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REASONS AND CONSEQUENCES OF WORK RELATED BOREDOM - CASES

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The objective of this work is to understand better work related boredom and how different personality types relate to workplace boredom, through the analysis of several previous case studies, including the selected individual case-persons experiences.

Work related boredom is an amotivational state at work, where employees lack interest in their work activities and have difficulties concentrating on them.

This study ws executed utilizing qualitative research methods and semi-structured interviewing. The questionnaire had question related to subject's own perception of boredom at their workplace, questions to verify the presence of boredom triggers and questions related to their perception of own personality trait. To validate the personality type study, the subjects were requested to execute a Myers-Briggs type indicator (MBTI).

Workplace boredom is theoretically related to a lack of perception of belonging to a group, lack of challenges and possibilities to be creative, innovative and learn in the workplace, lack of appreciation and social recognition from their job and a moderate satisfaction with salary and other types of compensation.

In this study reveled that the major aspects causing workplace boredom on the subjects were the lack of challenge, appreciation and social recognition.

Beause of the limited number of interviewed persons and the research method chosen, it was not possible to identify one specific personality trait to be linked with workplace boredom. However, in the researched persons there is a common trend towards "intuition". It is possible that intuitive persons need more content, purpose and variation in their work.

Edson Martins

TYÖPERÄISEN IKÄVYSTYMISEN SYYT JA SEURAUKSET - TAPAUKSIA

Tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena oli ymmärtää työhön liittyvää ikävystymistä/tylsistymistä/ kyllästymistä sekä miten erilaiset persoonallisuustyypit liittyvät työssä koettuun siihen. Tutkimuksessa analysoitiin useita aiempia tapaustutkimuksia sekä tutkimukseen valittujen koehenkilöiden henkilökohtaisia kokemuksia.

Työhön liittyvä ikävystyneisyys on ei-motivoitunut tila, jossa työntekijä ei ole kiinnostunut työtehtävistään ja hänellä on vaikeuksia keskittyä niihin.

Tässä tutkimuksessa käytettiin kvalitatiivisia tutkimusmenetelmiä ja puolistrukturoituja haastatteluja. Kyselylomakkeessa kysyttiin valittujen henkilöiden omia käsityksiä ikävystyneisyydestä työssä, ikävystymisen laukaisevista tekijöistä ja käsityksiä omista persoonallisuuspiirteistään. Persoonallisuustyyppitutkimuksen todentamiseksi koehenkilöitä pyydettiin tekemään Myers–Briggsin tyyppi-indikaattoritesti (MBTI).

Teoriassa töissä koettu ikävystyneisyys on liitetty ryhmään kuulumattomuuden tunteeseen, haasteiden puutteeseen, luovien ja innovatiivisten työtehtävien sekä töissä oppimisen puutteeseen, arvostuksen ja sosiaalisen tunnustuksen puutteeseen työpaikalla sekä keskinkertaiseen tyytyväisyyteen liittyen palkkaan ja muihin korvauksiin.

Tämä tutkimus vahvisti, että merkittävimmät työssä ikävystymiseen vaikuttavat tekijät ovat haasteiden, arvostuksen ja sosiaalisen tunnustuksen puute.

Haastattelultujen henkilöiden rajallisesta lukumäärästä ja valituista tutkimusmenetelmistä johtuen tässä tutkimuksessa ei ollut mahdollista tunnistaa mitään tiettyä persoonallisuustyyppiä, jonka voisi liittää työssä ikävystymiseen. Työssään ikävystyneiltä henkilöiltä tunnistettiin kuitenkin yhteinen taipumus "intuitioon". Mahdollisesti intuitiiviset henkilöt tarvitsevat työssään muita enemmän sisältöä, tarkoitusta ja vaihtelua.

ASIASANAT:

Ikävystyneisyys, motivaatio, persoonallisuus, Myers–Briggsin indikaattori

CONTENT

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Questionnaire transcription

FIGURES

PICTURES

TABLES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS (OR) SYMBOLS

Abbreviation	Explanation of abbreviation (Source)
CWB	Counterproductive behavior
FFM	Five-factor model of personality
GDP	Gross domestic product
MBTI	Myers-Briggs Type Indicator
RQ	Research question

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and motivation of the study

Work related boredom is an amotivational state at work, where employees lack interest in their work activities and have difficulties concentrating on them (Harju and Hakanen 2016, 374). There is also recent evidence that job boredom may be a contributing factor to production deviance and other forms of counterproductive work behavior (CWB) (Jex and Britt 2014, 177).

Counterproductive work behavior is any behavior not aligned with the organizational goals. Common forms of CWB include withdrawal (lateness or absences), being rude to others, deliberately wasting time, sabotage, theft, violence, drug and alcohol use, and sexual harassment (Jex and Britt 2014, 177). They are voluntary acts that harm or intend to harm organizations or people in the organization.

Bruursema et al. (2011, 103) found that individuals who reported higher levels of boredom on the job, as well as a general tendency to experience boredom, reported higher levels of production deviance and other forms of CWB.

Current technology (specially the access to the internet) has also multiplied the number of ways employees can harm the organization (Klotz and Buckley 2013, 121).

Work related boredom is rather common and harmless and some of the outcomes were briefly presented, but if the situation continues to arise, more harmful consequences to the individual can appear, for instance, a decrease in quality of life and depression. Both boredom and depression are categorized as unpleasant deactived affect, and sometimes their difference is very thin (Loukidou et al. 2009, 386).

Of course, if there are all the different forms of CWB as described above, there are losses for the individual, the organization and the society.

According to a recent study (Genowska et al. 2016, 925) regarding the social costs of loss in productivity related abseenteism in Poland, sickness absences due to mental and behavioural diseases accounted for 0.3% of the country gross domestic product (GDP).

Another recent study (Evans-Lacko and Knapp 2016, 1528) estimates the productivity costs of depression associated with abseenteism by country. Their findings are show on Table 1 below.

Table 1. Estimated productivity costs of depression abseenteism by country.

Country	GDP loss (%)
Brazil	0.66
Canada	0.14
China	0.04
Japan	0.12
Kora	0.01
Mexico	0.28
South Africa	0.62
USA	0.04

Although it is not shown on the studies what is the percentage of these absences are due to work related boredom and consequent depression, these figures indicate the scale of the issue facing the individuals, organizations and society.

If this study is able to address this concern by understanding better the reasons of workplace boredom and raising its awareness to managers, there is contribution to the common goal of making a better organization and society. This is what motivates this work.

1.2 Objectives

The objective of this work is to understand better work related boredom and how different personality types relate to workplace boredom, through the analysis of several case studies. Also the personal consequences of workplace boredom will be presented for the study subjects.

Therefore, the following research questions (RQ) will guide this work:

RQ1:•What is the likely reason for workplace related boredom in the subject persons?

and to complete,

RQ2: Can this study identify a personality type (or trait) more prone to workplace related boredom?

1.3 Study structure

This study contains the following sections:

On Section 2, the methodology used will be presented and discussed.

The following sections will present some of the literature available and what are the current studies regarding work related boredom and theories regarding motivation. Because this study is also focusing on personality types and traits, this study must also present some of the most commonly used personality tests and justify the utilization of one of these. This is the theoretical framework for this study.

Then the research itself will be presented, followed by the results and conclusion, including managerial implications for the case study subjects and suggestions for further studies.

2 METHODOLOGY

Before proceeding any further to answer the research questions, the methodology (or research approach) must be defined and justified.

Essentially, there are three research approaches: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning social or human problems are attributed to individuals or groups. Quantitative research is an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. Finally, mixed methods research involves collecing both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell 2009).

According to Klenke (2016, 6), qualitative research is a process of "naturalistic inquiry" that seeks deep understanding of social phenomena within their natural context. It focuses on the "why" rather than "what" of social phenomena and it is based on the experiences of human beings as agents in their everyday lives.

Gillham (2000, 11) also presents a list of perspectives qualitative methods enables the research to do, and their application to this study objective is shown on table 2 below.

Table 2. Qualitative methods enablers.

What qualitative methods enables the researcher to do?	
To carry out an investigation where other methods are either not practicable or not ethically justifiable.	Applies to this study.
To investigate situation where little is known about what is there or what is going on.	Applies to this study.
To explore complexities that are beyond the scope of more controlled approaches.	Applies to this study.
To get "under the skin" of a group to find out what really happens.	Applies to this study.
To view the case from the inside out – to see the perspective of those involved.	Applies to this study.
To carry out research into the process leading to results, rather than into the significante of the results themselves.	Applies to this study.

Once qualitative methods are selected to guide the research approach of this study, the next step is to define what is the most suitable strategy to address the research questions.

Among the several strategies for qualitative methods, the choice of using case studies lies on the fact that case studies allow investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events such as leadership processes (Klenke 2016, 61).

Qualitative researchers use theory in their studies as a broad explanation for behavior and attitudes – some of these theories will be then discussed later in this study (Section 3), in regards to current studies of workplace related boredom.

The cases are then selected because they may contribute to the raising theory the author is attempting to build. A single case study lacks generalization, so multiple cases are chosen.

Multiple cases have distinct advantages compared to the single case design. For instance, the evidence from multiple cases is often considered more compelling.

