all regional divisions of the organization. Moreover, this innovation team sets up innovation project groups, in which employees from all regional divisions cooperate to develop new products, services, and processes:

*If there are projects from Central, or within our own [regional] organization, then there is a project group en these have to be staffed by people, and employees can then apply for or be asked for this project group. [S4]*

In addition to these centrally organized innovation projects, workflow employees can also be part of the innovation process by engaging in IWB. In line with the theory (e.g. Scott & Bruce, 1994), we found that IWB indeed consists of the three stages: idea generation, idea promotion, and idea implementation. In this section, we elaborate on the extent to which each of these three stages occur at Insurance Company.

### *Idea generation*

Idea generation takes place when an employee recognizes problems or opportunities, and creates ideas that provides solutions for these problems and opportunities (Scott & Bruce, 1994). The majority of the interviewed employees engaged in the idea generation phase. Interviewees mentioned that they continuously look for ways to improve current processes and procedures, or for ways to change current products. Examples of such ideas from interviewees include the use of an excess with first damages, and providing a training on plant engineering for all claims handlers. However, it was also mentioned that most of these ideas from employees are mainly operational and focused on current processes, products, and procedures. Hence, employees at Insurance Company do generate ideas, but mainly small innovations or improvements of current business activities:

*As said previously, there are pretty good ideas from the workforce, but they are mostly very operational and very much focused on the current work process. [M1]*

### *Idea promotion*

Besides idea generation, the interviewed employees also engage in idea promotion. Idea promotion relates to the process in which the employee promotes his or her idea to, and finds support from, others within the organization such as his or her colleagues and supervisor (De Jong & den Hartog, 2010). When employees at Insurance Company have new ideas, they propose this idea to their supervisors or to the entire team during team meetings. For example, one interviewee said:

*When someone has an idea, we discuss it within our team. Every week, we have a team meeting in which ideas also emerge. And if we have ideas before the meetings, we write them down in our group chat, so that we don't forget to discuss them during the meeting. And then, during the meeting, we discuss the idea. And if it's good, our supervisor asks who wants to develop the idea further. [E9]*

Interviewees further mentioned that colleagues and supervisors are always open towards new ideas. When someone proposes a new idea, people within the organization usually listen to these ideas and take them seriously:

*So, no, in that sense, you don't need to be afraid that they are going to laugh at you or tell you that your ideas don't make any sense. No, everyone always takes the ideas very seriously and that is very nice. [E5]*

### *Idea implementation*

Although employees engage in idea generation and idea championing, the results show that idea implementation often does not occur or is hindered. For example, one employee mentioned:

*Through time, I found out that when you have an idea, and even if they say that they will further develop it, this often does not happen in practice. And I think that's a pity because it also demotivates me to come up with new ideas. [E8]*

The findings show that the most common barriers to idea implementation are: rules and regulations, IT systems, organizational hierarchy, and insufficient facilitation in terms of financial resources, time and freedom:

*Insurance Company is a very rigid organization. And very slowmoving in the decision making process. So, before something changes... You know, change always takes long. But at Insurance Company, it takes very long. And that hinders innovation within our organization. [E8]*

Also, interviewees specified that when they propose an idea, the communication regarding the development and implementation of this idea is often unclear or insufficient:

*We can give ideas, but at this point there are so many ideas that they are not directly looked at. There is also no feedback. So they don't explain to us if your idea is being developed or not. [E4]*

**Table 5: Supervisory support for IWB**

Type of support	Subdimensions	Example quotes
Supervisor motivates employees	Supervisor enthuses employees	<i>"Our supervisor just shows that he finds it [innovation] important. And that he appreciates it that we think along with him [...] He is just very enthousiastic about it." [E9]</i>
	Supervisor shows that he/she finds IWB important	<i>"It's also because my supervisor shows that it is necessary to stay up-to-date. And to continously improve." [E3]</i>
Supervisor stimulates IWB	Supervisor asks for employees' ideas	<i>"I continously ask employees for their input, feedback and to think along on problems that we face, and to tackle those problems all together." [M3]</i>
	Supervisor engages employees	<i>"We like to engage our employees to see in what ways we can do thing smarter." [M2]</i>  <i>"It's always possible to come up with new ideas. We are very much involved in the process." [E3]</i>
Supervisor is open towards ideas	Supervisors' openness for ideas	<i>'Insurance company is a very open organization. Yes, you're always allowed to bring new ideas or new input.' [E5]</i>  <i>"I want employees to feel free to come up with such ideas. That they don't think they say something crazy, just because we've always done it differently. Please, do." [M2]</i>
Supervisor gives room and freedom	Supervisor gives employees room and freedom	<i>"They also give us the freedom to take on a project or idea, also to see if it works in practice as well." [E1]</i>
Supervisor transfers ideas	Supervisor communicates ideas to a higher level	<i>"When someone proposes an idea to me, I always take it to my manager or a colleague that is working on something similar. You know, I always try to put it away well." [S3]</i>
Supervisor hinders IWB	Supervisor does not listen to employees' ideas	<i>"Sometimes they don't listen very well to us to see if something is or is not possible in practice. As employees we're not always being listened to." [E2]</i>
	Supervisor views ideas as criticism	<i>"The danger is that ideas can also be viewed as something negative. Or as criticism." [E4]</i>

## Supervisor support

Our findings show that supervisors play different roles in IWB. First, supervisors play an important role in motivating employees to generate ideas. According to the interviewees, supervisors try to motivate employees to come up with new ideas by enthusing the employees, and by showing employees that their supervisor finds it important that they come up with new ideas:

*Our supervisor is very enthusiastic about many things ... He tries to take everyone along. So he is very supportive to me and my team. What I say, he is very enthusiastic. And that infects you too. [S2]*

Another role of the supervisor is to stimulate employee to engage in IWB. Supervisors at Insurance Company do this by asking employees to come up with ideas, or by asking them to find solutions to perceived issues. Moreover, supervisors challenge employees by organizing team meetings or brainstorm sessions in which employees can share their ideas. Finally, supervisors try to stimulate IWB by engaging the employees:

