Measuring and developing wellbeing at work with co-creation and positive approach

INTRODUCTION
The aim of the current action research is to assist one of the largest municipalities in Finland in co-creating a novel measurement and development tool for supporting and increasing wellbeing in the workplace.

The tool will be used by leaders and immediate supervisors whenever they want to have a snapshot of the current state of their workplace, further develop the workplace and enhance employee wellbeing.

KEY ASSUMPTIONS

Co-creation
Good ideas concerning "wellbeing at work" and how to measure it are not just produced by personnel management or scientists; rather, they are created by immediate supervisors and employees.

Collaboration
Working closely with "end-users" of the tool will give real-life information about their hopes and needs and also offer a deep participatory experience, which in turn may increase commitment and the motivation to use the tool as well as enhance employee wellbeing.

Positive psychology
Using strength-based development and research methods, such as the Appreciative Inquiry, it will be possible to create a positive and safe environment, one which will enhance positive emotions. Positive emotions in turn will help municipal leaders be open to new people and issues that are essential for co-creation and collaboration (Fredrickson & Cohn, 2008).

Organizational culture
The developmental process itself can be seen as a baby step in changing an organizational culture’s basic orientation to one that is more possibility focused, participative, appreciative and positive (Cameron, 2008).

METHOD

Appreciative Inquiry (AI)
- Was used as a philosophical stance as well as a co-creation and data collection method
- Is a collaborative, strength-based approach
- Is a process that inquires into, identifies and develops the best of what organizations have to offer in order to create a better future (Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2008).
- Is commonly used as an organizational change method, but not often integrated with co-creation.
- It consists of four steps

DATA COLLECTION

1. Document analysis and background interviews
- The existing measurements (e.g. wellbeing at work questionnaires) and measuring processes were identified and analyzed.
- The personnel management group of the municipality was interviewed several times.

2. Facilitated workshop discussions
- Discovery and Dreaming phases (AI)
- Three different facilitated workshops were organized for the above-mentioned participants.
- The workshops lasted for about 4 hours and they were organized by the authors.
- The workshops followed the idea of AI and focused on the following questions:
  - What do you appreciate about the current measurement system?
  - What does an ideal measurement and development tool look like?

3. User experiences
- Design and Destiny phases (AI)
- The tool will be designed/built in co-operation with SurveyPal.
- Immediate supervisors will use the tool at their workplaces in real-life settings.
- Their user experiences will be collected and analyzed.
- The tool will be re-modified based on the user experiences

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KEY REFERENCES