For multiple case research, the cases need to be similar in some ways or share some characteristic or condition. In this study, this is the fact that the subjects encounter work place boredom at different levels.

To be able to validate the theories behind the case studies and answer the research questions, this study has to investigate deeper the reasons why the subjects are suffering from work place boredom.

Because of the resource (time and money) availability for this study, workplace observations are ruled out of the method, and the logic choice is to interview the subjects.

Structured interviewing refers to a situation in which the interviewer (researcher) asks each subject (interviewee) a series of preestablished questions with a limited set of response categories. It typically relies on close-ended questions in which the researcher is asked to choose between several predetermined answers.

Open-ended interviewing is designed to determine an authentic account of interviewee's subjective experience (i.e. boredom) in the natural sequence of things, instead of relying on a predetermined sequence. There are no predetermined questions, topics or wording to be used.

In semistructured interviewing, the researcher then combines the use of close-ended and open-ended questions. The content of the interview is focused on issues that are central to the research questions, while allowing greater flexibility than the structured interview.

Because of this greater flexibility in the interview and the basic theory behind the study, the choice is to use semistructured interviewing.

The interviews will be executed using e-mails. Among the advantages for researchers are that e-mail interviews allow the interviewee to respond whenever he or she wishes or when time permits. Interviews can be conducted between people living on different continents and time zones. There is also no need to transcribe verbal data (Klenke 2016, 137). Finally, they can be conducted without travelling, which does not create conflicts with the previously mentioned resource availability concerns.

Finally, a well selected sample may reflect fairly accurately the characteristics of the population.

Because this is a qualitative study, based on case studies and the proportion of employees with work place boredom issues is not known (neither is the subject of this study), "probability sample" is out of question.

Probability sample requires to know the probability on which an event occur in the population (Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad 2010, 55). For example, if the probability of an event is 5%, the researcher must have a sample of about the same size of the population.

In this study, it is not known the probability of an employee to be bored at workplace, therefore "non-probability" or "non-random" sample must be used. The benefits of this type of sampling are simplicity, convenience and low cost – once again, supporting the resource availability concerns.

It suffers from sampling bias, which can distort results. However, when the study does not aim at generalizing the findings to the population, but simply at feeling the range of conditions or nature of the phenomena, non-probability sample can be accepted (Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad 2010, 56).

The primary method of non-probability sampling to be used in this study is judgement sampling.

This method means deliberate selection of sample units that conform to some pre-determined criteria, in this case, feel bored at work. This method is appropriate when what is important is the typicality and specific relevance of the sampling units to the study and not their overall representativeness to the population. As discussed above, the probability and population is unknown.

The advantages of this method are the cost efficiency and convenience, plus it guarantees inclusion of relevant elements in the sample. The disadvantages are: non-representativeness of the sample, not efficient for generalizing, and it can not be used for using interferential statistics.

However, these disadvantages are not relevant, because of the nature of this study.

2.1 Questionnaire design and implementation

As explained above, the author decided to study the phenomena linked to the research question utilizing a questionnaire. The questionnaire is based on the theories described in the Section 3 of this study, where the current studies in the subject of workplace boredom are described, as well as motivation theories and discussions regarding personality types and traits.

The questionnaire is the main tool used in this preliminary research (i.e., not validated), because of the quantity of subjects studied and the potential connections between aspects of the workplace related boredom. As a result of the study, new hypothesis and further questions may arise, but these are subject for further additional studies. A full transcript of the questionnaire is found on Appendix 1.

It consisted of three separate sections. First, an introduction to explain the background of this study, a second part to study the demographics of the subjects as well as the questions to validate the theory, and third a section where the subjects could inform the results of their personality traits test.

The theory validation part consisted of several questions linking the subjects workplace general conditions with the theoretical background. Those questions were both multiple selection questions, as well as open questions to describe some phenomena in their workplace.

The multiple selection questions were designed to gauge how bored the subjects were, and which of the workplace boredom triggers and motivational aspects were present and current in their workplace environment.

The open questions gave the subjects the opportunity to use their own words to describe their own motivation and their own perceptions of the workplace, as well as a chance for them to describe their opinions on what could be done on their specific environment.

All the theory validation questions could be classified in three major groups: (1) questions related to the subjects own perception of boredom at their workplace, (2) questions to verify the presence of boredom triggers in their respective workplace (based on the theoretical background described on Section 3), and (3) questions related to their perception of own personality trait (extroversion or introversion).

In the final and third part of the questionnaire, subjects were invited to take an online test, whose result would be copied and pasted into the questionnaire. The test result was the personality type classified according to the Myers-Briggs type indicator (MBTI), which indicates if the subjects have a tendency to be more extravert or introvert, among other preferences. For a detailed theoretical background of the MBTI types, refer to the section 4.4 in this study.

The test consists of 64 questions, from which the subject makes the choice based on his/her most typical response or feeling in the given situation. The answers were graded from "YES" meaning strong agreement, "yes" moderate agreement, "no" moderate disagreement and "NO" meaning strong disagreement. Examples of questions are shown in Picture 1 below, a print screen from the test internet page. This specific page to execute the MBTI test was used because it was available at no cost over the internet.

A "non-random" selection of subjects were selected, because this study focus on people who perceives themselves as bored in the workplace. Another factor validating that this subject group is "non-random" is because all the subjects have personal connections with the author.

To collect the subject group, the author advertised his study on social media (Facebook and LinkedIn) and asked if any of his acquaintances were feeling bored at work. A screenshot of the advertisement on Facebook is shown on Picture 2 below.

14. You prefer to act immediately rather than speculate about various options

YES	yes	uncertain	no	NO

15. You trust reason rather than feelings

YES	yes	uncertain	no	NO

16. You are inclined to rely more on improvisation than on prior planning

YES	yes	uncertain	no	NO

17. You spend your leisure time actively socializing with a group of people, attending parties, shopping, etc.

YES	yes	uncertain	no	NO

18. You usually plan your actions in advance

YES	yes	uncertain	no	NO

Picture 1. Print screen with sample of questions used on MBTI test.

Picture 2. Screenshot of questionnaire advertisement.

Five people responded to the advertisement and they were informed about the study. They agreed to participate voluntarily and without any financial or financial-like compensation. Their motivation to spend time and support this research is because they feel bored at their work and would like to understand more about it. The subjects were all very keen to read the end result of this study.

All subjects required confidentiality regarding their participation in this study, because their employers were not aware of their boredom and were afraid of consequences if this information was released to the general public. For this reason, the questionnaire doesn't have a field to relate the answers to the subject and their employers, should there be a case of information leakage.

The demographics of the subjects are described on Table 3 below.

Table 3. Study subjects demographics.

Subject #	1	2	3	4	5
Gender	M	F	F	F	F
Age group	30-39	40-49	40-49	30-39	40-49
Education	Post graduate	Post graduate	Higher tertiary	Lower tertiary	Higher tertiary
Country of employment	USA	Estonia	USA	USA	Finland
Nationality	Brazilian	Estonian	American	American	Finnish
Field of occupation	Business development of Engineering Services	Medicine	Professional forester, forest specialist	Clerical, administrative	Corporate responsibility, teaching
Years on same organization	1-3	3-6	1-3	10+	1-3
Years on same position	1-3	3-6	1-3	10+	1-3

3 CURRENT ASPECTS ON WORKPLACE BOREDOM STUDIES

3.1 Literature review

There are two different ways to define boredom in an organizational environment (Mael and Jex 2015, 132-134): one way is linking boredom with a low arousal and symptoms of weariness, lethargy, fatigue and emptiness; while the other way defines boredom as a state of high arousal and aggravation typified by feeling restless, irritable and anxious.

Boredom at work is also associated with a subjective slower passage of time, plus attentional difficulties, specially in difficult tasks requiring extra cognitive effort (Game 2007, 703).

It is important to notice that the definitions of boredom above can be related to clinical depression. However, boredom is more often typified by annoyance and a desire to be stimulated.

Mael and Jex (2015, 137) then typifies workplace boredom according to two different dimensions: episodic vs. chronic and situational vs. global. A summary is shown on table 4 below.

Table 4. Typology and potential causes of boredom.

	Situational (e.g., job specific)	Global
Episodic	Specific boring stimuli or situations (meeting, project) Mood variations, biorhythms	Individual differences in intelligente, age, extroversion, stimulus seeking
Chronic	Total job has: qualitative/quantitative overload or underload, lack of meaning or purpose, lack of meaningful role	Depression, loneliness Resignation, defeat

Workplace boredom appears to be a common phenomenon nowadays, rising, and it is related to negative outcomes for individuals and organizations. Some of these outcomes are the engagement in unsafe work practices, company property stealth, absenteeism, turnover and output restriction (Whiteoak 2014, 742).

Job engagement is positively related to boredom at work, and it reduces employee productivity and overall wellbeing. This means that an engaged employee is less likely to be bored at work, as they would be more energized and aroused.

True dedication and job engagement in the workplace is only possible if there is an emotional connection to the work of the work context (Ashfort and Humphrey 1995, 110).

A number of factors can explain also why there is a raise in workplace boredom, even though modern contents of work have changed (job enrichment, empowerment, etc) towards lower levels of workplace boredom.

