Nudge Management; a way to Motivate Healthier Behavior

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ABSTRACT


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Research questions: How can nudge management and wellness incentives motivate employees to adopt a healthier lifestyle?

Purpose: Explore how firms can use nudge management and wellness incentives to motivate its employees to adopt a healthier lifestyle.

Method: Qualitative research method. Semi-structured face-to-face interviews.

Conclusion: Today, organizations are facing rising costs caused by increased employee sick-leave. A way to motivate employees to choose a healthier lifestyle is for the employer to offer wellness incentives. However, not too many employees are taking advantage of the incentives. According to the Transtheoretical Model of Health Behavior Change (TTM), people are at different stages in their behavior change process. By knowing their personal obstacles to change, organizations can use nudge management and wellness incentives to help their employees to choose a healthier lifestyle. In order to get some answers, we conducted qualitative interviews at the Swedish Migration Agency. The result of our research showed seven main obstacles, and in this thesis we have explored different nudges organizations can use to promote health and to lower sick-leave.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................................................... 1
   1.1 PROBLEM BACKGROUND ........................................................................................................ 3
   1.1.1 Research Question ............................................................................................................... 3
   1.2 PURPOSE AND AIM .................................................................................................................. 3

2. LITERATURE REVIEW .................................................................................................................... 4
   2.1 BEHAVIORAL ECONOMICS THEORY .................................................................................. 4
   2.2 NUDGE THEORY ..................................................................................................................... 4
     2.2.1 Weaknesses of Using Nudges ........................................................................................ 6

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK ...................................................................................................... 7
   3.1 NUDGE MANAGEMENT ......................................................................................................... 7
   3.2 MOTIVATION .......................................................................................................................... 7
   3.3 TRANSTHEORETICAL MODEL OF HEALTH BEHAVIOR CHANGE ................................... 8
   3.4 THE CONNECTION BETWEEN TTM AND NUDGE MANAGEMENT .................................... 10

4. METHOD ........................................................................................................................................ 11
   4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN ................................................................................................................ 11
   4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW ......................................................................................................... 11
   4.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK ............................................................................................. 12
   4.4 DATA COLLECTION AND INTERVIEWS .............................................................................. 12
   4.5 THE FIRM AND THE PARTICIPANTS .................................................................................... 13
   4.6 OPERATIONALIZATION ....................................................................................................... 14
   4.7 ANALYSIS ................................................................................................................................. 15

5. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS ..................................................................................................................... 16
   5.1 EXERCISE HABITS ............................................................................................................... 16
   5.2 MOTIVATION TO EXERCISE .............................................................................................. 16
   5.3 THE WELLNESS INCENTIVES AT THE SWEDISH MIGRATION AGENCY ........................... 17
   5.4 MOTIVATION TO USE THE WELLNESS INCENTIVES ...................................................... 18

6. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION ....................................................................................................... 19
   6.1 EXERCISE HABITS AND THE TTM STAGES ....................................................................... 19
     6.1.1 Obstacles to Exercising ................................................................................................. 19
   6.2 THE WELLNESS INCENTIVES ............................................................................................ 19
   6.3 NUDGE MANAGEMENT ....................................................................................................... 20
     6.3.1 Nudges for Personal Habits ........................................................................................ 20
     6.3.2 Incentives Nudges ........................................................................................................ 21

......................................................................................................................................................... 23

7. CONCLUSION .................................................................................................................................. 23
1. INTRODUCTION

The workplace has a decisive impact on health in society (Menckel, Bjurvald, Schaarström, Schelo & Unge, 2004). Wellness incentives are being used by employers to encourage employees to exercise, quit smoking, and eat healthier in order to improve overall health. Employers’ strongest motive in offering these incentives is to control healthcare costs that comes with absenteeism and sick-leave (Abraham, Feldman, Nyman & Barleen, 2011). The cost of these problems are increasing steadily which are becoming a major financial problem for organizations, the individual and the society (Statens Offentliga Utredningar, 2002). The cost for society has risen from 21 billion SEK in 2010 to 32 billion SEK in 2014, an increase with 11 billion SEK in four years (Regeringen, 2015). Research shows that if you get people to exercise and focus on a healthy lifestyle, sick-leave will decrease and the employees will be more productive (Zwetsloot, Scheppingen, Dijkman, Henrich & Besten, 2010).

Firms can help and motivate their employees to live a healthier lifestyle by using wellness incentives. Wellness incentives are an example of nudge management, which is being used today by firms to influence or motivate the behaviors of employees (Ebert & Freibichler, 2017). Nudge management is a management approach where nudge theory is applied to an organizational setting in order to best use the unconscious behavior of employees in line with organizational objectives (Ebert & Freibichler, 2017).

Almost half of all swedes are offered wellness incentives at work, more specifically 48% (Viktväktarna, 2017), of these, as much as 37% are not using it. This according to a survey conducted by Sifo in 2017 on behalf of ViktVäktarna. In the group that does not use wellness incentives are 47% men, compared to 28% women. The most common reason for why people are not taking advantage of the incentives is because they do not have motivation (31%), they do not know how to use it (21%), and they do not have time to use it (20%) (Viktväktarna, 2017).

Not only are people more unhealthy today than just 10 years ago (Anderson, Johrén & Malmgren, 2004), psychological illness has also increased substantially since 2010 (Försäkringkassan, 2015). Depression will be the second largest cause of global ill health in 2030 (Mathers & Loncar, 2006). Various diseases such as diabetes and high blood pressure can be prevented and treated by daily exercise (Faskunger, 2008), and regular physical activity reduces depression and anxiety (Azevendo, Sing-Manoux, Brunner, Kaffashian, Shipley, Kvim & Nabil, 2012). Health improvements in terms of reduced stress in everyday work life, reduced illness and increased energy are just a few of the benefits you get from exercise (Karlsson, Jansson & Ståle, 2009).

In the article “The 7 best reasons to have a wellness program: benefits of wellness” (2017), Steven Aldana lists seven reasons to why an organization would like to implement wellness incentives to begin with. He argues that the biggest reason for implementation is behavior change. Wellness incentives encourage employees to develop and maintain healthy behaviors such as; working out, eating healthier or stop smoking. These new healthy behaviors will lead to
lower health risks, and do even work as preventative care, which will lead less chronic disease. Because of the reduction in chronic diseases, the organizations’ health care costs will therefore also decline (Aldana, 2017). Aldana also argues that poor health leads to lower mental presence and lower productivity at work, and it will also lead to higher work absence and sick-leave. “Wellness programs have the ability to improve employee health and this can have an impact on whether or not individuals are absent from work.” (Aldana, 2017). Aldana continues to explain that wellness incentives can change the organization culture to one of higher morale. Employees feel happier when they have control over their health, feel appreciated at work, and are encouraged to reach personal goals. This will lead to the employees taking pride in working for the organization and staying longer. Merrill, Aldana, Garrett and Ross also write in the article “Effectiveness of a Workplace Wellness Program for Maintaining Health and Promoting Healthy Behaviors” (2011) that the common goal of wellness incentives is to encourage good health behavior change and how to maintain such. Merrill and Aldana (2011) also says that incentives “can influence employee health care costs, employee productivity, employee job satisfaction, absenteeism, a sense of community, and long-term health” (p.782).

