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## **Hard/heart worker**

Work intensification in purpose-driven organizations

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# Hard/heart worker – Work intensification in purpose-driven organizations

## Abstract

This article investigates the interrelations between purpose-driven organizations' quest for social sustainability and internal work conditions exemplified through experiences with work intensification. A governmentality studies approach is applied to investigate how employees' perceptions of doing greater good in the world also become a productive self-disciplining strategy that potentially increases work intensification and simultaneously result in an instrumentalization of working for greater sustainability. The analysis is based on a case study consisting of in-depth and focus group interviews with management and employees. The intersection between doing greater good in the world and the self-disciplining that comes along with it can, in some situations, create dilemmas that may decrease employee well-being, as it demands continuous negotiation of boundaries between paid work and free time, meaningfulness and work devotion, self-management and work intensification. The paper raises a discussion on how purpose-driven organizations with a sustainability focus should be concerned about internal social sustainability in order to maintain consistency between external purpose and internal well-being of employees.

**Key words:** work intensification, knowledge work, purpose, sustainability, technologies of the self, work devotion

## Introduction

*"You can either finish doing your job and make a difference in the world or you can choose to go home."* A manager in a non-profit purpose-driven organization founded on democratic and humanist values uses this phrase to demonstrate the work intensification dilemma faced by knowledge workers. This paper aims to investigate how this dilemma is played out. First the paper introduces recent research within the two fields of relevance to this paper, i.e. purpose driven organisations and work intensification. Next the analytical strategy is presented and the use of governmentality approach in structuring the analysis is explained. Third, a presentation of the purpose-driven case organisation that we collaborated with for the study is presented in the case section and the methods used to construct the empirical data is mapped out. Then comes the analysis of examples of employee perceptions of working in a purpose-driven organization. In the discussion section we sum up the analysis examples that show the psychosocial consequences of intermingling the organizational purpose with the personal one, that raise the need to discuss how working hard with the heart both may have psychosocial consequences and may challenge organizations' trustworthiness in their definition of a sustainability purpose. Also, inspired by other scholars within the field of organization and management studies it is discussed how new forms of identities in organizations redefine the norms of the individualized society and paves the way for consistently organizing sustainably. Finally, comes the

conclusion where we argue that organizing sustainably is both a political and a subjective question. The sustainability purpose is collective and, on an ideological level, obliges organizations to be consistent in terms of internal sustainability as well.

## (Re-)defining purpose

Purpose is present in nearly every organization's yearly report or mission statement. It has in recent years become revitalized as an important strategy for organizations to enhance trustworthiness and transparency between their mission and their actions (Grant, 2017). Its revitalization is based, on two aspects.

Firstly, on the fact that organizational scholars have previously typically referred to purpose as organizationally and managerially defined. It can in this respect be defined as knowledge about "the statement of a company's moral response to its broadly defined responsibilities." (Bartlett and Ghoshal 1993 in Rey et al. 2019, p. 33). In this definition purpose is broadly understood as the managerially defined reason for the being of the business itself. This simply requires the individuals in the organization to know it. When the organization's moral response is made explicit through its operational development purpose is then defined as action (Rey & Bastons 2019, p. 34) and: "...it becomes important how purpose is translated into actions that redesign work (Grant 2012). However, purpose both as knowledge and as action is still widely managerially defined. Therefore, research in employee perception is to an increasing extent suggesting to explore purpose as a concept focusing on the individual can feed into the organizational levels (Adla et al., 2020; Pircher, 2016; Rey et al., 2019, 11ff).

Secondly, in addition to a purely commercially defined purpose, purpose is to an increasing degree connected with doing good in society that goes beyond the mission statement of the company. Purpose represents an overarching commitment to society that includes broader aims, such as "making a difference," or 'improving lives,' or 'reducing harm' and '[Purpose] acknowledges the interdependence of business and society – [as] one cannot flourish without the other" (Hollensbe et al., 2014). Purpose in this respect has a normative dimension that implies changes in organizational practices and places organizations as part of an eco-system, in the sense that organizations are increasingly called to take responsibility in the societies they operate in.