One is the heavy use of information technology, as people are being inundated with new stimuli and information, even making difficult for someone to be alone without falling into boredom.

A second factor is the employee expectations, because employees have nowadays unrealistic expectations that all work can and should be interesting. Employees expect their jobs to be intrinsically fulfilling.

A current model of workplace boredom causes and consequences is presented on figure 1 below, adapted from Mael and Jex (2015, 150).

Thankfully for business managers, scholars like Whiteoak (2014, 747-751) have been studying how boredom coping can be predicted at business environments. He suggests that employees' boredom-coping can be analysed by four different drivers, and each of these drivers have a different time to affect the employee's behavior.
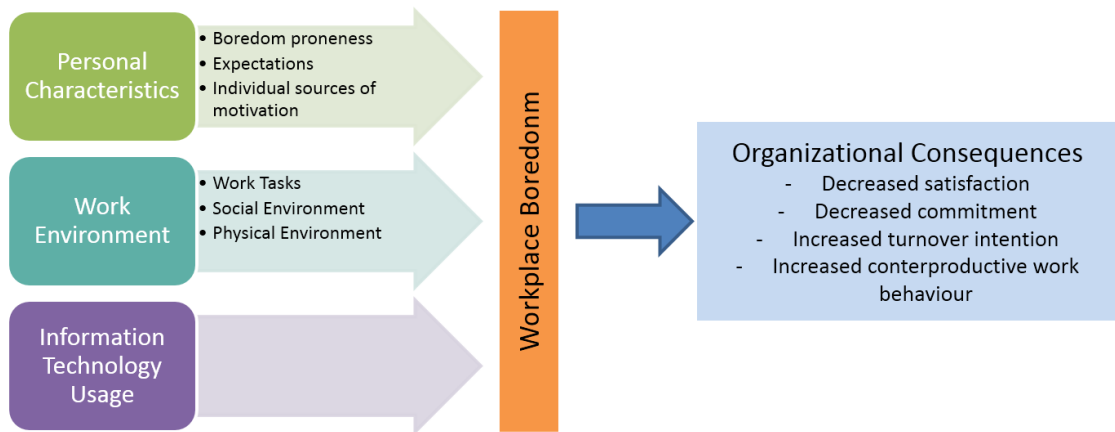
Figure 1. A current workplace boredom model.

The first and faster one is "group membership" – employees who belong to a well performing group are more likely to have better workplace boredom coping strategies.

The second driver is about the "attitudes and beliefs" – employees with a positive attitude to challenge are more engaged to the job, and for instance, if they enjoy their work, they are more able to cope even a normally boring job.

The third driver are the employee's "trainable abilities" – employees with a broader understanding of the workplace "big picture" are more likely to be more engaged in the workplace. These can be translated into qualities like situational awareness or foresight ability.

Finally, the fourth driver is the employee own "personality trait" – communication skills, if the employee is introvert or extrovert, or how the employee is open to new experiences can help to forecast his/her success against workplace boredom. For example, extraverts need extra stimulation to prevent boredom.

Figure 2 below shows a summary of Whiteoak's (2014, 752) drivers and time frames for intervention.
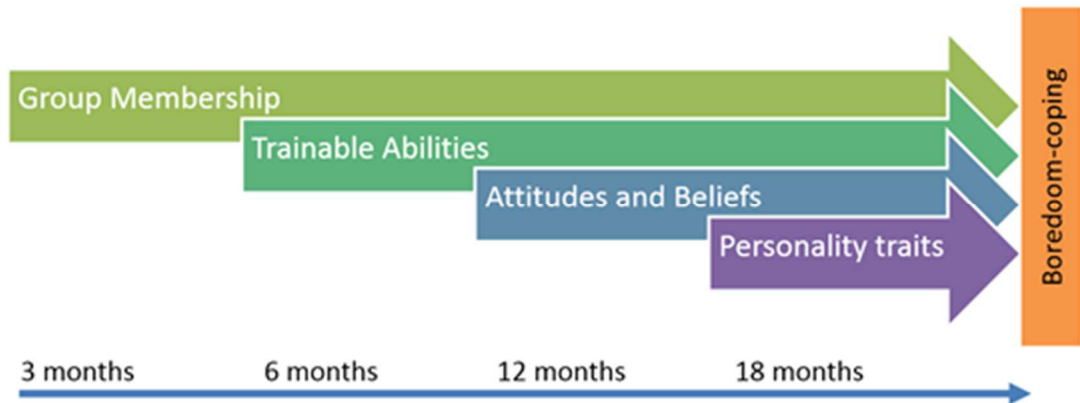
Figure 2. Whiteoak's model of drives of boredom-coping.

Employees with a high score in a job-related boredom coping scale then showed lower levels of depression and anxiety compared to lower score individuals. Employers with a high score also tend to work safer and were significantly more satisfied with their jobs.

One strategy to cope in this situation is by altering the nature of tasks considered boring. They tend to add steps and sometimes extend the time spent on a task, in order to make it more challenging and keep high the arousal level.

High boredom copers also appeared to be more creative and innovative while performing their tasks (Game 2007, 716).

Another perpective to describe the origin of differences on motivation in employees stems from the fact that each person has a predominant way of interpreting the events that regulate his/her own behavior (Deponte 2003, 31). She describes three types of orientations regarding the trigger events, in comparison intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors (more on motivation factors will be presented and discussed on Section 4 below).

"Autonomy orientation" describes people who maintain a high level of intrinsic motivation in all contexts and perceive all situations as interesting and see things to learn everywhere. They feel responsible for their own personal growth and are normally well motivated employees.

"Control orientation" describes people who tend to perceive external control in every event, and to regulate his/her behaviour accordingly. They are motivated and act on a reward basis.

Finally, "impersonal orientation" people have negative self-evaluations and a minimal sense or their own competence. They generally lack motivation, have a sense of helplessness and personal unworthiness.

On a study regarding the relationship among boredom proneness, subjective underemployment, perceived organizational support and job performance, Watt and Hargis (2010, 163) further conclude that "boredom-prone workers viewed themselves as underemployed, perceived less support from their organization and received lower performance ratings from their supervisors". Their results even conclude that these hypothesis hold even after controlling by age, race, gender, and education. This means that all kinds of employees can be boredom-prone, whether they perceive themselves as underemployed and perceive less support from their organization.

Underemployment is defined by the economists by having current earnings at least 20% less than earnings in previous jobs ("underpayment"), or an inefficient usage of human resources and lost output. Psychologists focus on the perception of underemployment, for instance, when the employee's perception of the job is below his skill level. Underemployed employees view their jobs are underutilizing their skills and training, and also lacking opportunities to learn new tasks.

Perceived organization support is the belief of the general support offered by the organization. According to Watt and Hargis (2010, 166), other aspects related to perceived organization support are job satisfaction, organizational commitment, higher levels of job performance and less turnover and absenteeism.

Workplace boredom increases workplace procrastination, therefore the individual's workplace performance (Baran Metin et al. 2016, 262).

As boredom stems from low job demands and resources, if the management is able to increase these, the workplace procrastination will decrease, therefore performance. Managers should fit the workplace environment with workers preferences, skills and competences to achieve it.

Contan and Serban (2015, 409-412) then summarize that there are a number of reasons for poor motivation in an employee, though every situation and person is different. Some of the most common reasons are:

- The employees lack the required capabilities.
- The job isn't challenging enough.
- The employees feel they are not appreciated.
- The employees do not get along with their colleagues.
- The employees have personal problems.
- The employees have developed an attitude.

The following section will then present and discuss some motivation theories.

3.2 Motivation theories

To understand why people behave in a particular way, we must understand what is his/her motivation. Motivation is then often studied in reference to needs, motives, drives, and goals or incentives (McKenna 2012, 92). It can be extrinsic (related to "tangible" rewards) or intrinsic (related to "psychological" rewards).

So motivation is a complex, personal subject and can be influenced by a number of variables.

In order to understand motivation better, scholars divided motivation theories in two big groups: need (content) theories and cognitive (process) theories.

When individuals are making efforts to achieve a goal or acquire an incentive, drives direct the behaviour of the individual. When individuals adopt a pattern of behaviour to achieve a particular goal, they are in a state of drive. Goals or incentives can then satisfy or reduce the behaviour related to the state of drive.

Motivation can also be seen as a psychological process involving arousal, direction, intensity and persistence of actions towards the goal. (Parks and Guay 2008, 679)

Arousal is essentially the process of being interested in a given goal, while direction is the process of selecting a goal and choose to pursue it. Intensity relates to the amount

of effort that one puts in pursuit of the goal, and persistance refers to the continuated pursuit of the goal, even in face of challenges.

3.2.1 Need (content) theories

Need theories relate to the identification of people's needs, which are intrinsic to the human being and waiting to be fulfilled.

A classic theory of needs classify them as physiological, security or safety, social, and ego or esteem needs. This is the basis for Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. This theory, first published on the 1940's is still one of the most accepted motivational theories.

Maslow considers the animal / irrational part of the human being, which hardly complete its satisfaction, but for a short period of time. Once a need is satisfied, another unsatisfied need emerges. Basic needs have to be satisfied first.