Not only Aldana and Merrill have done research about the reasons to implement workplace wellness incentives. In the research report; Total Rewards and Employee Well-being Practices (2015) by WorldatWork, a survey about wellness incentives and their benefits were conducted. WorldatWork is a human resource association, and the survey collected information from its headquarter managerial level or higher. The result of this survey showed several reasons for offering well-being incentives to employees (WorldatWork, 2015, p.13, figure 9). The same survey was conducted twice for comparison, 2011 and 2014. The most common reasons for an organization to offer wellness incentives were; to improve employee health, decrease medical costs, increase employee engagement and productivity, and reduce absenteeism. In the year 2014, some reasons were added. Those reasons were; to support the overall company culture, and to attract and keep the employees with needed skills.

In Sweden, firms usually offer their employees wellness incentives in the form of rebates to manage physical and mental health (Healthcare Nätverket, 2017). In this way, the firm will pay up to a certain amount a year per employee to engage in healthy activities of choice. Employers can give the employees rebates for simpler types of physical exercise and health care that is tax free as long as it is of lesser value (Swedish Tax Agency, 2017). Most employees will have this opportunity at the workplace regardless of the type of employment they have. The Swedish Tax Agency clarifies what is included among those simpler forms of exercise, such as racket sports, gymnastics, bowling or a gym card. Even dietary advice, stress management and smoking cessation courses are approved activities. Activities and sports that do not involve physical exercise such as; chess, gun shooting and bridge are not included in the healthcare incentives. In addition, expensive sports such as sailing, golf and horse riding are not subsidized (Swedish Tax Agency, 2017). It is not mandatory to firms to offer rebates, and they can encourage healthy lifestyles and give incentives in other ways (Unionen, 2017), for example a “wellness hour” per week when the employee can leave work one hour earlier to exercise. The firm can also organize free physical activities or/and competitions at the place of work.
1.1 Problem Background

As mentioned above, the cost of organizational sick-leave has increased by 11 billion SEK in four years (Regeringen, 2015). This is a problem to organizations. At the same time, in Sweden too few employees are using the wellness incentives offered by their employer. Only 63% of those who have access to it (Viktvåktarna, 2017).

According to Viktväktarna (2017), the reason for this is because of lack of motivation (31%), they do not know how to use it (21%), and time limitation (20%). Research shows that if people are motivated to exercise and focus on a healthy lifestyle, sick-leave will decrease and the employees will also be more productive (Zwetsloot et al., 2010). Therefore, organizations will benefit from providing wellness incentives to their employees. However, the employees need to be motivated to take the necessary steps to adopt a healthier lifestyle and to use the incentives. Research shows that nudge management, and the use of nudges, can be one solution to organizations in motivating and influencing their employees’ choices (Ebert & Freibichler, 2017). The connection between the motivation to change, nudge management, and the use of incentives therefore make an interesting and relevant research topic.

1.1.1 Research Question

How can nudge management and wellness incentives motivate employees to adopt a healthier lifestyle?

1.2 Purpose and Aim

The purpose of this study is to explore how firms can use nudge management and wellness incentives to motivate its employees to adopt a healthier lifestyle. Further, our aim is to hopefully be able to contribute with new information which could be of help to H&R and management of organizations in the area of employee health, and further also to a decrease in sick-leave costs.
2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a review of existing theories which are the bases to our theoretical framework. To understand our theoretical framework, nudge management, motivation, and the TTM, it is important to know the background theories. These theories are behavioral economics theory and nudge theory as described below.

2.1 Behavioral Economics Theory

Behavioral economic theory emerged from traditional microeconomics called the rational choice theory. Rational choice theory is a model describing social and economic behavior and how individual actor’s behavior affect aggregate social behavior e.g. demand and supply, where markets and incentives play a major role in shaping people’s behavior (Mullainathan & Thaler, 2000). Behavioral economics combines economics and psychology to understand how individuals actually behave as opposed to being perfectly rational (Thaler, 2016). Behavioral economics includes theories, such as; decision theory, prospect theory and nudge theory.

Decision theory studies the underlying reasoning for making certain decisions and how to make better decisions. This theory is closely related to the Game theory in economics. Prospect theory specifically describes decision-making in the light of gains and losses, and is a more accurate and developed model of the microeconomic expected utility theory. The theory was created by Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky. Nudge theory is a modern concept used in management to assist individuals to improve and change their thinking and decisions. Nudge theory is based on two systems developed by Daniel Kahneman. In the next section, we will explain and develop nudge theory.

2.2 Nudge Theory

In their book, *Nudge: Improving Decisions Wealth, health, and Happiness* (2008), Thaler and Sunstein brings up two systems of thinking. The first one is called the Automatic System and involves the intuitive thinking, and the second one is called the Reflective System and involves the rational thinking. The Automatic System is the gut reaction, the unconscious. The Reflective system is the conscious thought and involves a much slower way of thinking (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008). This way of thinking, and these two systems, were first developed by psychologist and behaviour economist Daniel Kahneman. Kahneman successfully integrated psychological research into economic science, and he was one of the first to research decision making and human judgement. Kahneman named these two ways of thinking as; System 1 and System 2.

System 1 takes intuitive and often unconscious decisions. It is used throughout the day and handles all types of questions. The major advantages of System 1 are that it is fast and it takes minimal energy, but it is prone to biases and systematic errors. We can make thousands of decisions a day with good accuracy. Examples of automatic activities that belong to system 1 are; determining where a sound comes from, knowing the answer of two plus two, and perceiving if someone is angry based on their tone of voice. We are born to perceive the world around us, recognize objects, focus attention and avoid losses. These abilities are congenital
and are linked to system 1. Through long-term training, other mental activities are accelerated and become automatic (Kahneman, 2012).

System 2 is an demanding, slow and controlled way of thinking. It requires energy and cannot work without attention. Example of activities that requires activating System 2 are complicated calculations, comparing two mobile phones or looking for a man with a hat in a crowded room. If you remove attention from the task, you will fail. This is why it is hard to make two demanding activities simultaneously, they take away attention and energy from each other. Once system 2 is engaged it can filter away the intuition and impetus that system 1 provides (Kahneman, 2012).