When an organization calls itself "purpose-driven" we take on board these two aspects of revitalization. Namely, bringing the discussion of purpose to the employee perspective and second to a sustainability agenda. Organizational purpose in this respect thus means that the organization defines itself as committed to doing good not only in relation to its own profitability, but also in acknowledgement to its interdependence to society, and it does so through engaging with the employee perspectives and actions in different levels internally and externally of the organization.

## Linking the organizational purpose with personal purpose

Defining purpose has on a personal level particularly been done through the concept of motivation within the field of psychology through a whole range of different theoretical perspectives, e.g. humanistic psychology (Maslow, 1954, 1971; Herzberg 1959; Alderfer 1972;

Rogers, 1961), existential psychology (Frankl 1959), psychological well-being (Ryff, 1989), meaning research (Steger, Dik, & Duffy 2012) and not least Self-determination theory (SDT) involving competence, autonomy and relatedness explaining intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan 1985; Deci, Olafsen & Ryan 2017). Each approach offer important insights into understanding motivation on a personal level. However, they also contain some limitations in applying them into an organizational and management setting. For example, Gagné and Deci (2005) forwards that earlier versions of SDT were mostly tested in laboratory experiments rather than organizational studies. More practically, many activities in work organizations are not intrinsically interesting and the use of strategies such as participation and involvement of employees to enhance intrinsic motivation is not always feasible. Also, often approaches to personal motivation seem to imply that managers would have to focus on either intrinsic or external motivation - that is, either on promoting intrinsic motivation through participation and empowerment while minimizing the use of extrinsic factors or, alternatively, on using rewards and other extrinsic contingencies to maximize extrinsic motivation while ignoring the importance of intrinsic motivation.

While we acknowledge the important contributions of personal motivation approaches and agreeing a sense of purpose as being integral to psychological well-being (Weidemann 2019, p.16), giving a person a sense of direction in life (Ryff 1989) and that purpose is an individual's motivation to do what the person is meant for (Maslow 1954;1971), we also aim to bring an awareness to the interest of managers has widely been to use personal motivation strategically in order to increase employees' willingness to work more, and purpose is then communicated from a top-down perspective to the employees as an important driver in motivating them to more productivity and work devotion (Murray, 2017).

Therefore, we argue that the interrelation between organizational and personal purpose can be fruitfully analysed through investigating employee's perception of the concrete organizational practices to explore how the personal and organizational purpose are closely and dynamically interrelated and culturally and discursively defined. Further, it is important to recall that purpose from an organizational perspective can be, but is not necessarily interrelated with the individuals in the organization. Which calls for further investigation of the interrelations between the two. Rey et al. (2019) suggest that the focus on purpose should be strengthened by a bottom-up approach to defining organizational purpose. as: 'It endows any task with deeper meaning, while reinforcing the individual's value system.' Rey et al. (2019) develop the 'management logic of purpose' that entails: personal purpose, self-management and unity, where 'unity' is the idea of connecting individual purpose with that of the organization, inviting employees to engage with defining not only their own purpose but also with that of the organization.

### Putting sustainability on the purpose agenda

The second aspect of redefining purpose has to do with its increasing obligation not only to the profit and economic growth of the organization itself, but to a broader definition of doing good in society. Purpose represents the 'why' of our actions and efforts, whether collective or individual (Sinek, 2009). 'It specifies our contribution to this world and to the society in which we live' (Rey et al., 2019, p. 4). Organizations are increasingly held accountable for how they participate in making the world sustainable through the production of their products and services. It is no longer enough for organizations to state that they are complying with good

governance and triple bottom line (the three 'p's: people, profit, planet, that Elkington [1997] came up with 25 years ago).