The basis of the hierarchy represent the most basic needs of the human being, and the higher we climb up the hierarchy, the most abstract those needs are. Figure 3 below shows the hierarchical pyramid of needs.
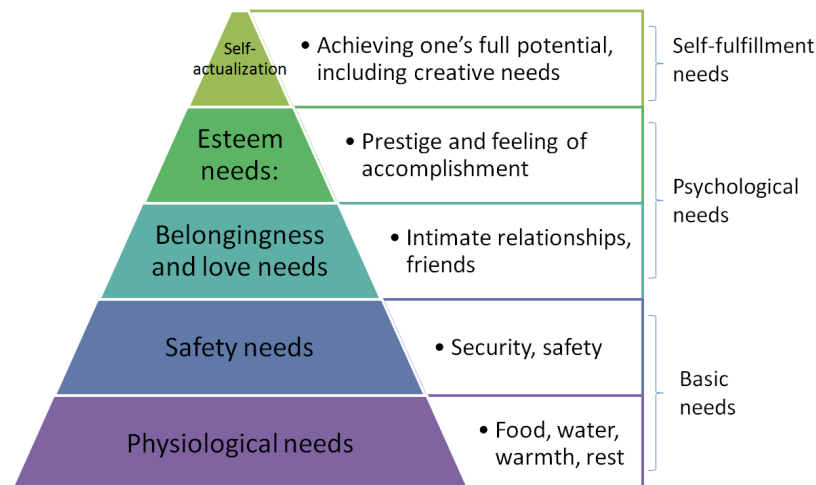
Figure 3. Maslow hierarchy of needs.

Mullins and Christy (2013, 255) give examples of how the Maslow needs level are translated into organizational factors, and its summary is shown on figure 4 below.
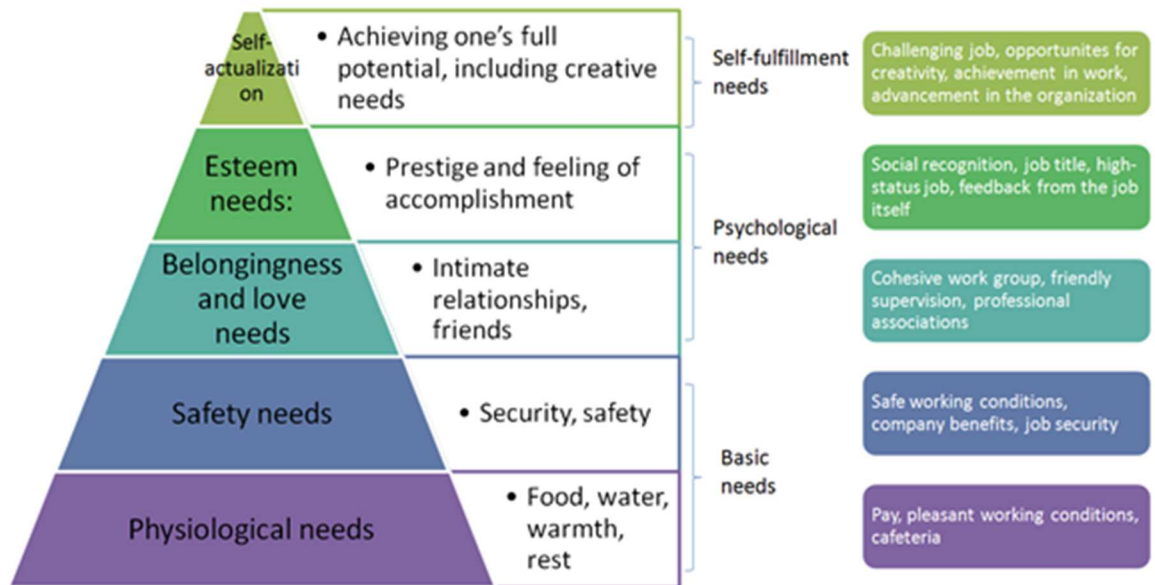
Figure 4. Maslow needs as organizational factors.

Furnham (2008) then describes what characteristics the self-actualizers share. The understanding of those characteristics are important for business managers, as subordinates on this phase of their careers (and/or personal lives) have more demanding needs than other employees in different stages.

These characteristics are:

- *A good grip on reality.*

- *They indulge in almost fatalistic acceptance.*

- *They have an unaffected naturalness and spontaneity.*

- *They are profoundly problem-focused.*

- *They can be alone and have an affinity with solitude.*

- *They are not swayed by fad or fashion.*

- *They have an open, fresh appreciation of things.*

- *They have frequent "peak experiences".*

- *They are empathic, caring, kind.*

- *They have deep, profound private relationships with others.*

- *They respect and value all.*

- *They can differentiate the means and the end.*

- *They have a philosophical sense of humor.*

- *They are creative, because they can see the connections between things.*

- *They resist the conformity of the crowd.*

Tesone (2005, 6) further concludes that "the ultimate goal of management motivation as being the creation of workplace environments aimed at facilitating the self-esteem and self-actualization needs of individuals". She also reminds that some managers use their own motivating factors to subordinates, trying to encourage subordinates to perform better. However, not all employees are in the same advanced stage in life and career as the managers, so managers have to know how to translate the motivational tools to the subordinates in less developed stages in the career.

Guillén et al. (2015, 805) summarize that the classical needs motivation theories can be synthesized in 2x2 a two-dimensional matrix, where columns are the extrinsic/intrinsic motivations and rows the low/high needs.

Extrinsic motivation relates to an external benefit received; intrinsic motivations are then internally received ones. The lower and higher needs follow Maslow's theory.

A synthesis of this matrix is shown on Table 5 below.

Table 5. Needs and motives theories synthesis.

	Extrinsic motivation	Intrinsic motivation
Higher needs	*Relatedness* - receive good from outside	*Satisfaction* – acquire good from inside oneself
Lower needs	*Support* – receive good from outside	*Achievement* – acquire good from inside onself

Modern authors are then researching other neglected aspects of motivation in the workplace, for instance ethical and pro-social needs.

For instance, Guillén et al. (2015, 811) propose an extended / modified matrix to take into consideration these ethical and social needs, which were not very strong in the context of the 1950's workplace, but it is current in the present days.

In their theory, the "lower needs" are called "practical level", which is then described as the "useful good", they are the goods human beings need for their existence. "Higher needs" are called "psycho-affective level", which is described as the "pleasant good", the good related to upper needs like esteem, recognition, etc.

Going further, they add two more layers on the matrix: moral and spiritual levels; and transitive and religious motives.

"Moral level" and "moral good" is everything that is right and contributes the development of human being moral character. "Spiritual level" and "spiritual good" refers to "a deep sense of meaning that requires some sort of faith", but not necessarily with any religion.

"Transitive motivation" relates considers our transcendence from ourselves and to consider the impact our actions have on others.

A summary of their work is shown on table 6 below. The fields in green shade are the ones from the original 2x2 matrix (Table 5 above), the others are the ones related to their modern approach.

Table 6. The additional dimension of needs.

	Extrinsic motives	Intrinsic motives	Transitive motives	Religious motives
Spiritual level (spiritual good)	*Gifts:* receive spiritual good from outside	*Holiness* : acquire spiritual good from inside	*Charity :* give spiritual good to others	*Glorify :* give spiritual good to the Other (God)
Moral level (moral good)	*Respect :* receive moral good from outside	*Flourishing :* Acquire moral good from inside	*Benevolence :* Give moral good to others	*Worship :* Give moral good to the Other (God)
Psycho-affective level (pleasant good)	*Relatedness :* receive pleasant good fro outside	*Satisfaction* : acquire pleasant good from inside	*Pleasantness :* give pleasant good to others	*Gratitude :* give pleasant good to the Other (God)
Practical level (useful good)	*Support :* receive useful good from outside	*Achievement :* acquire useful good from inside	*Service :* give useful good to others	*Submission :* give useful good to the Other (God)

Business managers should then be aware of these "hidden" dimensions of needs, especially in times of globalization and multinational business. The motivators in a Christian country can then be different from an Islamic country, for instance. Knowing and understanding these differences can make the difference between a bad and a good manager.

The management of emotions in the workplace is then a current topic in the field of Organizational Behaviour (McKenna 2012, 300; Mullins & Christy 2013, 144), and currently some jobs also require the display of emotions, for instance the jobs related to service or health industries.

Reiss (2002) then expands further Maslow's hierarchy of needs (i.e. "basic desires") and relates to associated emotions and behaviours. "The basic desires provide a powerful tool for analyzing the behaviour" (Reiss 2002, 17). A summary of his work is shown on table 7 below.

Table 7. The relation between needs, emotion and behavior.

Basic desire	Associated emotion	Behaviour
Power	Competence, influence	Leadership, achievement
Independence	Freedom	Self-reliance
Curiosity	Wonderment	Truth-seeking, problem-solving
Acceptance	Self-confidence	Assertive behaviour
Order	Security, stability	Makes many rules, clean, "perfect", compulsive
Saving	Ownership	Collecting, frugality
Honor	Loyalty	Character, morality, principled behaviour
Idealism	Compassion, sense of justice	Social causes, fair play
Social contact	Happiness, belonging	Party, join clubs/groups
Family	Love	Parent, homemaker
Status	Self-importance, superiority	Concern with reputation, showing off
Vengeance	Anger, hate	Revenge
Romance	Lust, appreciation of beauty	Sex, courting
Eating	Unger	Eating, dining, cooking
Physical exercise	Vitality	Physical activity, participatory sports
Tranquility	Safety, sense of peace	Avoids stressful situations

The moods and emotional states are then directly related to job satisfaction - both positively and negatively.