*Every time we try to ask for feedback, we try to engage the employees. Also when we are preparing something, or when we are running a new project. Just to make them a part of the process [M3]*

Besides stimulating IWB, the role of the supervisor is also to support IWB. According to our findings, supervisors can support IWB by being open to employees ideas, by giving employees room and freedom, and by communicating employees ideas to others in the organization. According to the interviewed employees, most supervisors are open towards employees input and ideas, and give enough room and freedom:

*Yes, you're allowed to give your own innovative ideas. They are open towards this. At least at our department, I think our supervisor and our manager are open to our ideas. [E2]*

*In our team, our supervisor always steers us in such a way that you formulate your idea independently, and that you develop your idea by yourself. [E1]*

However, some interviewed employees explained that the role of the supervisor can be negative as well. Sometimes, supervisors at Insurance Company do not listen to the employees' ideas sufficiently, are not open towards employees' ideas, or take such ideas more as criticism rather than feedback:

*Sometimes they push their own ideas too much, and then they don't always listen to what we have to say about this, and the input we deliver. This is not always incorporated very well. [E2]*

*The danger exists that ideas can be viewed as something negative. Or as criticism. You actually mean it as positive criticism, but the question is how this comes across. And then it can be interpreted in a negative way. [E4]*

**Table 6: HR policies and practices to stimulate IWB**

HR practice	Sub-practices	Example quotes
Training	Training to improve employees' skills	<i>"We are very much targeted towards training and development, we have our own Insurance Company Academy, and Good Habits, also to stimulate innovation." [HRM1]</i>
Rewards	Non-financial rewards	<i>"Innovation is rewarded, but more with a compliment or a result." [S2]</i>  <i>"The appreciation is there. They appreciate it when you think along." [E4]</i>
	No financial rewards	<i>"There is not really a financial reward for innovation, not specifically. You can get rewarded if your general performance is above average. [S4]</i>
Performance appraisal	Performance appraisal stimulates idea generation	<i>"Also, during performance reviews, we discuss with the employees things like: Which type of project would you like to work on? Where would you like to think along about?" [S3]</i>
	IWB part of performance appraisal	<i>"We do have different performance reviews, during which the supervisor highlights the good things you've done, such as giving new ideas. And that is valued." [E6]</i>
Recruitment	Innovation capabilities part of selection criteria	<i>"For example, when you hire new employees, you should also select on the right competences. That they are creative or innovative." [HRM1]</i>

## HR policies and practices

Insurance Company uses different HR practices to stimulate employees' IWB. First, the organization has different online training programmes for all employees, where employees can voluntarily participate in to improve their skills:

*This week we start with a new online training programme, or an online provider of different trainings. The programme offers more than 120 types of trainings of 2 to 3 hours, in which you can learn something completely new. [HRM1]*

Moreover, there are non-financial rewards for IWB. When an employee comes up with a new idea, he or she receives non-financial rewards in terms of compliments and appreciation. However, Insurance Company does not offer any financial rewards for innovation. Most employees do not see this as a problem, as they find the non-financial reward sufficient:

*To some extent, ideas are rewarded. Not that you receive money, but there are also other types of reward. That your supervisor picks up your idea, starts to work on it, involves you in the process, and gives feedback on whether the idea is being developed or not. [E1]*

*Yes, me and my employees do receive rewards in terms of appreciation. However, we don't receive financial rewards. But we don't need that, because we already receive money every month, right? [S4]*

Finally, IWB is included in the performance appraisal. Although the performance appraisal is not directly targeted towards an employees' innovation capabilities, it does include factors such as willingness to change, taking initiatives, and the extent to which employees think along and come up with new ideas:

*The employee's job description does not explicitly mention innovation. Also, in their performance appraisal, we do not look at if the employee has been very innovative or not. Not explicitly. But in the performance appraisal, we do look at ability to change, and taking initiatives. Those types of competences. So, in that sense, innovation is included in the appraisal. [M2]*

**Table 7: Supporting (HR) factors for the supervisor's AMO**

AMO-framework	Subdimensions	Example quotes
Ability to support	Supervisor is able to support IWB	<p><i>"I stimulate my employees to do things easier [...] I challenge them to do their thing, which is handling claims. And that should be done in the easiest way possible [...] And if you see it as innovation, then yes, I support them in being innovative." [S1]</i></p> <p><i>"When an employee has an idea, we first look at whether it fits what we want and need as an organization. And then, if it has to be developed further, then the supervisor supports this development [...] Then me and the supervisor try to offer help, and try to facilitate the process to implement the idea. [M3]</i></p>
	Training to improve supervisors' ability to support IWB	<i>"And for the supervisors, we've been doing a development programme for the supervisors and also to train them in their coaching skills. [...] Especially for the supervisors, we really try to invest in training and development." [HRM1]</i>
	Manager coaches supervisor in supporting IWB	<i>"As a supervisor, you are being stimulated a lot by the managers. My manager always indicates that he finds it important that we support employees' innovation. He really coaches us in that as well." [S3]</i>