The abilities of system 1 and system 2 have an impact on skills. The requirement for energy decreases when you become more skilled at a task. It has the same impact on talent. Individuals who are highly intelligent need less effort to solve the same problems as those with lower intelligent. Whether it is cognitive or physical exertion the "law of least effort" applies. The law contend that if there are several different ways to achieving the same goal, people will gravitate to the least demanding course of effort. It is because laziness is deeply rooted into our nature. The limited budget of effort have an effect on both self-control and deliberate thought. Cognitive effort and self-control are forms of mental work, and this mental work can be trained, for instance the effects of temptation can be reduced. When you decide to quit eating candy, the difficulty of resisting the temptation to eat candy only lasts for a couple of weeks at most. It takes a few weeks to form a habit. In other words, it takes a few weeks for a system 2 task to shift over to system 1. Resisting the temptation to eat candy is primarily a system 2 task, once you have practiced resisting temptation for a few weeks, the resistance to candy becomes automatic. This principle applies for other system 2 tasks like fighting procrastination and increasing focus (Kahneman, 2012).

Thaler and Sunstein (2008) explain how humans are “nudge-able” in their judgement (p.37). In a high-speed world, quick decisions are required, and there is limited time to actually stop and analyzing rationally what to do. In a decision-making situation, humans automatically “default” to what is already known, to previous experience and to stereotype thinking. The “default” is explained by Thaler and Sunstein (2008) as, “The combination of loss aversion with mindless choosing” (p.35). Loss aversion is when someone sticks to what they already know because it is safest, and mindless choosing is when someone acts with lack of attention or lack of interest. This is also called “Status Quo Bias” (Samuelson & Zeckhauser, 1988). In this situation, thinking is more sensitive to impressions and forces around us that may impact our decision-making, thus being “nudge-able”. We are being nudged by e.g. temptation and social pressure.

Thaler and Sunstein’s (2008) definition of nudging is as follows, “...any aspect of the choice architecture that alters people’s behavior in a predictable way without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic incentives. To count as a mere nudge, the intervention must be easy and cheap to avoid. Nudges are not mandates. Putting fruit at eye level counts as a nudge. Banning junk food does not.” (p.6).
In his book, *Nudge theory in action: behavior design in policy and markets* (2016), Sherzod Abdukadirov argues about nudges, that “behavioral studies also demonstrate the power of framing in influencing how we make choices, which implies quirks in how both our preferences and information are affected” (p.19). Abdukadirov also argues that “nudges are changes to the choice environment (or choice architecture) around options” (p.21).

Employers can use different nudges in its management to change the choice architecture in the organization. The management has to decide what nudges to use and how subtle they should be (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008). This is called nudge management and will be discussed in the theoretical framework.

### 2.2.1 Weaknesses of Using Nudges

When it comes to ethics of choice, “liberal neutrality” comes in. Liberal neutrality is “the view that the state should not reward or penalize particular conceptions of the good life but, rather, should provide a neutral framework within which different and potentially conflicting conceptions of the good can be pursued” (Kymlicka, 1989, p.883). Simpler said, each person has the right to makes choices in their own interest as they understand them, and not be controlled by how policymakers define them. However, humans also make bad choices that may have a negative impact on themselves and others. Therefore, laws are to some degree needed to protect citizens from each other, and to protect the environment and animals (Abdukadirov, 2016). This is called paternalism and is defined as “the interference of a state or an individual with another person, against their will, and defended or motivated by a claim that the person interfered with will be better off or protected from harm.” (Abdukadirov, 2016, p.34). An example of this is in Japan where there is a law forbidding to have a waistline larger than 33.5 inches for men and 34.5 inches for women, and this applies to people between the ages of forty and seventy (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008). According to Thomas Hove, paternalism comes with a danger. It is dangerous when experts think they are entitled to make choices regarding others because they judge them to be incompetent to make healthy choices of their own (Hove, 2012). In organizations, paternalism can become a problem when employees are controlled or nudged in unethical ways because of unethical motives of management (Hove, 2012).
3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter we will introduce and discuss the main theories of use, namely; nudge management, motivation, and the TTM.

3.1 Nudge Management

Marketers, employers, governments and politicians use different nudges to steer people to make certain decisions. Even though nudge theory originates from science in microeconomics, it is used in business administration as nudge management. Ebert and Freibichler (2017) define nudge management as, “Nudge management is born out of the idea that some of the basic insights of nudge theory can be adapted and implemented in an organizational setting” (p.2), and further “Nudge management is a management approach that applies insights from behavioral science to design organizational contexts so to optimize fast thinking and unconscious behavior of employees in line with the objectives of the organization” (p.2). An example of an organization which uses nudge management is Google. Their management control system focuses on using nudges and defaults to control the choices of their employees (Ebert & Freibichler, 2017).

Different nudges can be used to change thinking (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008). As an example, in an organizational setting managers can use wellness incentives to motivate employees to make better health choices by e.g. offering rebates on gym membership or giving rewards in competitions. Also, managers can change different “default” options in order to engage conscious action, e.g. by placing fruits instead of candy by the register in the cafeteria. Another nudge an employer can use is “priming” where certain choices can be manipulated by talking about an issue beforehand. This works as a priming of the automatic system of the brain and as an unconscious reminder. Other nudges are; giving immediate feedback, education and information, social nudging, and self-control strategies (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008).

3.2 Motivation

In order to understand how managers at firms can “nudge” employees, it is good to find out how motivation works. To be motivated, means “to move”. It comes from the Latin term movere (Jang, Conradi, McKenna & Jones, 2015). The definition of motivation is, “The reason why somebody does something or behaves in a particular way” (Oxford, 2010, p.998), and the “eagerness and willingness to do something without needing to be told or forced to do it” (Longman, 2014, p.1138). In order for an employee to utilize the incentives, the person first need to be motivated to exercise, eat healthy, or change other unhealthy behaviors. There are many motivational theories and models which seem to be very similar, and sometimes intertwined. There has been a confusion among students and researchers in the past decades about of the large amount of motivational theories and how to integrate them (Locke & Latham, 1990). One reason for this is that most of the theories relate to- and can be applied to different parts of the motivational sequence. Some parts of the motivational sequence are; needs, values, goals, performance, rewards, and satisfaction (Locke, 1991). In the 1990s, a university professor named James O. Prochaska tried to simplify the theory integration. He did a
comparative analysis of different behavior change theories and integrated them into a common model called the Transtheoretical Model (Prochaska & Velicer, 1997).