Job satisfaction is associated with how well our personal expectation at work are in line with outcomes (McKenna 2012, 299). It can be caused by an extensive array of factors, some of which are: pay and benefits, promotion, the job itself, leadership, work group, working conditions, and at least but not last, personality (how a person is fit for a position).

3.2.2 Cognitive (process) theories

Cognitive motivation theories focus on how behaviouris initiated in the individual, what is their desire to produce an effect, i.e., achieve a certain goal. People is aware of their motives and action, risks involved and make execution plans guided by their expectations (goals).

According to Mullins and Christy (2013), there are four main approaches to cognitive (process) theories: expectancy-based models, equity theory, goal theory and attribution theory.

Expectancy theory is related to the anticipation of possible outcomes of our actions. Motivation is dependent on the effort to be expended and expected level of performance, how the rewards and outcomes will be related to performance, and the expectation that rewards and outcomes are available at the end of the process.

Equity theory focus also on expectations intrinsic to the human being, but in this case, the motivation is to secure a perceived fair return to their efforts. In other words, the expectation that people are being treated equally by others.

For example, to prove the equity theory, a study of employees in California concludes that the disclosure of salary information (i.e., proof/evidence of "inequality") results in a decline in job satisfaction and work motivation, especially among the lowest-earning workers (Card et al. 2012, 3001).

In another study related to the equity theory, Bellemare et al. (2010, 283) found that the level of peer pressure and incentives can affect workers productivity, with different results between genders.

The basic premise behind goal theory is that goals direct work behaviour and performance towards consequences and/or feedback.

This is one of the most simple cognitive theories, therefore widely accepted in practical management, viewed sometimes rather as a motivation technique than a formal theory (Mullins and Christy 2013, 268). A simple diagram to illustrate goal theory is shown on figure 5.
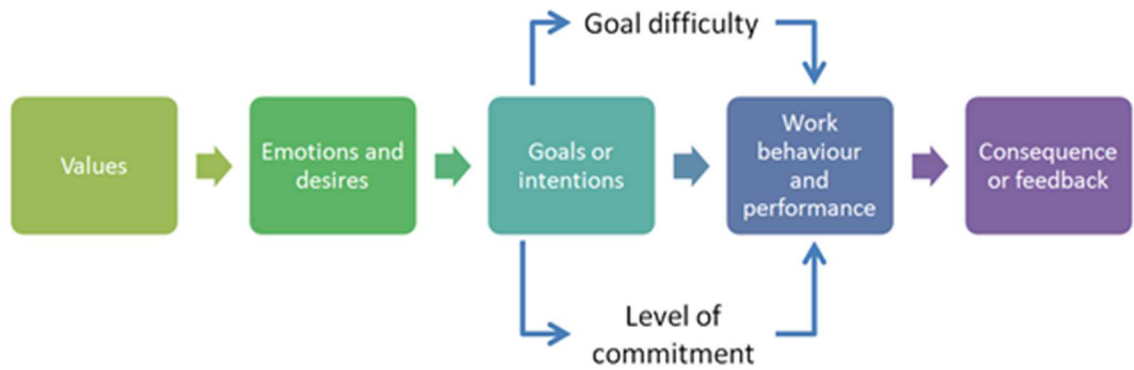
Figure 5. Diagram of goal theory.

When applying goal setting theory, business managers should be aware of the importance of the correct goal setting. If the goal is too difficult or unrealistic to achieve, instead of motivating the employee, it will create negative effect in the organization. A timely, complete and accurate feedback of results is then associated with right performance and motivation.

According to attribution theory, behavior is determined by a combination of perceived internal forces (ability, skill, amount of effort, etc) and external forces (organizational rules, policies, superiors, etc). People highly motivated normally perceive that a successful performance is resulted by their own internal forces and ability; on the other hand, if individuals underperform, they may perceive that external factors are a cause, therefore reducing the level of future efforts.

Finally, business managers should be aware of cross-cultural (international) differences in motivation (Silverthorne 2005).

For instance, traditional (Western) performance evaluation work best in collective cultures, while group or team evaluations in collectivist (e.g., Chinese) cultures. Feminine cultures (Sweden) will emphasize relationships, while masculine (United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia) achievements and accomplishments. Cultures with a long-term orientation (Finland) emphasizes changes based on performance, while in cultures with short-term orientation (Argentina) the relationships are more important than the performance.

4 PERSONALITY, PERSONALITY TRAITS AND ASSESSMENTS

Personality can be defined as the "relatively stable and enduring aspects of the individual which distinguish him from other people and at the same time form the basis of our predictions concerning his future behaviour" (McKenna, 2012, 32).

Research has also demonstrated that personality is related to physiological processes and there is also evidence that genetic factors influence personality traits. There is also an environmental component contributing to an invididual's personality.

It is easy to justify the study of personality in business contexts because of the increasing use of personality testing in employee selection and development.

Until the early-1980's, the research on personality on workplace outcomes concluded that personality did not matter.

However, this conclusion changed after the emergence of the five-factor model of personality (FFM), or Big Five. (Parks and Guay 2008, 675). Also the revival of interest in personality as a determinant of job performance within industrial and organizational psychology has also had an impact on job analysis. (Weiner et al. 2012, 68).

McKenna (2012, 32) suggests different topics to study personality, namely:

- Idiographic and nomothetic approaches.
- Psychoanalytical perspective.
- Projective tests.
- Trait and type perspectives.
- Interpersonal perspective.
- Behavioural perspective.
- Cognitive perspective.
- Personality assessment.

Because the focus of this study is the relation between personality types and traits with workplace boredom, the following sections will present some of the current theories in this field of study.

4.1 Personality traits and types

According to McKenna (2012, 40), a trait is "an individual characteristic in thought, feeling, and action, either inherited or acquired, and refers to tendencies to act or react in certain ways". The possesion of a trait suggests that the person is disposed to react with that particual trait in given situations.

While a person's value structure may gchange somewhat if/when exposed to a new environment, personality traits are relatively stable over the lifetime (Parks and Guay, 2008, 678).

Values can refer to values as preferences or values as principles. Values as preferences are essentially attitudes. Values as principles, also termed individual or personal values, are guiding principles regarding how individuals ought to behave.

When a person shares a pattern of traits with a large group of people, he/she is said to belong to a personality type.

4.2 "Big Five" factor theory

The "Big Five" factor theory or model for personality typology is one of the most dominant and widely accepted in the area of personality research (McKenna 2012, 45; Furnham et al. 2007, 100).

According to this theory, there are five higher order / dimensional personality traits on which people differ, namely Neuroticism (or Emotional stability), Extraversion, Openess to Experience (or Intellect), Agreeableness (or Likeability), and Conscientiouness.

Neuroticism refers to the tendency to experience negative emotions, such as anxisty, depression, and anger. Extraversion reers to high activity, assertiveness, and a tendency towards social behaviour. Openess-to-experience representes the tendency to get involved in intellectual activities, and a preference for novel ideas and experiences. Agreeableness or socialibitlity refers to friendly, considerate and modest behaviour. Conscientiousness is associated with efficiency, determination, responsibility and persistance.

The desirable and undesirable traits representing each of the personality dimensions is shown on Table 8 below, adapted from McKenna (2012, 46).

Table 8. The "Big Five" personality dimensions and representative traits.

Dimensions	Traits	
	Desirable	Undesirable
Extraversion	Outgoing, sociable, assertive	Introverted, reserved, passive
Agreeableness	Kind, trusting, warm	Hostile, selfish, cold
Conscientiousness	Organized, thorough, tidy	Careless, unreliable, sloppy
Emotional stability	Calm, even-tempered, imperturbable	Moody, temperamental, nervous
Intellect	Imaginative, creative, intelligent	Shallow, unsophisticated, imperceptive

4.3 Jung's typology

Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961) is one of the most important figures in the broad field of psychology. Educated as a physician, Jung became known in the field of psychology in the early 1900's and his works are still used by Post-Jungians clinical psychologists until today, which show the influence of his works.

In a paper published in 1913 and further developed in his book "Psychological Types" (published in 1920), Jung outlined his theory of psychological types in terms of opposite attitudes to the world, which he named "introversion" and "extroversion" (Geyer 1995, 32).

His typology combined the notion of individual preferences for opposite attitudes to the world of extraversion (gaining psychic energy from the external world of objects) and

introversion (gaining this energy from the internal world of ideas), and a cognitive model of perception and judgement.

Here there are two opposite preferences for taking in information called "sensing" (through the five senses) and "intuition" (through seeing patterns and relationships) and two oppositve preferences for making decisions called "thinking" (deciding through objective logic) and "feeling" (deciding through subjective values). In the literature, these prefences can also be called "functions". (McKenna, 2012, 47)

Jung considered that each person used all of these preferences in their day-to-day activities, but preferred one of each opposite over the other. The interaction of these preferences was the core personality of each individual.