	Supervisor is unable to stimulate IWB	<p><i>"Sometimes, it's difficult for the employees to come up with a solution themselves. The thinking and inventing. I think that's also how they have grown. In the past, the organization invented everything and they just had to execute it. And now, they get more room for it, and then it's difficult to change. And it's difficult to steer them in that direction sometimes." [S3]</i></p> <p><i>"As a supervisor, my task is to motivate the people to be innovative. But that's not always easy, because you're not always as engaged in the processes as the employees." [S4]</i></p>
	Supervisor is insufficiently engaged with workflow	<p><i>"Sometimes I feel like they should be more engaged with the workflow. The role of the supervisor is to organize things, and to structure things. And if... what I often miss, is that supervisors and managers don't know enough about our tasks, they don't know what the conversations with the customers are like." [E6]</i></p>
Motivation to support	Intrinsic motivation to support IWB	<p><i>"I think that it's my intrinsic motivation, from within, to help people, to stimulate and support people to make everything better... to have more fun." [S3]</i></p> <p><i>"I think I'm very result-oriented. I always want to work towards a goal, and grow our department, each year. Because standing still is going backwards, that should be the motto. And innovation is part of that." [S4]</i></p>
	Extrinsic motivation to support IWB (non-financial rewards)	<p><i>"I think it's also what the directors and managers expect of us. They want us to stimulate and support our employees with innovations." [S4]</i></p> <p><i>"It's also valued, and you receive compliments. And those compliments, that people walk towards you and give you a compliment, that's something that I like as well. That also motivates me." [S3]</i></p>
Opportunity to support	Freedom to support IWB	<p><i>"I'm supported to stimulate innovations, because my manager gives me the freedom to set up my team the way I want to, and the way I think is the best. So, yes, there's a lot of freedom. [S1]</i></p>
	Management supports supervisor in stimulating IWB	<p><i>"I try to support the supervisors by coaching them in the creation of a foundation, or support for the employees." [M3]</i></p> <p><i>"What I really like is that I receive room to work on things like innovation. From my directors, the board, I get enough room to work on those types of things." [M2]</i></p>
	Facilitation to support IWB	<p><i>"I think the support is very good. There is always some money available to work on an idea, to develop it [...] And there is always room to try things." [S4]</i></p> <p><i>"At this point, I receive enough support and room to do my job and to stimulate my employees, and to steer them towards the direction I want them to be in." [S1]</i></p>
	Manager trusts supervisor	<p><i>"I also give them the trust. And when you do that, you'll see that it's much easier to coach them too." [M3]</i></p>

Insufficient facilitation to support IWB	<p><i>"Do I receive enough time to structurally work on bigger innovation projects, to really see how we can develop new products or new services? Well, you know. I sometimes come across that... No, I don't have enough time for that." [M3]</i></p> <p><i>"Am I hindered to support my employees in being innovative? Well, yes, by time. We don't always have time to work on it." [S1]</i></p>
Insufficient organizational support hinders opportunity to support	<p><i>"Actually... it's not at all expected from the organization that you're innovative. There is no... it's just not ingrained. And it makes sense, because Insurance Company is a very old and complex organization." [M1]</i></p> <p><i>"Are we supported by the organization to stimulate employees' innovativeness? Well, I don't know... Honestly, not really. No." [M3]</i></p>
No structured policy hinders opportunity to support	<p><i>"We don't really have a clear policy, or a clear organization-wide strategy for innovation. [...] That is something, I think it would help us if there would be a better innovation policy." [S4]</i></p> <p><i>"I think it would help if we would have an easier, more structured, and more accessible process for supporting innovations. So that when ideas are given bottom-up, that you can tell employees where they have to go to with this idea." [M1]</i></p>

### Supervisor and HR (AMO)

In line with previous theories on the AMO-framework (Bos-Nehles, et al., 2013), our findings show that the extent to which supervisors can stimulate and support IWB also depends on the supervisors' ability, motivation, and opportunity to support and stimulate IWB. The findings further show that this ability, motivation, and opportunity can be improved through different HR practices. This section elaborates on the ability, motivation and opportunity of Insurance Company's supervisors to support IWB. In addition, different HR practices to improve the supervisors ability, motivation, and opportunity to stimulate IWB are defined.

#### *Ability to support IWB*

In general, the findings show that supervisors are able to support employees' IWB, as they possess the right skills to do so. As previously highlighted, supervisors try to stimulate employees by asking for ideas or feedback, by being open for employees' ideas, and by challenging employees to find solutions to issues. By doing so, they are able to stimulate and motivate employees to engage in IWB. Moreover, supervisors support idea development by helping employees to further develop the idea, by giving them feedback on their ideas, or by helping them in finding the right person to whom they can further introduce their idea. Hence, supervisors are also able to stimulate idea promotion. Our findings also show that there are different ways in which this ability to support IWB is stimulated by the organization. First,



interviewees explain that supervisors are able to support IWB because they receive coaching and support from their managers:

*“I try to engage the supervisors, and coach them by also showing the importance of supporting innovation with the hope that they take on this facilitating role for their employees. I believe that every supervisor is capable of doing that. It’s not difficult, it’s just... it’s a mindset, you have to believe in it. And I try to coach them in that.” [M3]*

*“How I’m supported to stimulate employees’ innovations? Well, we discuss it a lot with my manager and the other supervisors. My manager is very enthusiastic, and is always willing to support us and help us in this. That really helps me as well.” [S3]*

Moreover, the supervisors receive trainings that allow them to develop different skills, such as coaching skills. By acquiring such coaching skills, supervisors are able to coach the employees in generating and developing innovative ideas:

*“And for the supervisors, we’ve been doing a development programme for the supervisors and also to train them in their coaching skills. [...] Especially for the supervisors, we really try to invest in training and development.” [HRM1]*

Finally, interviewees highlighted that it is also important that supervisors are engaged with the workforce, as this allows them to fully understand what is going on at the workforce, where there is still room for improvement, and where there are opportunities for the team to develop new ideas. As such, being engaged also influences a supervisors’ ability to support and stimulate IWB. However, the interviewed employees explained that this workforce engagement could still be improved:

*“I think that the role of our supervisor in supporting innovation can be improved by being more engaged with the workforce [...] For example by working one day with us, to see what it’s like to be in contact with the customers. Then they will be able to understand what we talk about. And then they can also better support us in innovations, and engage more with us in innovative ideas.” [E6]*

However, the interviewed supervisors explained that they sometimes found it difficult to stimulate employees’ creativity and willingness to change. This also withholds them from being fully able to stimulate IWB:

*“In the past, employees weren’t engaged that much. Everything was decided for them. And now that they receive more room, you see that it’s difficult for them to change. And I’m not sure if the people fit with that. If they can become very innovative. It’s difficult to change them into that direction.” [S3]*

In addition, supervisors also mentioned that it's important that they receive the organization's support to be fully able to support idea development. However, this support from the organization is sometimes lacking, which also makes it more difficult for the supervisors to be able to support employees' innovative ideas:

