Management across distances – how to ensure performance and employee well-being - DTU Orbit (20/12/2018)

Management across distances – how to ensure performance and employee well-being

Today many businesses are geographically distributed with co-located employees and teams across dispersed work situations. Furthermore, today’s technologies and business requirements both allow and demand distance management like never before. Distance work and management are characteristic of various types of knowledge work (Fisher & Fisher, 2001; Jacobs, 2004; Li & Scullion, 2006). In fact, it is precisely knowledge workers who are most likely to experience work-related stress, which to a large extent remains an unsolved problem in practice, and is the second most frequently reported work-related health problem in Europe by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work. The risk of work-related stress and the high costs associated with it has generated a large number of preventive intervention studies. However, according to Westgaard and Winkel (2011), balancing organizational performance and employee well-being, also termed sustainable management, is not taken into consideration in most intervention studies. In the present study, the concept of sustainable management is applied at the organizational level, aiming at management, with the intention to improve organizational sustainability (Docherty, Forslin, Shani, & Mari, 2002; Westgaard & Winkel, 2011). Despite the fact that distance management in daily operations in virtual organizations is a growing field, there is little theoretical and empirical knowledge of its characteristics and focus has largely been on managerial activities aimed at ensuring performance and less on the well-being.

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