Jung also made it clear that these type categories were not pure and that there was much individual variation within each type.

These preferences can be viewed as being located at the ends of orthogonal axes as shown on figure 6 below, adapted from McKenna (2012, 48).
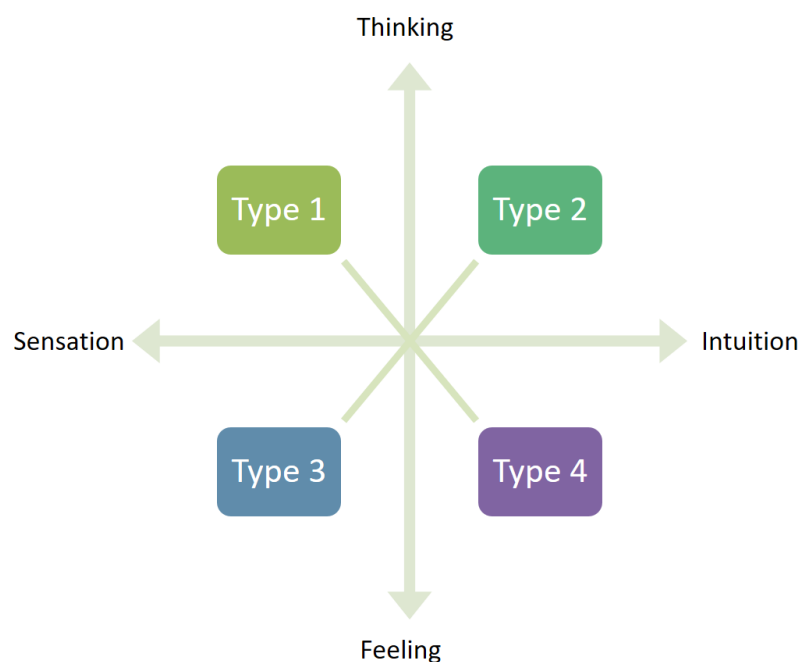
Figure 6. A graphic representation of Jung's functions of personality.

Each person has then a personality type lying somewhere between these orthogonal axes, and therefore four distinct types can be found.

- Type 1: sensing – thinking
- Type 2: thinking – intuition
- Type 3: feeling – sensing
- Type 4: intuition – feeling

For instance, a Type 1 person is cold, analytic and practical, while its opposite (Type 4) is emotional and sociable. On the other dimensions, a Type 2 is rational, analytic and sociable and its opposite (Type 3) is factual but emotional.

4.4 Myers-Briggs type indicator

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is derived from the personality types earlier described by Jung (see section 4.3 above). The MBTI is a self-assessed, forced-choice, multi-item questionnaire which results as one of 16 personality types indicated by four letters.

The MBTI results from the works of Katherine Briggs and her daughter Isabel Myers, and have been developed since the 1920's, but the latest version version has been defined in the 1960's. The work and life time achievements from Briggs and Myers are still present today through the works of "The Myers & Briggs Foundation", which organize trainings for psychology professionals.

Until today, the MBTI is one of the most commonly used personality test assesments, being applied not only in business environments, but also in non-business and other social sciences studies. (McKenna 2012, 50; Geyer 1995, 36; Ghidella 2017, 79).

According to the Myers-Briggs Type theory, everone uses all eight preferences, but more easily and naturally uses only four, one from each category.

The first letter is I or E, for the "Introversion – Extraversion" category. Introversion is obtaining energy during solitude, from one's internal mindscape. Extraversion is obtaining energy from social interactions and one's external world.

The second letter is S or N for "Sensing – iNtuition". Sensing focuses on practical facts, details, and events the five senses interpret, while Intuition focuses on the big picture, underlying patterns, and following "gut feeling".

The third letter is either T of F, for "Thinking – Feeling". Thinking is known for logical reasoning in decision-making, while Feeling is known for deciding upon personal values.

The fourth letter is J or P, for "Judging – Perceiving". Judging preference indicates one making confident, concrete decisions, while Perceiving leaves life plans more open-ended, and more apt to change.

Each person has their preference on the four binary categories, but everybody has the ability to use and strengthen their non-prefence. For example, a person with the preference for Introversion will have a natural tendency to be less social and more reflective, but if they are social and outgoing enough, they can learn to utilize their Extraversion non-preference. However, if this person is subject to stress, they will operate under their preference of Introversion.

Table 9 below adapted from The Myers & Briggs Foundation summarizes the 16 different personality types, as well as it includes names to these types. The other adjectives on the same box also can be used to describe the different types.

Table 9. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator table.

ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ
"Tradionalists"	"Protectors"	"Guides"	"Visionaires"
Dutiful	Dutiful	Devoted	Independent
Practical	Practical	Innovative	Innovative
Logical	Supportive	Idealistic	Analytical
Methodical	Meticulous	Compassionate	Purposeful
ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP
"Problem-solvers"	"Harmonisers"	"Humanists"	"Conceptualisers"
Expedient	Tolerant	Insightful	Questioning
Practical	Realistic	Innovative	Innovative
Objective	Harmonious	Idealistic	Objective
Adaptable	Adaptable	Adaptable	Abstract
ESTP	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP
"Activists"	"Fun-lovers"	"Enthusiasts"	"Entrepreneurs"
Energetic	Spontaneous	Optimistic	Risk-taking
Practical	Practical	Innovative	Innovative
Pragmatic	Friendly	Compassionate	Outgoing
Spontaneous	Harmonious	Verstatile	Adaptable
ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ
"Co-ordinators"	"Supporters"	"Developers"	"Reformers"
Organized	Friendly	Friendly	Determined
Practical	Practical	Innovative	Innovative
Logical	Loyal	Supportive	Strategic
Outgoing	Organised	Idealistic	Outgoing

5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Results of the survey

As discussed earlier in Section 2 (Methodology), the questions used to interview the subjects were classified in three major groups: (1) questions related to the subjects own perception of boredom at their workplace, (2) questions to verify the presence of boredom triggers in their respective workplace (based on the theoretical background described on Section 3), and (3) questions related to their perception of own personality trait (extroversion or introversion). Tables 10 to 17 below gives us the results of the questionnaires evaluation.

The number of respondents is five (5) for all questions.

Table 10. Perception of boredom – general.

	A little	Moderately	A lot
Have you been bored at your work?	20 %		80 %
How seriously are you bored?	20 %		80 %
How much boredom has affected your motivation?	20 %		80 %
How much boredom has affected on your job satisfaction?	20 %	20 %	60 %
How much does boredom affect your work performance?	20 %	60 %	20 %

Table 10 indicates that the subjects perceive that workplace boredom affects their motivation, job satisfaction and work performance. This supports Watt and Hargis (2010, 163) findings that boredom-prone workers have lower work performance ratings from their supervisors.

Tables 10 and 11 (below) validate that the subjects indeed feel bored frequently (majority of answers classified as "always" or "every day". They also perceive that they are "a lot" bored. This was expected, because it was expected from the subjects to be bored at work to participate in the study.

Table 11. Frequency of boredom.

How often do you feel bored at your working place?	
Always	20 %
Once a day	60 %
Once a week	
Once a month	20 %
Once a year	

Table 12. Presence of boredom triggers – general.

	A little	Moderately	A lot
How engaged to your job do you feel?	20 %	40 %	40 %
How much does your job fulfill your work-related needs?		80 %	20 %
How much do you feel you belong to a group in your job?	60 %	20 %	20 %
Do you like challenges?			100 %
Is your job challenging enough?	60 %	40 %	
Do you feel you are creative and innovative at your job?	60 %	20 %	20 %
Do you feel you are learning at your job?	40 %	40 %	20 %
Do you feel you are using all your skills at your job?	40 %	40 %	20 %
Are you satisfied with your salary?		100 %	
Does your organization support your personal goals?	80 %	20 %	
Do you feel appreciated at your job?	60 %	20 %	20 %
Do you have full internet access at your disposal during your working hours?	20 %	20 %	60 %

Table 12 indicates that the subjects do not perceive they belong to a working group. As explained above on Section 3 by Whiteoak (2014, 742), workers belonging to a group are more likely to have better workplace boredom coping strategies, therefore are less prone to workplace boredom. If this perception of not belonging to a group stems from personal problems with their colleagues, it is also can be one reason for the poor motivation, as explained by Contan and Serban (2015, 409). For instance, subject #1 even mentioned that "respect from boss and colleagues" motivate him better; subject #2 complained about "conservative colleagues" and subject #5 mentioned the need of "nice working colleagues".

All the subjects described that they like challenges on work conditions, however the majority of the subjects does not feel that their job is challenging enough, neither they have opportunities to be creative and innovative, nor learning in the work environment. This supports Game (2007, 716) findings that high boredom copers are more creative and innovative while performing their tasks, so if the subjects are not able creative and innovative, their boredom coping skills diminish and eventually they will be bored. For instance, subject #2 (a medical doctor) pointed out that "a little variety in patient cases" cause her boredom; subject #3 was very blunt to explain that "her motivation is in challenging projects"; and subject #4 complained about "redundant work practices (work flow requires no independent thought)".