*"My employees also tell me that they sometimes don't hear back from the organization, or that they are not supported in the idea development. That's a pity. And that also makes it difficult for me to support them in their innovations. Sometimes I would like to receive more support from the organization to be able to support my employees better." [S3]*

### *Motivation to support IWB*

Our findings show that supervisors at Insurance Company are motivated to support and stimulate employees' IWB. There are two ways in which they are motivated: intrinsically and extrinsically. First of all, the interviewed supervisors explained that they were intrinsically motivated to support employees' IWB. They explained that they are motivated by the belief that innovation is very important, or even the only way to survive in the competitive market. As such, they are also motivated to stimulate and support innovations from the employees:

*"What motivates me to stimulate employees' motivations? For me, I am driven by my view that, if the market is changing and the competition is changing, that they are developing... Then you have change and improve as well. Also keep a connection to the market, and to remain relevant. That's what motivates me." [M2]*

Besides this intrinsic motivation, supervisors are also extrinsically motivated by non-financial rewards. When they stimulate and support employees' innovation, this is generally appreciated at Insurance Company. As such, when employees support IWB, they receive compliments and recognition for this. According to the interviewed supervisors, these non-financial rewards also motivate them to support and stimulate employees' IWB:

*"For me, being appreciated is very important. [...] That you are being acknowledged, and that you receive compliments." [S3]*

### *Opportunity to support IWB*

The interviewees show contrasting results regarding the opportunity for supervisors to support employees' IWB. On the one hand, some supervisors point out that they receive enough support and facilities from the organization that give them the opportunity to support and

stimulate employees' IWB. For example, some interviewed supervisors mention that they receive enough freedom, time, and financial resources to support innovations:

*I think that the support is very good. There is always some money available to work on a new idea [...] And there is also always room to try new things. That's my experience." [S4]*

In addition, the interviewees mention that they receive sufficient support from the management. According to the interviewed supervisors, managers support them in stimulating employees' IWB, and managers trust the supervisors, which also allow them to better support employees' innovations:

*"I think the support from management is also dependent on the relationship between the manager and the supervisor, and the level of trust between them. It's similar between supervisors and employees, you need to be able to trust each other and have a good relationship to support innovation and to allow new ideas. And I think this relationship is good." [S4]*

On the other hand, other supervisors argue that they do not receive enough time and support from the organization to support innovations. In particular, the interviewed supervisors explain that they do not have sufficient time to structurally work on innovations:

*"You need to make investments to be able to innovate. You need to learn new things, and make time free for this. And because we have a lot of things to do as a department, and many things come our way, it is difficult to make time for this. To implement an innovation, that costs time [...] And that is pretty difficult sometimes." [M2]*

Moreover, supervisors mention that they perceive insufficient support from the organization, which limits their opportunities to support employees' IWB. According to the interviewees, there is no clear organizational policy regarding employees' innovations, and the supervisors are insufficiently stimulated by the organization to support IWB:

*"The support from the central organization is limited. I don't really get the feeling that they really challenge me and my employees to come up with new ideas, and to develop innovations." [S1]*

Supervisors mention that it is important that they receive support from the organization, as this also gives them more opportunities to support IWB. If there is no clear policy, or no clear support, then it is also unclear for the supervisors whether they need to support IWB and whether the organization perceives this as important. As such, supervisors mention that they

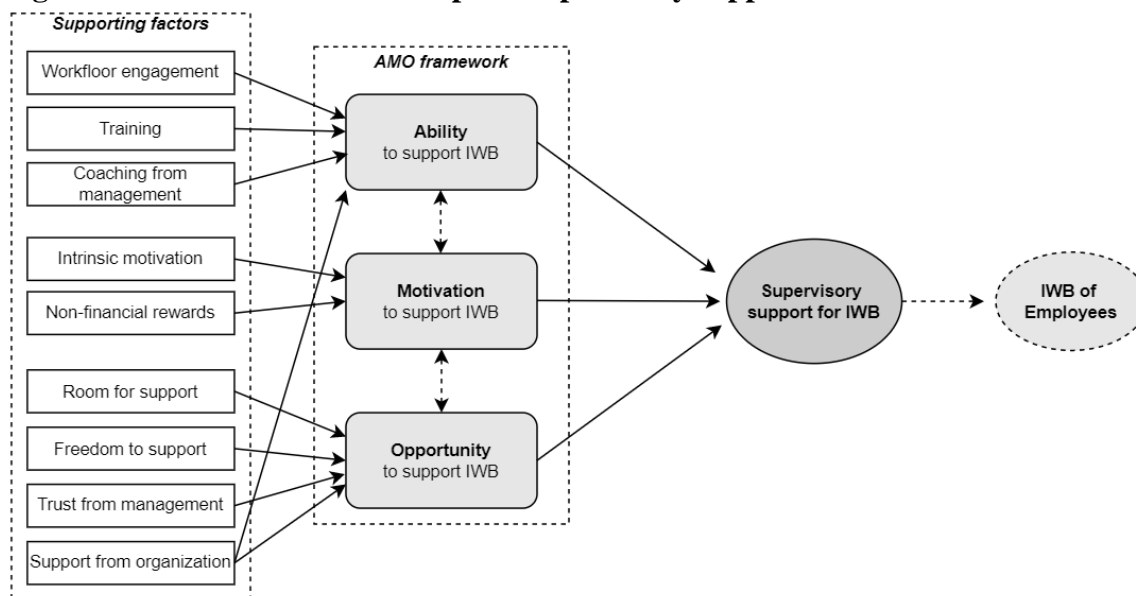
would be better at supporting and stimulating IWB if they would receive more support from the organization, and if there would be a clearer organization-wide innovation policy:

*“For me, I would be better able to support employees’ innovations if there would be a clearer organization-wide policy for innovations. And also a clearer communication on how they are going to maintain this.” [S4]*

### Supervisor’s AMO to support IWB

Figure 2 shows a summary of our findings on the supervisors’ ability, motivation, and opportunity to support IWB. The figure shows that the supervisors’ ability, motivation, and opportunity all individually influence the supervisor’s support for IWB. However, the arrows between the ability, motivation and opportunity show that the three factors are also related to each other, as these three factors are all needed together to fully support and stimulate employees’ IWB. The left side of the figure highlights the most important supporting (HR) factors. These factors include both HR practices, as well as other supporting factors, that determine the supervisor’s ability, motivation, and/or opportunity to support IWB. For example, the factor *support for innovation* influences both the supervisors’ ability, as well as their opportunity, to support IWB. The right side of the figure shows the relationship between the supervisors ability, motivation and opportunity and the supervisory support, which in its turn influences the employees’ IWB. The different stages of IWB – idea generation, idea promotion, and idea implementation – are excluded from this model, as the findings did not show a difference between these stages.