### 3.3 Transtheoretical Model of Health Behavior Change

The model by James O. Prochaska is called the Transtheoretical Model of Health Behavior Change (TTM) and it explains the stages, processes, and levels of change that people go through in order to change health related behaviors such as e.g. diet, exercise and weight control, sex, and alcohol abuse (Prochaska & Velicer, 1997). The different stages in the model can directly be related to what an employee go through before deciding to make a health behaviour change (Moschetti, 2013). Therefore, knowing these stages, the model can be used in business administration to motivate employees to make health changes by using the wellness incentives. In addition, the management can use nudges to motivate in these stages. The TTM has become one of the most widely accepted models of health behavior change (Glanz, Rimer & Viswanath, 1990).

The transtheoretical model suggests that the decision to change a health behavior involves a process of through a series of six stages. Theses stages are; precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance, and termination (Prochaska & Velicer, 1997). Below, we will introduce the different stages separately.

- **Precontemplation.**
  The first stage in the transtheoretical model is contemplation. People have no ambition or intention to take action in the upcoming future, often measured as the next six months. The reason that people are in this stage is because they are unaware that their behavior will lead to negative consequences. People in this stage often underestimate the pros of changing behavior and place too much emphasis on the cons of changing behavior. (Moschetti, 2013)

- **Contemplation.**
  Contemplation is the stage in which people intend to change behavior in the foreseeable future defined as six months, and they are more aware of the advantages of changing, but also the cons. Despite this recognition, people may still be ambivalent toward changing their behavior. The weighing between pros and cons is the cause behind the ambivalence which can lead to people remaining in this stage for a long time. This phenomenon is called chronic contemplation (Prochaska, Norcross & DiClemente, 1994).

- **Preparation.**
  When people decide to pursue change and to be less ambivalent, they enter the stage of preparation. In this stage, people are ready to take action within the next month and have already taken small steps toward behavior change, like joining a gym. The commitment to change has been done and they are ready for action-oriented programs (Di Clemente & Prochaska ,1998).
● **Action.**
At this stage the individuals have recently (within six months) implemented their plans of changing behavior into action and intend to keep that change. At this point they are active in their commitment and make some modifications in their lifestyle. The modifications they make have to meet some certain criterion that scientist and professionals considers to be sufficient to reduce risk for disease. For example, it is not enough to reduce number of cigarettes, only total abstinence counts. The overall process of behavior change is often equated with action since it is observable but it is only one of five stages in TTM (Prochaska & Velicer, 1997).

● **Maintenance.**
Maintenance is characterized as integration of the newly developed behavior. The individuals intend to maintain their behavior change and work to prevent relapse (Marlatt, 1985). Researchers have concluded that maintenance lasts from six months to five years based on self-efficacy data. There have been pessimism about this estimate, but data from the Surgeon General's Report of 1990 support this estimate. After 12 months of constant abstinence, 43% of the individuals started to smoke regularly again. It took five years of continuous abstinence until the risk for relapse dropped to 7% (Prochaska & Velicer, 1997).

● **Termination.**
The individuals are considered to be in this stage when they are not tempted at all and have 100% self-efficacy. They are sure they would not relapse no matter if they are stressed, lonely, bored or angry (Prochaska & Velicer, 1997)
3.4 The Connection Between the TTM and Nudge Management

As stated in the introduction, organizations can attempt to lower sick-leave costs and increase employee productivity by helping employees to take care of their health. One way to do this is to offer wellness incentives at the workplace. However, because of lack of motivation, time, and information, too few are using the incentives (Viktväktarna, 2017). According to Prochaska’s TTM of health behavior change, there are six stages a person goes through in order to reach a committed and maintained change in health behavior (Prochaska & Velicer, 1997). Each stage needs motivation, or a nudge, to transfer to the next stage. Through nudge management, organizations can use wellness incentives to nudge and motivate its employees through theses stages (Faskunger & Nylund, 2014). They can do this by educating about health choices, having clear information about incentives available, offering fun rebates, arranging competitions or activities at the workplace to create a social nudge.
4. METHOD

This section will highlight the methodology that was used in order to follow and comprehend how we have conducted our thesis. It is important to highlight methodology in order to create reliability. Reliability can be explained as how trustworthy the collected data is (Björklund & Paulsson, 2014). The research will be more reliable if it is for example replicable by someone else (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Other investigators should be able to obtain the same results if the same data collection procedures were repeated (Yin, 2013). Below we will explain and discuss the different steps of methodological assumptions we used: research design, literature review, theoretical framework, data collection, the participants, operationalization and analysis method for our study.

4.1 Research Design

Methodology provides guidelines and is a way to achieve the aim of a study (Potter, 1996). Generally, research is being carried out by adopting a qualitative or quantitative method. Depending on the aim of the study, the researchers selects which method that will be used (Holme & Solvang, 1991). What also affects the choice of method is the problem and the need for information. The main emphasis of a qualitative research is on perceptions and interpretations of social reality (Bryman & Bell, 2015). We adopted a qualitative method for our study because it aspire to build a better understanding of the social phenomenon in specific situations. Also a qualitative research enables us to ask supplementary questions to the answers and go broader into the reasons to why the respondents may respond as they do (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

Not being objective enough when selecting which information or source to use can be one of the critiques when conducting a qualitative research. A selective approach may be chosen which can lead to personal judgement instead of being objective (Bryman, 2012). It is difficult to ensure that a study has been conducted completely with an objective approach, as valuations may have been made unconsciously. Our intention has been to be as objective as possible when conducting this study. As mentioned in sections below, we tried to limit biased expectations, judgement, and analyses by creating our interview questions grounded on our theoretical framework. In order to minimize biased interpretations in the interviews, and to make the interviews more reliable, we decided to both attend the interviews in order to get a more objective interpretation with minimum intrusion of personal values (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

4.2 Literature Review

It is important to be aware of already existing literature in the relevant field in order to gain confidence in the studied subject (Yin, 2013). To construct a relevant framework for this study,
we have used a set of literature covering health, behavioral economics, nudge theory, nudge management, motivation and behavior change theory. Several well-known printed books have been used, such as those by Thaler and Sunstein, and Kahneman. But in order to gain credibility and trustworthiness, mostly peer-reviewed scientific articles from databases have been used. We have used databases such as; Google scholar, ABI/INFORM Global, EconPapers, JSTOR, and Emerald Insight. Further, in addition to scientific articles, this project builds on secondary sources such as web pages and magazine articles, and books other than Kahneman, Thaler and Sunstein.