Table 13. Presence of boredom triggers – relative perception of salary.

Compared to your peers, do you think are you paid	
More?	
Less?	20 %
I don't know	80 %

The majority of the respondents are only moderately satisfied with their salaries, even not knowing what their peers earn on same positions within the organization. As explained above, the disclosure of salary information (i.e., proof/evidence of "inequality") results in a decline in job satisfaction and work motivation, especially among the lowest-earning workers (Card et al. 2012, 3001), so this fact is a bit contradictory with the findings from this study. It is not possible to conclude further about salary disclosure on the subjects of this study. Nevertheless, all the subjects mentioned some form of financial rewards on their answers.

The majority of the respondents do not feel appreciated on their job, neither have social recognition from their job. Recognition is a part of the "higher needs" (as described on Section 3 above), and if motivation needs theories hold, once these needs are not fulfilled, the subjects are not motivated and bored. Both subjects #1 and #3 openly mentioned the lack of recognition by superiors and colleagues alike, as a reason for their lack of motivation at work.

Table 14. Presence of boredom triggers - internet utilization.

How long time per day do you spend browsing the internet on activities not related to your job?	
Less than 30 minutes	40 %
Between 30 minutes and one hour	20 %
1-2 hours	20 %
More than 2 hours	20 %

Although currently workplace procrastination is expressed on endless hours browsing the internet, the subjects of this study do not spend extra hours on the internet doing non-related tasks, even though they all have access. Therefore for this group study, the availability and utilization of the internet do not seem relevant to their workplace boredom.

Table 15. Presence of boredom triggers – social aspects.

Do you feel you have (please select all which applies)?	
Decent pay and pleasant working conditions	80 %
Safe working conditions and job security	100 %
Cohesive workgroup and friendly supervision	40 %
Social recognition and high status job	40 %
Challenging job and opportunities for creativity and achievement	20 %

Table 15 indicates also that the subjects perceive safe working conditions and job securities, which can also be a factor linked to motivation and workplace boredom. Because all the subjects in the study have white collar, clerical and stable jobs and are not exposed to harsh physical working conditions (e.g, working on a construction site, or heavy industry), this question is somewhat irrelevant.

Table 16. Perception of extraversion/intraversion and MBTI test result.

Subject #	1	2	3	4	5
Own perception of personality trait (extroversion or introversion)	E	I	I	I	E
MBTI Test result (internet based)	ESTJ	INFP	INTJ	INTJ	ENFP

From Table 16 concerning the comparison between their perception of personality trait and the internet based results, we can conclude that all the subjects knew in advance the concept of introversion / extraversion and their perception matches the internet based results.

With a introverts/extroverts ratio of 2/3, it is not possible to associate one specific personality trait (extrovertion or introvertion) to workplace boredom. However, as explained above, extroverts tend to be more episodically bored than introverts.

Each of the five study subjects have different personality types according to the MBTI classification (out of 16 possible combinations), therefore it is not possible to associate one specific personality type to workplace boredom with the sample size utilized in this study.

Table 17. MBTI results by category.

Subject #	1	2	3	4	5
MBTI Type	ESTJ	INFP	INTJ	INTJ	ENFP
Introversion (I) / Extraversion (E)	E 44%	I 3%	I 47%	I 19%	E 53%
Sensing (S) / Intuition (N)	S 1%	N 25%	N 12%	N 19%	N 16%
Thinking (T) / Feeling (F)	T 6%	F 9%	T 1%	T 16%	F 41%
Judging (J) / Perceiving (P)	J 16%	P 59%	J 31%	J 19%	P 9%

When analyzing Table 17 concerning the MBTI results by category and breaking down the results in the different categories, it is not conclusive to relate subjects workplace boredom to any of the introversion/extraversion, thinking/feeling or judging/perceiving categories. The only category with a clearer trend is towards intutition, because all the subjects have slight to moderate preference of intituition over sensing, with the exception of one subject, which still had a very small preference of sensing. As described above, "intuition" focuses on the big picture, underlying patterns, and following "gut feeling"; so if all the subjects do not have a challenging enough job, they are not able to see the "big picture", because there is no big picture to be seen. Therefore it can be concluded that there might be a connection between being classified as "intuitive" according to MBTI and workplace boredom.

5.2 Answers to the research questions

Based on the observations and conclusions above, it is then possible to answer the research questions proposed to guide this study.

> *RQ1: What is the likely reason for workplace related boredom in the subject persons?*

The answer for this research question is: Both the workplace environment where the subject execute their work tasks and some specific traits in their own personality are the reasons for workplace related boredom in the subjects.

"Workplace environment" factors causing the workplace boredom are:

- Lack of perception of belonging to a group.
- Lack of challenge in the workplace and lack of possibilities to be creative, innovative and learn within the organization.
- Lack of appreciation from colleagues and superiors, and social recognition from their job.
- Moderate satisfaction with salary and other types of compensation.

As explained above, there are other factors which can lead to workplace boredom (for instance, internet availability and usage, safe working conditions) but these other factors are not present or are not relevant in the subject group.

> *RQ2: Can this study identify a personality type (or trait) more prone to workplace related boredom?*

Theory indicates that extroverts tend to be more episodically bored than introverts, but because of the small size of the group study, it was not possible to validate this hypothesis. As seen, the share of introverts and extroverts in this group is similar and it is not possible to identify a connections between introversion and extroversion on work related boredom.

However, the only noticeable phenomena is the association between workplace boredom and subjects with moderate to strong "intuition" characteristics on the MBTI personality analysis. Maybe especially intuitive and emotional people need more content, purpose and variation on their work.

In order to have a definite answer for this research question and validate that "intuition" relates to workplace boredom, the research method should be changed to a quantitative approach, where it would be possible to use more statistical tools to validate the phenomena and expand to the world population.

5.3 Validation of results

As explained in the Methodology section of this study, qualitative research methods were chosen over quantitative methods because qualitative methods seeks deep understanding of social phenomena with their natural context, focusing on the "why".

This choice seems appropriate to support the research to answer the first research question and it supported this study as expected. This study was able to answer the first research question with an acceptable level of precision.

However, the chosen research method was not able to support and find an exact answer for the second research question. The answer for the second question was only an indication, which can be validated using quantitative research methods in further studies. The relatively small group size (number of respondents is five), might not be big enough fo this type of study.

Another fact to be considered is the possibility of bias in this study, because all the subjects have some sort of personal relationship with the author. Some are very close friends, some acquaintenances; some are known for over 20 years.

Because of this personal relationship, the subject group can be classified as homogeneous: they are all between 35 and 45 years old, they all have children, they all have polytechnic or university degrees, they all live and work in developed countries, they have the same ethnic (Western) background, among other similarities. This homogeneity might have created bias into this study.

5.4 Suggestions for further studies

Once the results are analysed, it is possible to suggest several studies to answer the new questions raised in this study.

The first suggestion is to have the similar study as this one, but with a group of subjects with more heterogeneity, including subjects with more diverse background: subjects from non-Western backgrounds, lower educational levels, different age groups, random persons without previous personal relationship with the author, people from different countries, people with jobs inheritantly boring, people with lower income, etc.

Once the study group is more heterogeneous, another suggestion is to increase the size of the group, because the small sample size (number of respondents = 5) was not able to provide enough information to validate some of the hypothesis discussed earlier in this study.

If the subject group is heterogenous and big enough, the research method can be changed from qualitative to quantitative and further studies can be executed to validate the questions regarding personality traits, which were not possible in this study.

For instance, only "intuition" showed association with workplace boredom; but is it possible to validate this association within the world population? Or is there another characteristic which has a stronger positive association with workplace boredom, and it was not possible to identify because of the validation concerns inherent to this study? These are very interesting questions to be answered in another study.

Or what would happen if instead of the MBTI, this study would use another type of personality classification test? What would be the results? Would there be a clear answer to RQ2?

Bigger, heterogenous group could also support answers to other questions not answered in this study. For example, it was not possible to conclude anything regarding the internet utilization; or is internet utilization a cause or really a consequence of workplace boredom.

Following another line of further studies, it would be interesting (to say the least) to discover how the workplace boredom is in practice affecting the subjects motivation, job satisfaction and work performance. What is the true output level of the bored subjects? Are these employees truly performing at their maximum and creating revenues for their organization, or is their motivation and job satisfaction so low, that their work performance is a small portion of their theoretical full capabilities?

In this further study, it would be able to see what in practice means the data shown on Table 1, where there is indication of how much GDP wealth and production is lost because of depression absenteeism in different countries.

One must have in mind that boredom is rather common and harmless; however if the situation continues to arise, more harmful consequences to the individual can appear, for instance, a decrease in quality of life and depression. Both boredom and depression are categorized as unpleasant deactived affect, and sometimes their difference is very thin. Boredom can be seen as a momentaneous state of mind, while depression is a more systematic state of unpleasanteness.

Therefore further studies related to this can be expanded to other disciplines, involving not only business and economical sciences, but also psychology and health sciences.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The objective of this study was understand better work related boredom and how different personality types relate to workplace boredom through the analysis of several case studies.

With the test results, it was possible to conclude that both the workplace environment where the subjects work and some specific traits in their own personality are the reasons for their workplace related boredom in the subjects.