**Figure 2: AMO-framework to explain supervisory support for IWB**



## DISCUSSION

This research has focused on the role of HR policies and practices in supporting the supervisor to stimulate and support employees' IWB. As such, this research aimed to answer the following research question: *What is the role of HR policies and practices in stimulating supervisors to support their employees' innovative work behavior?*. To answer this research question, we drew upon the AMO-model to investigate the role of HR policies and practices in stimulating the supervisor's ability, motivation, and opportunity to support employees' IWB. Based on the case study at Insurance Company, the results show that the supervisor's ability, motivation and opportunity to support IWB depends upon different supporting (HR) factors. First, the supervisors' ability to support IWB is influenced by the extent to which the supervisor is engaged with the workforce, the amount of training the supervisor receives from the organization, the support from the organization, and whether the supervisor receives coaching from the management. Second, the supervisors' motivation to stimulate IWB depends upon both their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The latter can be increased by the HR practice non-financial rewards, such as appreciation and compliments. Lastly, results showed that the opportunity to support employees' IWB depends on the HR practices room and freedom the supervisor receives, as well as the supporting factors level of trust from the management, and the support from the organization. Thus, these different HR policies and practices can support the supervisor and increase their ability, motivation and opportunity to support the innovative behaviors of their employees.

### Theoretical implications

This study has some theoretical implications for HRM and IWB literature. The main finding from this research is that HR plays an important role in stimulating supervisors' ability, motivation, and opportunity to engage their subordinates in IWB. Previous literature already found that different HR policies and practices play an important role in stimulating employees to engage in IWB (Bos-Nehles, et al., 2017; Prieto & Pérez-Santana, 2013; Veenendaal & Bondarouk, 2015). This research adds to this by showing that HR plays an important role in stimulating the supervisor too. According to our findings, the ability of the supervisor to stimulate and support employees' IWB depends on HR practices such as training and coaching. Moreover, the supervisor's motivation to stimulate employees' IWB is partly determined by their extrinsic motivation, which is influenced by the HR practice non-financial

rewards. Additionally, the opportunity to support is influenced by HR practices such as freedom and room to support employees' IWB. These findings can be explained by social exchange theory, which claims that individuals are interested in participating in rewarding relationships after which they feel obliged to return the favor. According to this theory, HR policies and practices stimulate such social exchanges, as they signal an organization's recognition of the individual's commitment and contribution (Gould-Williams, 2007; Kehoe & Wright, 2013). According to our findings, supervisors also felt supported by different HR practices such as training, coaching and non-financial rewards, making them more likely to support and stimulate employees' IWB. Moreover, our findings can be applied to the AMO theory in two ways. First, in this study we explored the AMO factors to examine how supervisors can stimulate employees' innovative work behavior. By doing so, we show how organizations can facilitate and support the effectiveness of supervisors in performing management tasks, as described in the HR implementation literature (Bos-Nehles et al., 2013; Bos-Nehles & Meijerink, 2018) and people management literature (Knies & Leisink, 2014). Second, in this study we applied AMO theory to the role of supervisors in stimulating employees' innovative behaviors. In doing so, we were able to uncover the support that supervisors need to make their employees more innovative, which has been summarized in Figure 2.

In addition, this research also adds to the literature in that it supports the view that IWB is a multi-dimensional construct. (e.g. de Jong & den Hartog, 2010; Messmann & Mulder, 2012; Scott & Bruce, 1994). In particular, the findings of this research are in line with Scott & Bruce (1994), who proposed that IWB consists of three steps. The findings at Insurance Company show that IWB indeed follows the three stages of idea generation, idea promotion, and idea implementation.

Finally, the the findings from the case study at Insurance Company show that supervisors play an important role in stimulating, motivating and supporting employees' IWB. According to the results, supervisors stimulate and motivate employees to engage in IWB, for example by challenging employees to come up with new ideas, or by asking them for feedback on current products and processes. Furthermore, the results show that supervisors play an important role in supporting employees' ideas, as they have to facilitate IWB, and they communicate employees' ideas to others in the organizational hierarchy. These findings support previous literature on the role of supervisors in IWB, which also found that supervisors play a crucial role in motivating, stimulating and supporting employees'

engagement in IWB (e.g. de Jong & den Hartog, 2007; Janssen, 2005). Moreover, these results support transformational leadership theory, which argues that supervisors can motivate employees through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1993). As the results show that supervisors can motivate employees by enthusing them, and stimulate them to engage in IWB by challenging them to come up with new ideas, these findings are in line with the concepts of inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation of transformational leadership theory. Moreover, as the findings showed that the extent to which employees engage in IWB depend on their perceived support from the supervisors, these findings also support the leader-member exchange theory, which argues that the extent to which employees receive freedom, decision-making involvement, and other resources, determine their loyalty and commitment, which in their turn increases their likelihood to engage in IWB (Basu & Green, 1997; Wang, et al., 2015).