4.3 Theoretical Framework

In order to base our research question and analysis scientifically, we started to search for a fitting theory. In the beginning of our search, we immediately encountered extensive material concerning behavioral economics theory. This lead us further to a more specific and fitting theory, namely nudge theory by Richard Thaler. However, since nudge theory is an microeconomic theory, and this thesis is a business administrative research, we needed to look at how firms can use nudges in their organizational management. This lead us to nudge management and motivation, and as we searched for motivational theories, we found an array of different theories and models which seemed to be very similar. After getting acquainted with several theories we chose to use the transtheoretical model of health behavior change (TTM) by James O. Prochaska (1997) as a theory of use in this thesis. Since the TTM explains the six stages someone goes through in order to make a health change, we thought it was a good foundation to lay for the use of nudge management. Each stage needs motivation and/or a nudge to transfer to the next stage.

4.4 Data Collection and Interviews

For this qualitative research, we have chosen in-person interviews as the collection method for the empirical data. According to Robert Yin (2013), interviews can provide rich details, ideas and explanations, and are an imperative source of information. We first considered conducting a survey with self-completion questionnaires since we might get a wider result with relatively little effort (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Björklund, 2014), but then we decided to do in-person interviews because we felt that we would get more personalized answers because of the closer involvement it brings (Bryman & Bell, 2015). We also felt that we would get a quicker response with in-person interviews, since surveys have a tendency to easily be put to the side and then forgotten (Björklund, 2015). We also wanted to be able to read the interviewee’s body language which is not possible with surveys. Furthermore, in-person interviews were possible because the company and the persons interviewed were located in Västerås, the same town as the University, and travel was not needed.

We chose to conduct a semi-structured interview (Bryman & Bell, 2015), and we had structured questions going into the meeting but were open to follow-up questions depending on how the discussion would flow. The interviews was in Swedish. Even though follow-up questions could be asked in a telephone interview as well, we wanted to meet in-person to make it a little more
personalized. Each interview lasted about 15 minutes per person. The interview questions, which are seen in the interview guide in Figure 2, are based on the subjects in the theoretical framework; nudge management, motivation, and TTM. The first six questions concerned the overall view of exercise, and the exercise habits of the interviewees. Also, about what would motivate them to exercise more and what hinder them. The intention of these questions were to create a general view of in which stage of the TTM the person would fit (Prochaska & Velicer, 1997). The last four questions concerned the wellness incentives at the workplace, the information available, and what would motivate the employees to take advantage of this benefit. The intention of these questions were to see if, and where, there might be a gap in the preferences of the employees and what the employer offers.

We chose to record the interviews in order to be able to concentrate fully in the conversation without having to take notes. Some of the advantages of recording interviews are that it allows a more thorough examination of what people say, but also that it permits repeated examinations of the answers (Bryman & Bell, 2015). A recording reveals the tone of the voice of the interviewee when asked questions (Gibbs, 2007), which can be beneficial.

We transcribed, and translated the full interviews in English since the language of this thesis is English. We used a literal transcription method where the interviews were transcribed word-for-word. This was in order to be able to catch the sense of the whole interview. The full interviews are not published in this thesis but are available upon request (Bailey, 2008).

4.5 The Firm and the Participants

Our original intention was to conduct 6-8 interviews at a total of two different companies. However, one company could not help us until a later time, and one company did not have any volunteers wanting to conduct the interviews. This put us in a tight time-frame, but we managed to find an organization in Västerås that was willing to help us do our research and interviews within a very short time notice. We did the interviews at the Swedish Migration Agency (Migrationsverket). This is a state owned organization processing applications for residence permits and accommodation for asylum seekers (Swedish Migration Agency, 2017). Since this paper is not a case-study about this organization, we will not go further into the specifics of this office.

We did a purposive sampling for the interviews (Bryman & Bell, 2015). We purposely chose four individuals from the company who did not use the wellness incentives because we wanted to know specifically what motivated them and what did not. However, one of the interviewees did take advantage of the “wellness hour” offered. We wanted to interview more than four individuals but because of the limited time-frame and the limited supply of volunteers, we chose to keep it at four. The gender or age of the interviewees was not decided in advance and was not relevant in this study. In order to make an ethical research, the participants were volunteers and anonymous, and were informed about the purpose of our thesis (Gibbs, 2007). The participants heard about the project and the need for interviewees through Sirwan who has a relative who works there. However, Sirwan has no personal relation to the specific interviewees.
4.6 Operationalization

The interviews were conducted during two different days and during the interviewees’ lunch hour. We were able to use a quiet conference room at the workplace, which was good for recording without disturbing noises. We noticed in the first interview that some of our questions were intertwined and were answered in just one question instead of two. However, because we conducted a semi-structured in-person interview, we were able to ask follow up questions and create a flowing discussion. We think the interviews were relaxed, and the interviewees spoke freely without hesitation. However, one of the interviewees was in a hurry to a meeting and was therefore a little stressed. The discussions stayed on topic. In order to reduce biased conclusions by the interviewers, we tried to not steer the conversations in certain directions, and to be open to new information (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

Figure 2. Interview guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Theory used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General exercise:</strong></td>
<td>Transtheoretical model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What are your exercise habits?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What kind of exercise do you prefer?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Would you like to exercise more often? What is keeping you from that?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivation:</strong></td>
<td>Transtheoretical model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a. Do you think exercise affects your physical/psychological health? Can you give an example?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b. Does it affect your effectivity at work?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wellness incentives:</strong></td>
<td>Nudge management/Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a. Do you know if your workplace offers wellness incentives?</td>
<td>(Ebert and Freibichler, 2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b. Does your company inform you about your incentive choices?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you take advantage of the incentives? And how?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivation</strong></td>
<td>Transtheoretical model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a. What would motivate you to use the wellness incentives?</td>
<td>Prochaska, James O; Velicer, Wayne F. (1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b. Would your motivation increase by …? (competitions, rewards, increased choices, exercise during work hours, monetary amount)</td>
<td>Nudge management/Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Would you appreciate activities arranged by the workplace? (lunch workout, running group, competitions)</td>
<td>(Ebert and Freibichler, 2017)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.7 Analysis

There has been a growing popularity in the use of qualitative research method in the past decade, but there is a lack of methods to analyze the empirical data in the end of the study (Bryman & Burgess, 1994). It is important that the data can be analyzed in a methodical manner to be meaningful and useful. A common way to analyze qualitative data is the thematic networks theory, which is a process of revealing repeated words and themes in the data in order to analyze and create meaning. The thematic networks theory is “an organizing and a representational means” of analyzing data (Attride-Sterling, 2001, p.338). According to Robert K Yin (2011), there are five stages of analyses that can be used; summarize empirical data, code, recode, interpreting, and summarize. Through these stages, the data is taken apart and dissected into common words and then put together in themes. Once recoded into themes, the data is analyzed.