Workplace boredom was related to a lack of perception of belonging to a group, lack of challenges and possibilities to be creative, innovative and learn in the workplace, lack of appreciation and social recognition from their job and a moderate satisfaction with salary and other types of compensation.

It was not possible to identify one specific personality trait to be linked with workplace boredom, because the sample was too small and the qualitative research method chosen might not be the most appropriate to research this subject.

However, it is possible to notice that all the subjects had a preference of "intuition" over "sensing" on the MBTI results, so there may be some evidence that "intuiton" can be linked to workplace boredom. Maybe especially intuitive and emotional people need more content, purpose and variation in their work.

Also theoretically, literature indicates that extroverts tend to be more episodically bored than introverts, but because of the small size of the group study, it was not possible to validate this hypothesis.

When observing a bit deeper the replies to the survey, it seems very clear that both the lack of challenge and lack of appreciation are the keys to solve the problem of workplace boredom to the subjects.

The lack of challenge can be disrupted by actions to create a more challenging business environment, adding more difcult tasks and creating opportunities for the subjects to utilize more of their mental capabilities. The lack of challenge may also appear in the form of low perspectives of professional growth within the current workplace and organization, and the subjects would need to change their organizations to professionally grow.

For instance, subject #2 is a medical doctor working on a hospital, and there aren't many possibilities to growth hierarchically in the very flat organization where she works. Considering it is a public organization, the next level must inherently require even more clerical and administrative and less operational than today. In this case, the challenge could be the engage her in some sort of program to optimize their process. The second alternative for her is to go to the private sector and work on applied clinical research, or perhaps she could start specializing in a new medical specialty.

Subject #3, the civil servant, does not perceive any challenge within her current job description, and assuming that public administration jobs are slower to respond to changes than the private sector, the challenge could either be the involvement in some big project with the private sector stakeholders, or assuming another position in the organization, if more challenging jobs are available at all.

A lack of appreciation is clearly shown on Subject #1, the business manager. But using his own words, he would expect for his manager to "be more active and manage on a constructive way, and not in disruptive way". Because he is at the very high level of a medium size enterprise, the only chance for him to remove this boredom factor is to either change his job to another organization, or hope that his manager will leave the organization and a more reasonable supervisor will come.

Subject #3 also perceives the lack of appreciation, when no one gives her any positive feedback on her job, regardless if she performs her task in a superb manner. The context may seem that in her organization, the upper management consists of either technically oriented people or people in a clear political career, who lack the basic management skills to engage their workforce on their respective tasks. If this is the case, only the change to move to another organization would avoid the workplace boredom.

In summary, the key for business managers to avoid workplace boredom is to keep the workplace challenging and appreciate the efforts of their subordinates towards strategic goals. If these are present within the organization, the employees will be motivated and there is a smaller likelihood of workplace boredom.

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Appendix 1 – Questionnaire transcription

Dear Participant,

The purpose of this study is to understand the context of why you are feeling bored at your work place, and how it relates to your own personality.

Work related boredom is an amotivational state at work, where employees lack interest in their work activities and have difficulties concentrating on them. It can also be linked to a low arousal and symptoms of weariness, lethargy, fatigue and emptiness; or a state of high arousal and aggravation typified by feeling restless, irritable and anxious.

This study will be used on a master's thesis for the Turku University of Applied Sciences (https://www.tuas.fi/en/), in the field of International Business Management.

This study consists of two parts. Part one is a questionnaire with 34 questions. The majority of them are multiple-choice, while a few are open questions, where you are free to write the answer you wish.

At part two, there is link for a personality test, which will tell you what your personality is. The external personality test consists of 64 multiple choice questions, and in the end, it will calculate your personality type. With the results, you may even discover careers and occupations most suitable for your personality type. It takes about 10-15 minutes to complete the test.

The multiple-choice questions have a check box (□), which you can click to select. A selected box looks like this (⊠). The open questions have a text box, which you can click to start typing your answer.

Thank you very much for your support!

Edson Martins

Part One: Questionnaire

1. Sex

☐ M ☐ F

2. Age group

☐ 20-29 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 50+

3. Education

☐ Secondary ☐ Lower tertiary ☐ Higher tertiary ☐ Post graduate

4. Country where you work?
   Click or tap here to enter text.

5. What is your nationality?
   Click or tap here to enter text.

6. What is your field of occupation?
   Click or tap here to enter text.

7. How many years are you at same company/organization?

☐ 0-1 ☐ 1-3 ☐ 3-6 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 10+

8. How many years are you working at the same position?

☐ 0-1 ☐ 1-3 ☐ 3-6 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 10+

9. Have you been bored at your work?

☐ A little ☐ Moderately ☐ A lot

10. How often do you feel bored at your working place?

☐ Always ☐ Once a day ☐ Once a week

☐ Once a month ☐ Once a year

11. How seriously are you bored?

☐ A little ☐ Moderately ☐A lot

12. How much boredom has affected your motivation?

☐ A little ☐ Moderately ☐A lot

13. How much boredom has affected on your job satisfaction?

☐ A little ☐ Moderately ☐A lot

14. How much does boredom affect your work performance?

☐ A little ☐ Moderately ☐A lot

15. Why do you feel bored at your job?

Click or tap here to enter text.

16. How engaged to your job do you feel?

☐ A little ☐ Moderately ☐A lot

17. How much does your job fulfill your work-related needs?

☐ A little ☐ Moderately ☐A lot

18. How much do you feel you belong to a group in your job?

☐ A little ☐ Moderately ☐A lot

19. Do you like challenges?

☐ A little ☐ Moderately ☐A lot

20. Is your job challenging enough?

☐ A little ☐ Moderately ☐A lot

21. Do you feel you are creative and innovative at your job?

☐ A little ☐ Moderately ☐A lot

22. Do you feel you are learning at your job?

☐ A little ☐ Moderately ☐A lot

23. Do you feel you are using all your skills at your job?

☐ A little   ☐ Moderately   ☐A lot

24. Are you satisfied with your salary?

☐ A little   ☐ Moderately   ☐A lot

25. Compared to your peers, do you think are you paid

☐ More?   ☐ Less?   ☐ I don't know.

26. Does your organization support your personal goals?

☐ A little   ☐ Moderately   ☐A lot

27. Do you feel appreciated at your job?

☐ A little   ☐ Moderately   ☐A lot

28. Are you

☐ Extrovert?   ☐ Introvert?

29. Do you have full internet access at your disposal during your working hours?

☐ A little   ☐ Moderately   ☐A lot

30. How long time per day do you spend browsing the internet on activities not related to your job?

☐Less than 30 minutes   ☐Between 30 minutes and one hour

☐1-2 hours   ☐More than 2 hours

31. Do you feel you have (please select all which applies)?

☐ Decent pay and pleasant working conditions

☐ Safe working conditions and job security

☐ Cohesive work group and friendly supervision

☐ Social recognition and high status job

☐ Challenging job and opportunities for creativity and achievement

32. What does motivate you better? Tangible rewards (salary, bonus, extra vacation) or psychological rewards (sense of accomplishment, respect from your colleagues, etc)?

Click or tap here to enter text.

33. Which type of situations make you feel bored at work?

Click or tap here to enter text.

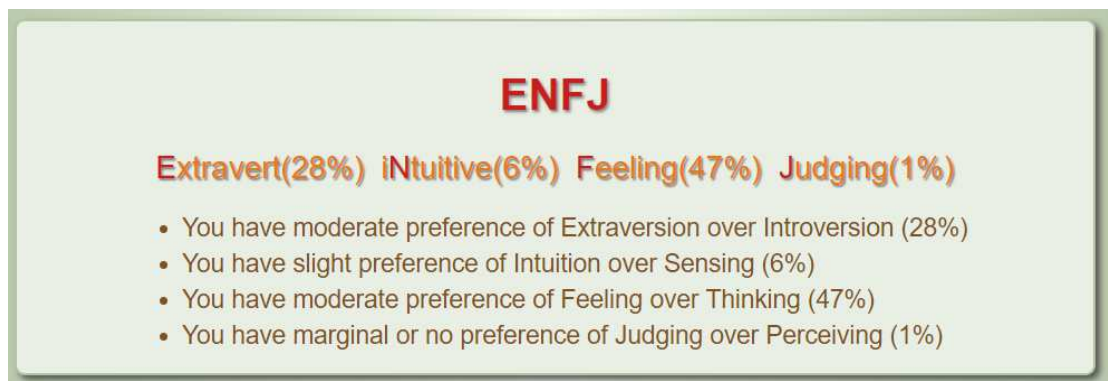34. What your manager should do to reduce or eliminate your boredom?

Click or tap here to enter text.

Part Two: Personality test

The personality test can be found on the following link:

http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes2.asp

Your test result will look similar to this:

ENFJ

Extravert(28%) iNtuitive(6%) Feeling(47%) Judging(1%)

- You have moderate preference of Extraversion over Introversion (28%)
- You have slight preference of Intuition over Sensing (6%)
- You have moderate preference of Feeling over Thinking (47%)
- You have marginal or no preference of Judging over Perceiving (1%)

Please copy your test results here below

Click or tap here to enter text.