### **Practical implications**

Besides contributing to the theory, this research also adds to practice. Previous literature already found that employees' engagement in IWB is strongly influenced by the received support from the supervisor (e.g. Janssen, 2005; Yuan & Woodman, 2010). However, previous literature have not yet investigated how these supervisors can be supported by the organization, so that they will become better able to stimulate and support employees' engagement in IWB. This research has added to this by focusing on different HR practices that can stimulate the supervisor's ability, motivation, and opportunity to stimulate and support employees' IWB. Our findings show that there are numerous HR practices that can stimulate this ability, motivation and opportunity (Figure 2). For example, our findings showed that the supervisor's ability to support IWB can be increased through training and coaching. Moreover, the supervisor's opportunity to support IWB can be improved by giving more room and freedom to support the employees. Hence, our findings provide insights into how the supervisors can be supported by the organization in stimulating and supporting employees' IWB. As such, our study adds to the practice in that it gives organizations insights into how they can support their supervisors. In particular, our findings show that different practices such as training, coaching, non-financial rewards, freedom and trust can increase supervisors' ability, motivation and opportunity to stimulate and support employees' IWB (Figure 2). Therefore, organizations may implement such practices to become better able at

supporting supervisors, who play a crucial role in stimulating and supporting employees' IWB. By implementing such practices, supervisors' ability, motivation and opportunity to support and stimulate employees' IWB will likely increase.

### **Limitations and suggestions for future research**

We acknowledge that this study is not without limitations. One of the limitations of this study is that the findings are based on a single case study. This may limit the applicability of these findings to other contexts. In particular, it might be the case that highly innovative industries and organizations show different results and may rely less on HR policies and practices, as these supervisors and employees are naturally more innovative and therefore may need less support from the organization in the form of different HR practices. For example, as they are more innovative by themselves, they may need less training and coaching from the organization. By performing this study solely in a less innovative environment, this may limit the applicability of our findings to highly innovative industries and organizations. As such, we suggest future research to conduct a multiple case study in different industries and environments. In particular, we suggest researchers to investigate the role of HR for the supervisors in highly innovative environments to see if these results really differ.

Another limitation of the study is related to the diary studies. Due to the time available for data collection, the time span of the diary studies was only three weeks. However, as numerous interview applicants pointed out, innovation at Insurance Company is a prolonged process. As such, in a period of three weeks, it is simply unattainable to capture supervisors' involvement in each of the three stages of IWB – idea generation, idea promotion, and idea implementation. Although we were able to distinguish between the three stages of IWB during the interviews, we were unable to do so in the diary studies. As such, future research could extend our research by performing a diary study for an extended amount of time. By doing so, future research could gain more insights into the role of HR in stimulating the supervisor for each of the three different stages of IWB separately.



## CONCLUSION

This paper has studied the role of HR in stimulating the supervisor to support the innovative work behavior of the employees. Through an exploratory case study, we collected data from interviews and diary studies at a Dutch insurance company. Our results show that different HR practices influence the supervisors' ability, motivation, and opportunity to support employees' IWB. In particular, the HR practices workflow engagement, training, coaching from management, and support from organization all influence the supervisors' ability to support IWB. The motivation to support is influenced by the supervisors' intrinsic motivation and non-financial rewards such as compliments and appreciation. The results further show that room for support, freedom to support, trust from management and support from organization all influence the supervisors' opportunity to support IWB. By using these different HR practices, supervisors' ability, motivation, and opportunity to support can be improved, which allows them to better support and stimulate the innovative work behavior of the employees.

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## APPENDIXES

### Appendix A: Interview Protocols

#### *A1: Interview Protocol for HR Manager*

First of all, I would like to thank you for your participation. My name is Merle Holterman, and my research is about the innovative work behavior of the employees, and the roles of HR and the supervisors in this. In this interview, I am going to ask you some questions about this topic. The interview today will take approximately 30 minutes.

I would like to record this interview, is that okay for you?  
YES / NO

The information that you provide today will be treated confidentially. The recording of our interview will not be shared with others, and your answers will be anonymized in my research.

Do you have any questions before we are going to start with the interview?  
If you have any questions for me during the interview, feel free to ask them.

<b>Innovation at Insurance Company</b>	What is the role of innovation for Insurance Company?
	<i>Is innovation perceived as important for the company?</i>
	<i>Does innovation take place a lot at the company?</i>
<b>IWB of employees</b>	What are the possibilities for the employees to participate in the innovation process?
	<i>Are there innovation projects that employees can apply for?</i>
	<i>Can employees express their own innovative ideas?</i>
	Do you often receive innovative ideas from your employees?
<b>Role of the organization</b>	What does Insurance Company do with such ideas from the employees?
	What are, in your eyes, the most important factors that influence innovative work behavior?
	How does Insurance Company stimulate employees to generate and develop innovative ideas?

	<p>What are, in your eyes, the roles of HR in stimulating innovative work behavior of the employees and supervisors?</p> <p><i>Which HR practices are used to stimulate employees and supervisors to be innovative?</i></p> <p><i>For example: rewards, performance management, training</i></p>
	<p>In what ways is innovative work behaviors being hindered?</p> <p><i>For example: not enough time, other priorities, etc.</i></p>
<b>Role of the supervisor</b>	<p>What is, in your eyes, the role of the supervisor in stimulating innovative work behaviors of the employees?</p>
	<p>How are supervisors stimulated by Insurance Companies to support their employees' innovative work behavior?</p>

### ***A2 Interview Protocol for Managers***

First of all, I would like to thank you for your participation. My name is Merle Holterman, and my research is about the innovative work behavior of the employees, and the roles of HR and the supervisors in this. In this interview, I am going to ask you some questions about this topic. The interview today will take approximately 30 minutes.

I would like to record this interview, is that okay for you?

YES / NO

The information that you provide today will be treated confidentially. The recording of our interview will not be shared with others, and your answers will be anonymized in my research.

Do you have any questions before we are going to start with the interview?

If you have any questions for me during the interview, feel free to ask them.