We chose to categorize our findings from the interviews in four different categories to create a structure according to the interview guide. The most common words mentioned in our interview were motivation, exercise, wellness incentives, information flow, energy, and lack of time. Once the findings were in place, we categorized our analysis section in three main categories rather than four. The keywords and the categories were related to our main theories of use, the TTM and nudge management (Prochaska & Velicer, 1997). We did this in order to create a better foundation for discussion. Once the categories of analysis were in place, we explored the similarities, differences and connections of the interview results. Our intention was to stay objective in the analysis process, however, since the study had a purpose, our preconceived expectations of the outcome could have influenced the analysis to some degree.
5. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The interviews were conducted at the Swedish Migration Agency (Migrationsverket) in Västerås, Sweden. The Swedish Migration Agency processes applications from persons who want to live in- or visit Sweden, who need protection from persecution, or want to apply for Swedish citizenship (Swedish Migration Agency, 2017). According to the H&R department at the Swedish Migration Agency, the purpose of having wellness incentives is to create opportunities for the employees to develop and keep a healthy lifestyle. They offer a wellness rebate in accordance to the Swedish Tax Agency’s regulations, and the rebate is 3000 SEK/year. They also offer the choice of a wellness hour instead of the rebate, with the benefit of exercising one hour/week during workhours (Maria A. Andersson, personal communication, January 12, 2018).

5.1 Exercise Habits

In interview 1, the respondent prefers to go running, swimming, and do aerobic classes. She is not exercising at all at the moment. She has been exercising several times/week in the past and she would like to exercise more. What is hindering her mostly is lack of time, and lack of energy. She has a heavy burden at work due to, and has a one hour commute each way.

In interview 2, the respondent practices Nordic walking every morning for about 30-40 minutes. She wants to exercise more but there is no time for that. At her previous job, she attended boxing classes together with her co-workers arranged by the employer during work-hours, but now she only does Nordic walking. Due to her exercise in the morning she does not get stressed at work.

In interview 3, the respondent does not exercise at all. Back when he was in the military he exercised a lot and also before that. When he started to work at the Swedish Migration Agency he slowly stopped. He was supposed to buy a gym-card and to start exercising again several weeks ago, but it has not been done due to laziness. He postpones it every time. Living 30 minutes from the workplace makes it harder for him to exercise since the travelling takes a lot of time and energy. He does not like any ball sport, but he prefers gym, jogging and boxing.

In interview 4, the respondent thinks exercise is pretty important and goes to the gym about 2-3 times/week. She is not interested in any other physical activity. She would like to exercise more than she does. What is hindering her is mostly lack of time and energy. Another factor which affects her is the different seasons.

5.2 Motivation to Exercise

In interview 1, the respondent says that the motivation factor for her to exercise is better health, to be more alert, and to have more energy. However, she has no motivation at all at the moment. Physical benefits are that she has more energy, e.g. easier to walk up the stairs, sleep better, and it is easier to make healthier diet choices. Psychological benefits are that she feels less stress when exercising and that during exercise she processes stressful thoughts. She
feels calmer, and she considers herself more effective at work as well when exercising because of the factors above. She can handle work much better.

In interview 2, the respondent would be motivated to exercise more if she could do it somewhere really close to her work without having to go far. What would also motivate her is if there were workout classes she could attend in a group along with her co-workers. Nordic walking gives the respondent good psychological advantages, she feels more relaxed and more stress-resistant. Furthermore, exercise also makes her feel better physically. These benefits motivates her to exercise. Competitions would not increase her motivation to exercise more.

In interview 3, the respondent feels that motivation to exercise would come from the respondent himself by realizing that he is not in shape. He prefers to exercise alone rather than in group. Mainly because he can focus on himself only. The respondent feels that exercise affects him a lot physically for example better endurance, increase strength and a better body. Psychologically it builds better endurance. He remembers being in the military where they trained their mentality just as you build muscle in the gym. But if you take a break you will become lazy like him. He thinks that he gets more alert and efficient at work when he is exercising. However since he has not exercised since starting at the Swedish Migration Agency, he has not noticed those effects.

In interview 4, the respondent would feel more motivated to exercise if she had more time. Physical effects of exercise are that she notices herself having more energy and better general health. A psychological effect example is a feeling of satisfaction of having exercised. She thinks it is hard to connect exercise and productivity at work since other factors can play in. But the general health state would be affected in a positive direction, and feeling positive about yourself could make you more effective at work. She does not use the rebate, but uses the weekly wellness hour. She does not always use it for exercise, but knowing that she could leave earlier from work one day to get to the gym before everyone else is satisfaction enough.

5.3 The Wellness Incentives at the Swedish Migration Agency

In interview 1, the respondent knows that her workplace offers wellness incentives, but she is not using it. She said that she had gotten some information about the incentives from the H&R administration at some point, but most information is transferred from other colleagues when she hears about what the others use it for. However, she do not know much about what is offered. Not much information has been received from the company. She thinks the rebate is 3000 SEK/year and that you could also choose the wellness hour instead.

In interview 2, the respondent has knowledge of her workplace offering her wellness incentives in the form of a wellness rebate of 3000 SEK/year, or the choice of a wellness hour. She searched for the information regarding the wellness rebate by herself on the homepage of the Swedish Tax Agency, and which activities you could use it for. The employer only has informed about that they offer the wellness rebate and what amount it is but nothing more.
In interview 3, the respondent knows that the employee offers wellness incentives in the form of an wellness hour and wellness rebate but does not know the amount. He got informed about the wellness incentives through e-mail and that is not the best idea according to him as it is easier to forget or ignore. He would prefer that the H&R administrator had told them clearer about it in a meeting and not just have reminded them a week before the last date. He points out that they have a ping-pong table at the workplace which is being used.

In interview 4, the respondent has not gotten herself into the information about the rebate and she does not know about the amount or which activities available. She cannot recall any meeting about it. She thinks there was some information in the beginning that there are incentives available, but most information the employees have to find themselves. The employer does not arrange any group training or competitions, but some colleagues have arranged it in the past.

5.4 Motivation to use the Wellness Incentives

In interview 1, the respondent thinks she would feel more motivated to use the incentives if there was more information about how they could use it. Also if the company engaged a little more effort and maybe arranged competitions or groups doing exercises together. Usually it is employees who take the initiative, but she would appreciate if the company itself took some initiative. She does not know what would motivate the others.

In interview 2, the respondent does not use the wellness incentives because the activities does not fit her. Increased options would motivate her to use the wellness incentives. For example she wants be able to use the wellness rebate for buying running shoes. Since she has much to do at work she is not motivated to use the wellness hour during work-hours.

In interview 3, the respondent thinks that the wellness incentives are a motivation by itself, but he feels that he might need a push to use it and also better information about the amount, date and options. Exercising during work hours would be a good solution since it would be included in his daily workday. Having competitions and rewards might also be beneficial. If it is an environment where many are exercising it will become a topic of conversation and then the wellness incentives would come up more often. He would be more motivated to use the incentives if the amount or options were increased, for example being able to go golfing.

In interview 4, the respondent thinks that nothing could motivate her to use the incentives differently. She could use the rebate to buy her gym-card, but the wellness hour has more worth to her. To have the opportunity even if she does not use it. She has mixed feelings about group exercising. She does not think that it should be pushed too much to make it a competition or make it wrong to not exercise, because then it will be heavy pressure for those that do not exercise. They would feel pointed out and unhealthy in some way. Exercise should be positive.
6. ANALYSIS and DISCUSSION

6.1 Exercise Habits and the TTM Stages

The health habits among the interviewees differed, and we could also categorize them in different stages of the TTM model. In this section, we will discuss in which stage each participant might belong.

Participant 1 does not exercise even though she did before, and would like to do more. She also knows the pros of exercising but still seem a little ambivalent to start again. Based on these answers she fits the stage in the TTM called contemplation, where the person is aware of benefits of changing the behavior and start exercising but do not have enough determination, and just does not do it. Prochaska and Velicer (1997) argued that a person in this stage can get stuck in a chronic procrastination, and it seems like this participant might fit this description.

In comparison to participant 1, participant 3 also does not exercise at the moment but is ready to take action and has taken some small steps. Therefore, he fits the stage of preparation rather than contemplation. He admits he is just lazy, but has a plan of action in the immediate future.

Participant 4 exercises regularly every week, but not as much as before she started to work at her current job. She intends to keep the behavior, and maybe even exercise more. Therefore, she fits the stage of maintenance where the person is making an effort to keep the current habits.

We have one participant, namely participant 2, who fits the last stage of termination. She has discipline to take walks every morning, and she is able to keep this habit because it is very important to her. A person in this stage has self-efficiency even through difficult times.

6.1.1 Obstacles to Exercising

We found that the obstacles to exercising were similar among the participants. The most common reason for not exercising as much as desired is lack of time. All participants feel that they do not have enough time because of for example, commutes and heavy burden at work. These factors are also reasons to another common obstacle, namely energy. All participants feel that they have too much to do at work and feel stressed. Therefore, they have less energy to exercise. However, they are all aware that if they did exercise they would actually receive more energy. Two of the participants, the ones in the contemplation stage and the preparation stage of TTM, both seem to struggle more with having motivation to exercise than the other two.

6.2 The Wellness Incentives

At the Swedish Migration Agency, the employees are offered a wellness rebate of 3000 SEK/year or they can use a “wellness hour” where they can leave work one hour early every
week to exercise. However, they cannot combine those two. None of the participants use the incentives in the form of the rebate, but one of them uses the wellness hour.

All participants wish that the company would have given them better information about the wellness incentives, some of them said they have received information about it in an e-mail, and the H&R administrator has mentioned the closing date in a meeting. They do not know much about their incentives options and have to search for most information by themselves or talk to colleagues about it. However, some of the participants do not seem too interested in knowing this information.

The participants also feel that the incentive options could be expanded for example being able to use the rebate to buy workout clothes and exercise equipment. They also feel that the employer could make an effort to arrange activities at work, such as; competitions and group training.

6.3 Nudge Management

In this section we will explore in what ways organizations can use nudge management and the wellness incentives in a better way to help their employees make better health choices. In this thesis we have focused mainly on exercise, but these nudges can also be used to improve dietary choices and improve psychological health.

6.3.1 Nudges for Personal Habits

When it comes to the employees’ personal exercise habits and obstacles, we found in our interviews three main obstacles; lack of time, lack of energy, and lack of motivation.

The largest obstacle the respondents battled with was lack of time. The solution for this, obviously, mainly rests on the individual person’s responsibility to prepare and plan the week ahead and to exercise self-control and discipline in order to make something happen. The organization have not much control over where the employees live or their personal scheduling or family lives, but they can offer information or classes about time-management and creating routines. Thaler and Sunstein (2016) talk about something called “frequency” where practice makes perfect, and that difficult things become easier with time, and so does preparing and planning habits. We believe that persons in the upper stages of the TTM practice frequency easier than those in the lower stages. Therefore, those in the lower stages might need more nudging in the area of planning, preparing and time-management.

Another large obstacle the respondents battles with is the lack of energy. They feel that, because of the lack of time, they do not have time to exercise but also they do not eat healthy. The largest reason for lack of energy is the workload and the stress they encounter when at work. They all say that they have very much to do and that they are too tired to exercise after work. If they use the wellness hour, they would instead be backed-up at work and have to work overtime. This is a new finding for us and was not an answer expected before conducting the
interviews. We feel that this is something very important that the organization must look into in order to nudge the employees to live a healthier lifestyle. It would be a good idea to lower the stress by lessening the workload by e.g. hire more employees and delegating. It would also be a good idea to offer stress-management.

The third main obstacle is lack of motivation. We found that especially two respondents, the ones in the contemplation and preparation stages, struggled more with motivation to exercise. We see that they may need a nudge more than the other two respondents. One nudge that can be used to motivate is “priming”. Thaler and Sunstein (2008) explain that this is a way to nudge a person’s choices by generally talking about an issue beforehand. This works as an unconscious reminder. We realized that we practiced priming in our interviews. As we brought up the topic of exercise with our interviewees, they had to analyze their own habits, which in turn worked as a reminder and might have encouraged them to exercise more. Organizations can use priming to stir the unconscious by mentioning health and using certain images in communication.

6.3.2 Incentives Nudges

When it comes to the wellness incentives, we found at least four main obstacles which organizations could improve in order to encourage more employees to choose a healthier lifestyle. Those obstacles are; lack of activities, lack of options, lack of information, and lack of education.

In order to overcome the obstacles, one of the main requests of change was for the employer to arrange activities such as competitions and group exercises at the workplace. The respondents feel that in this way they would feel more motivated to be more physically active since they would encourage each other. This is called social nudging, and is explained as, “Humans, on the other hand, are frequently nudged by other humans” (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008, s.53). Friends and colleagues who actively exercise nudge other people around them to be more physically active (Trost, Owen, Bauman, Sallis & Brown, 2002). We think that organizations would benefit from arranging some health activities and competitions at the workplace from time to time, which in turn would automatically create an environment of social nudging.