<b>Introduction</b>	What is your position at Insurance Company?
	What are your main tasks within this position?
	How long have you been in this position?
<b>Innovation at Insurance Company</b>	What is the role of innovation for Insurance Company?
	<i>Is innovation important for Insurance Company?</i>

	<i>Does innovation happen a lot at Insurance Company?</i>
	What are the possibilities for the employees to participate in the innovation process?
	<i>Can employees apply for innovation projects?</i>
	<i>Can employees also give their own innovative ideas?</i>
<b>IWB of Employees</b>	Do you often receive innovative ideas from your employees?
	Can you give me an example of an idea given by one of your employees?
	What does Insurance Company do with such ideas from the employees?
	<i>What happens when you receive an idea from your employees, what is this process from generation to implementation like?</i>
	To what extent do you think that employees perceive it as important to generate and develop innovative ideas?
	How do you stimulate your employees to generate and develop innovative ideas?
	<i>How do you motivate them? How do you show employees that they can give ideas too?</i>
<b>Role of supervisors</b>	What motivates you to stimulate employees in their innovative work behavior?
	What is, in your eyes, the role of the supervisor in stimulating employees' innovative work behavior?
	How do you ensure that supervisors are motivated to stimulate employees in their innovative work behavior?
	<i>How do you motivate the supervisors, so that they stimulate the employees in their IWB?</i>
	How do you ensure that supervisors are able to stimulate employees in their innovative work behavior?
	<i>How do you ensure that the supervisors possess the right skills, knowledge and competences needed to stimulate their employees?</i>



<b>Support from Insurance Company</b>	To what extent does Insurance Company expect you to stimulate your employees in their innovative work behavior?
	How are you supported by Insurance Company in stimulating employees' innovative work behavior?
	Do you receive enough time and space?
	How is innovation rewarded at Insurance Company? <i>Both financial and non-financial rewards</i>
	Is innovation included in the performance evaluation of the employees?
	How are innovative ideas of you and your employees hindered? <i>Examples: time, resources, not perceived as important, other priorities</i>
	What can Insurance Company do so that you can better stimulate your employees in their innovative work behavior? <i>Examples: more time needed? More resources needed? More motivation? Coaching or training?</i>

### ***A3 Interview Protocol for Supervisors***

First of all, I would like to thank you for your participation. My name is Merle Holterman, and my research is about the innovative work behavior of the employees, and the roles of HR and the supervisors in this. In this interview, I am going to ask you some questions about this topic. The interview today will take approximately 30 minutes.

I would like to record this interview, is that okay for you?

YES / NO

The information that you provide today will be treated confidentially. The recording of our interview will not be shared with others, and your answers will be anonymized in my research.

Do you have any questions before we are going to start with the interview?

If you have any questions for me during the interview, feel free to ask them.

<b>Introduction</b>	What is your position at Insurance Company?
	What are your main tasks within this position?
	How long have you been in this position?
<b>Innovation at Insurance Company</b>	<p>What is the role of innovation for Insurance Company?</p> <p><i>Is innovation important for Insurance Company?</i></p> <p><i>Does innovation happen a lot at Insurance Company?</i></p>
	<p>What are the possibilities for the employees to participate in the innovation process?</p> <p><i>Can employees apply for innovation projects?</i></p> <p><i>Can employees also give their own innovative ideas?</i></p>
<b>IWB of Employees</b>	Do you often receive innovative ideas from your employees?
	Can you give me an example of an idea given by one of your employees?
	<p>What does Insurance Company do with such ideas from the employees?</p> <p><i>What happens when you receive an idea from your employees, what is this process from generation to implementation like?</i></p>
	To what extent do you think that employees perceive it as important to generate and develop innovative ideas?
	What is, in your eyes, your role as a supervisor in stimulating innovative work behavior of the employees?
	<p>How do you stimulate your employees to generate and develop innovative ideas?</p> <p><i>How do you motivate them? How do you show employees that they can give ideas too?</i></p>
	What motivates you to stimulate employees in their innovative work behavior?
<b>Support from Insurance Company</b>	To what extent does Insurance Company expect you to stimulate your employees in their innovative work behavior?

	How are you supported by Insurance Company in stimulating employees' innovative work behavior?
	Do you receive enough time and space?
	How is innovation rewarded at Insurance Company?  <i>Both financial and non-financial rewards</i>
	Is innovation included in the performance evaluation of the employees?
	How are innovative ideas of you and your employees hindered?  <i>Examples: time, resources, not perceived as important, other priorities</i>
	What can Insurance Company do so that you can better stimulate your employees in their innovative work behavior?  <i>Examples: more time needed? More resources needed? More motivation? Coaching or training?</i>

#### ***A4 Interview Protocol for Employees***

First of all, I would like to thank you for your participation. My name is Merle Holterman, and my research is about the innovative work behavior of the employees, and the roles of HR and the supervisors in this. In this interview, I am going to ask you some questions about this topic. The interview today will take approximately 30 minutes.

I would like to record this interview, is that okay for you?

YES / NO

The information that you provide today will be treated confidentially. The recording of our interview will not be shared with others, and your answers will be anonymized in my research.

Do you have any questions before we are going to start with the interview?

If you have any questions for me during the interview, feel free to ask them.

<b>Introduction</b>	What is your position at Insurance Company?
	What are your main tasks within this position?

	How long have you been in this position?
<b>Innovation at Insurance Company</b>	What is the role of innovation for Insurance Company?
	What are the possibilities for the employees to participate in the innovation process?
<b>Innovative Work Behavior</b>	<p>Do you ever develop innovative ideas? If yes, can you give me an example of such an idea?</p> <p><i>Innovative ideas = generating new ideas, processes, and/or products that are 1) new to the organization, and 2) of benefit for the organization.</i></p> <p><i>Do you ever come up with ideas to improve certain work processes, or ideas for new products or services that Insurance Company can offer?</i></p> <p><b>If no:</b>            What withholds you from giving innovative ideas?            And            How can you be motivated to be more innovative?  <i>So, how can Insurance Company motivate you to develop new ideas?</i></p>
	<p>What does Insurance Company do with such ideas from the employees?</p> <p><i>If you propose your idea to a supervisor, what does he/she do with this?</i></p> <p><i>Has one of your ideas been developed and implemented?</i></p>
	What motivates you to generate and develop innovative ideas?
<b>Role of the organization</b>	<p>How does Insurance Company stimulate you to generate and develop innovative ideas?</p> <p><i>How do they show you that they expect you, or want you, to come up with new ideas?</i></p>
	To what extent does Insurance Company expect you to generate and develop innovative ideas?
	Are innovative ideas rewarded at Insurance Company?
	Is innovation a topic in your performance evaluation?