Another main request was to offer more options when it comes to the incentives. For example the respondents want to use the wellness rebate for buying exercise shoes and other training equipment, which is not allowed at the moment. The idea of tailoring the incentives is something the Swedish Migration Agency should look into since every participant is at a different stage of TTM and they have different needs of nudges in making choices. However, the rebate options are decided by the Swedish Tax Agency and which the individual organization have not much power. The Swedish Tax Agency does include an array of options which the rebate can be used towards and usually tailor to most people. What the individual organization can do would be to increase the wellness hour to maybe two hours/week to make it more attractive. A couple of respondents feel that they would exercise more if the gym was situated closer to the workplace. The organization could, if they have room and finances, install a small gym on the premises.
Studies show that the creation of-or increased accessibility to physical activity premises, coupled with participation in informative activities, has a strong connection with increased physical activity among individuals (Khan, Ramsey, Brownson, Heath, Howze, Powell, Stone & Rajabl, 2002). Increased accessibility also has to do with time-management, since the employees would save time if the gym was close by.

Moreover, all the respondents think that the information about the wellness incentives are insufficient. They are not aware of all that is offered to them e.g. that they can use the rebate for the use of a personal trainer. If organizations want to get the employees to use the wellness incentives they should share the information and knowledge in a clearer way. We found out in our interviews that an e-mail with written information is not enough, nor is it enough to mention it in a staff meeting. There are many different ways to market the incentives to the employees e.g. having creative meetings, making videos, and offering an internal app etc. According to Persson (2013), an increase in information flow and increased investment in wellness incentives leads to increased participation among employees.

Another way to use nudge management in organizations could be raising health awareness by arranging lectures held by health coaches or other. During our research we recognized that adopting a healthy lifestyle is a process involving several parts and not just exercise, and arranging lectures would put a focus on the other parts as well. The lecturers would be teaching about self-image, values, diet, overcoming obstacles, stress and time-management etc. Through this, the employees can get feedback and support, and even role-models (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008).

As an end-note, it is important to mention that the attempts to nudge employees in a healthier direction cannot become too obsessive. The respondent in the maintenance stage pointed out that if the pressure to exercise becomes too heavy it can have the opposite effect and even cause psychological ill health.
Figure 3. Obstacles and Nudges Model

**Obstacles**

- **Lack of time**
- **Lack of energy**
- **Lack of motivation**
- **Lack of activities at the workplace**
- **Lack of options**
- **Lack of information**
- **Lack of education**

**Nudges**

- Self-control, planning, preparing.
- Stress management, lighter workload, delegation.
- Priming, feedback, support.
- Education, awareness, coaching.
- Social nudge, group training, competitions.
- Expanded rebate usage, more choices, gym at work, increased wellness hour.
- Increased information flow.
- Education, awareness, coaching.
7. CONCLUSION

In this thesis we have explored how firms can use nudge management to motivate its employees to adopt a healthier lifestyle. By collecting information about the employees personal exercise habits and obstacles to exercise, we have been able to put them in different stages of the Prochaska’s transtheoretical model of health behavior change (TTM). We found that the employees faced the same main obstacles to exercise, but depending on the stage, the employees faced different levels of motivation and also needed different nudges to change. Furthermore, we chose to specifically focus on the wellness incentives offered at the workplace and how organizations can use it in a more effective way. By collecting information from employees who do not use the incentives we could clearly see where it was lacking in effectiveness. Once we summarized the empirical data we used it to explore different ways that organizations can nudge their employees in the direction of a healthier lifestyle. By knowing the main personal obstacles, and that each person belong in different stages of change, and by knowing what is lacking in the wellness incentives, organizations can make changes by using nudge management.

Even though we collected information from only one organization, and from a small sample, we felt that the findings gave us interesting information which we could analyze and discuss, and out of this create our own model. We found it interesting that, on the personal level, the respondents faced the same three main obstacles to exercise; lack of time, lack of energy, and lack of motivation. One thing we did not expect was the amount of interference of work-related stress. As we did the interviews we quickly realized that the stress from the pressure of having a heavy workload was one of the main reasons for not having enough time or energy to focus on exercising and a healthy lifestyle. This was something all four interviewees mentioned, no matter in which stage of the TTM they were positioned, and this was not something we had expected beforehand. Having too much to do at work was an obstacle for the employees to actually take advantage of the wellness incentives, whether it be the rebate or the wellness hour. In this case, it seems like the stress at work actually works against the idea of offering wellness incentives. If the incentives are supposed to motivate the employees to pursue a healthy lifestyle, the stress acquired at work actually has the opposite effect. Because of this, we suggest that maybe instead of offering wellness incentives, organizations need to focus on lowering the stress level that employees might encounter at work. They can do this by lessen the workload assigned to each person, hire more staff and delegate, and offer stress-management classes. This will lead to less overtime and exhaustion, and therefore maybe automatically lead to employees focusing more on their health as they have more time and energy left to pursue such thing.

We discovered that the respondents have different ideas and requests on how to change or develop the wellness incentives. But it is not possible to conclude that participation in wellness activities would increase if individual wishes were considered. However, with the knowledge of previous research (Garber, Blissmer, Deschenes, Franklin, Lamonte, Lee & Nieman, 2011), it may be assumed that organizations who offer wellness incentives could gain a higher
participation in their activities if they were adjusted based on employee criteria. This could in turn lead to healthier staff (Conn, Hafdahl, Cooper, Brown & Lusk, 2009) which in turn would lead to positive economic effects (Hanson, 2004).

In order to be able to explore how organization can use nudge management to motivate its employees to adopt a healthier lifestyle, we chose a qualitative study with semi-structured questions. With this method, the participants could contemplate better and provide comprehensive answers. That is what we wanted and why we think the method was good for our study.

The strengths of the study are that it is focused and delimited, as we have been looking at one specific area without floating outside the subject. Reliability is high when the study has been carried out without the personal valuation influencing the results (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The study has an authenticity i.e. a fair picture of the participants’ opinions and perceptions. During the course of the study, we have remained objective and neutral. Weaknesses with the study are that several of the questions are almost flowing together which made it possible to answer, what would be asked in the supplementary question, already in the main question and which meant that the follow-up questions in some cases felt superfluous. Another weakness in our thesis is that our sample was small and the results might not be a true picture of all organizations in general. In this research we only looked into one organization, and the results may be totally different if further study would be conducted including other organizations. Also, the time-limit of ten weeks that was set to this assignment was a set-back as we could not spend as much time on the research as we wanted.

In our study we investigated the employees motivation to exercise in a state-owned company where we did not compare gender and age. It would be interesting in future research to see result from a private-owned company and see if there would be any differences or similarities. Possible differences between gender and age is also something that can be investigated. Further research could investigate if the results would have been different if the employees would have had the option to work from home.

As an endnote we would like to say that we found this subject interesting to study. The purpose of this study was to explore how firms can use nudge management and wellness incentives to motivate its employees to adopt a healthier lifestyle and we believe that this was accomplished. We believe that the results could be of interest to organizations who are interested in implementing nudge management.
WORKS CITED LIST