	Do you receive trainings on innovation / developing innovative ideas?
	Are you challenged by Insurance Company to develop innovative ideas?
	<p>In what ways are you hindered when generating and developing innovative ideas?</p> <p><i>Examples: not enough time, not enough freedom, not enough resources, etc.</i></p>
	How can Insurance Company stimulate you better in generating and developing innovative ideas?
<b>Role of supervisor</b>	<p>What is, in your eyes, the role of your supervisor in stimulating your innovative work behavior?</p> <p><i>Is this role important? Why / why not?</i></p>
	To what extent does your supervisor expect you to develop innovative ideas?
	To what extent is your supervisor open for new ideas?
	How does your supervisor motivate you to generate new ideas?
	How are you supported by your supervisor when you want to develop your innovative idea?
	<p>In what way can this role of your supervisor in stimulating innovative work behavior be improved?</p> <p><i>Should your supervisor give you: more time, more autonomy, more freedom, more appreciation, etc.</i></p>
	<p>What can Insurance Company do so that your supervisor can better support you with your innovative ideas?</p> <p><i>Should Insurance Company provide more training or coaching for your supervisor, better reward innovation, give your supervisor more time and space for innovations?</i></p>

## Appendix B: Diary Studies Questionnaire

This questionnaire contains four questions about the innovative work behavior of your employees of the past week, and the role you played in this. Filling in this questionnaire takes approximately 10 minutes.

Your answers will be used for a research of the University of Twente. The answers that you are going to give will be treated confidentially, and will be anonymized in the research.

*Which ideas did you receive from your employees in the past week?*

*Which role did you play in this?*

*How were you supported by Insurance Company in this?*

*What can Insurance Company do so that you can better support such ideas from your employees?*

**Appendix C: Initial Coding Template**

<b>Concept</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Keywords</b>
<b>Innovative work behavior</b>	Idea generation	All employees' behaviors aimed at the generation, introduction, and implementation of new ideas, products, processes, and procedures that are outside the employees' general job responsibilities, and of benefit to the organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Idea generation</li> <li>- Idea promotion</li> <li>- Idea implementation</li> <li>- IWB</li> </ul>
	Idea promotion		
	Idea implementation		
<b>Supervisor support</b>		The support employees receive from their supervisor when engaging in IWB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Room for innovation</li> <li>- No room for innovation</li> <li>- Open for ideas</li> <li>- Rejects ideas</li> <li>- Supervisor implements ideas</li> <li>- Motivating supervisor</li> <li>- Relationship with supervisor</li> </ul>
<b>HR policies and practices</b>		All HR policies and practices that support the supervisor in stimulating IWB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training &amp; development</li> <li>- Financial incentives</li> <li>- Non-financial incentives</li> <li>- Performance appraisal</li> <li>- Feedback</li> <li>- Autonomy</li> <li>- Job design</li> <li>- Other HR policies &amp; practices</li> </ul>
<b>Supervisor and HR (AMO)</b>	Ability	The ability, motivation, and opportunity the supervisor needs to implement HR policies and practices that can support the employees in their IWB, but also the ability, motivation, and opportunity the supervisor needs to support employees that engage in IWB.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ability to support</li> <li>- Motivation to support</li> <li>- Opportunity to support</li> <li>- Skills needed</li> <li>- Competences needed</li> <li>- Time available</li> <li>- Support from others</li> <li>- Motivated by organization</li> <li>- Motivated by others</li> <li>- Intrinsic motivation</li> </ul>
	Motivation		
	Opportunity		

**Appendix D: Final Coding Template**

<b>Concept</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>	<b>Clusters</b>	<b>Example preliminary codes</b>
<b>IWB</b>	<i>Idea generation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Idea generation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Idea generation</li> <li>Small innovative ideas</li> </ul>
	<i>Idea championing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Idea championing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Idea championing</li> <li>IWB</li> </ul>
	<i>Idea implementation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Idea implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Idea implementation is hindered</li> </ul>
<b>Supervisor Support</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervisor supports IWB</li> <li>Supervisor stimulates IWB</li> <li>Supervisor facilitates IWB</li> <li>Supervisor is open towards ideas</li> <li>Supervisor selects ideas</li> <li>Supervisor asks feedback</li> <li>Supervisor engages employees</li> <li>Supervisor challenges employees</li> <li>Supervisor motivates employees</li> <li>Trust in supervisor stimulates IWB</li> <li>Supervisor communicates IWB</li> <li>Supervisor takes ideas serious</li> <li>Supervisor hinders IWB</li> <li>Supervisor is not open towards ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervisor engages employees to stimulate IWB</li> <li>Supervisor shares problems to stimulate idea generation</li> <li>Supervisor gives freedom to employees to solve issues</li> <li>Supervisor communicates employees' ideas further in the hierarchy</li> <li>Supervisor takes ideas serious</li> <li>Supervisor views ideas as criticism</li> <li>Ideas are not always being listened to</li> </ul>
<b>HR Policies and Practices</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training to stimulate IWB</li> <li>Performance appraisal to stimulate IWB</li> <li>Non-financial rewards</li> <li>No financial rewards</li> <li>Recruitment stimulates IWB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Free trainings for employees and supervisors</li> <li>Performance appraisal includes willingness to change and initiatives</li> <li>Non-financial rewards for idea generation</li> </ul>
<b>Supervisor and HR (AMO)</b>	<i>Ability to support</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to support</li> <li>Inability to support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training and coaching to improve supervisors' skills</li> <li>Manager coaches supervisor in facilitating IWB</li> </ul>
	<i>Motivation to support</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Motivation to support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intrinsic motivation to engage in IWB</li> </ul>
	<i>Opportunity to support</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunity to support</li> <li>Insufficient opportunity to support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Freedom from management to stimulate IWB</li> <li>Lack of support from central organization</li> </ul>