Unfortunately, in spite of the greater inclusion of sustainability in the definition of an organization's purpose, we still see a primary focus on the output of the organization and not on the human factor or what is also called 'social sustainability' (i.e. well-being, equality and solidarity; see Dupret & Langergaard, 2020) within the organization. Rather, management and organization studies have to a great extent looked upon the possible links between profitability and sustainability as well as the factors that cause organizations to pursue different sustainability strategies (e.g. Ambec & Lanoie, 2008). Even when there is a concern with how the formulation of organizational purpose has social effects, these concerns are mostly directed to the consequences of economic development and resource exploitation (Pfeffer, 2010, p. 36) rather than the consequences on every employee's health and well-being and the richness of social life as assessed by participation in meaningful civic activities. Jeffrey Pfeffer (2010) focuses on employees' health and well-being within sustainable organizations. Inspired by the concern of balancing the outer sustainability purpose with the inner, this paper focuses on how employees shape and are shaped by conditions of work in a strongly purpose-driven organization.

### Challenges in the decrease of personal purpose - Work intensification

In the last decades, despite improved living standards and wealth in general, researchers in industrialized countries have registered a sense of increasing work intensification (Eurofond, 2016). This is surprising because the quality of working life was predicted to improve with fewer hours of work, more holiday and better work conditions (Green, 2006, p. 66). Since WW2 there has in fact been a decrease in working hours in most industrialized countries. On average people work far less than in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. And in recent years, working hours have decreased even further. Despite statistics that show a general decline in working hours, people report increasing pressure at work: *'This disjuncture between widespread perceptions and the most obvious nationally representative statistic warrants investigation: either perceptions of increasing pressures of work on life are based on a popular illusion, or the perceptions relate to something other than the average of work hours'* (Green, 2006, p. 45–46).

The quality of work life does not only depend on the amount of work hours, but also the ways in which the work is conducted, i.e. qualitative and emotional aspects. Since 1991, the Eurofond has monitored work conditions in Europe. The results are published in the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS). One of the seven indicators is work intensity (Eurofond, 2016). Work intensity is selected as an indicator on the basis of its proven negative impact on the health and well-being of workers. Regarding work intensity, the report concludes that there is an increased level of work demands in the job; for instance, working at high speed and under time pressure while at the same time experiencing emotional demands. This is especially the case within the group of highly skilled jobs. Evidence supporting the view that work continued to intensify in the 1990s comes from the 1998 Workplace Employment Relations Survey (WERS98) (as cited in Green, 2006, p. 56).

The findings about the development of work intensity are to be specified in relation to the group of employees and the type of intensity referred to. It is also important to bear in mind that it is



different from work performance or efficiency<sup>i</sup>. ‘Work intensity’ is an ambiguous term<sup>ii</sup>. First, one can distinguish the time spent at work from work intensity, meaning the intensity of labour effort during that time at work. Conceptually, work intensity/effort is the rate of physical and/or mental input to work tasks during the working day (Green, 2006, p. 48). Additionally, the Socially Innovative Knowledge Work (SIW) research project<sup>iii</sup> that this paper draws upon defines work intensification using the following indicators: the amount of work, unforeseen tasks, increased complexity of skill required to master the job without the allocation of extra resources, heightened pace and deadlines that are difficult to comply with and constant connectivity. This is difficult to measure as discrete units, and the experience of work intensification is subjective. With the reservation of possible measuring difficulties, an increase has been shown in both work load and work intensity in industrialized countries (e.g. SCEL)<sup>iv</sup> (Green, 2006, p. 51).

While the exact definition of increasing work pressure appears to vary, the issue is frequently linked to ill health, either metaphorically or literally (as an ‘epidemic of stress’ and the epidemic of ‘hurry sickness’, a virus engineered in California that causes people to fear that ‘time is running out and it’s driving us crazy’) (Greene, 2006, p. 44). While stress is only the extreme manifestation of increased pressures at work<sup>v</sup>, there is a certain amount of psychological evidence about the impact of work overload on well-being (Johnson et al., 1998, cited in Greene, 2006; Van den Berg & Schalk, 1997; Warr, 1987). Overall, with increased skill requirements, tight deadlines and increased task flexibility (Gallie et al., 1998), the pace of work has been blamed for deteriorating workplace health (Cartron & Gollac, 2002, cited in Greene, 2006, p. 44).

Specifically within knowledge work, work intensification is increasingly self-driven and influenced by subjectification processes in the context of trends of individualization and self-management that explain this groups’ increased experience with work intensification (Pérez-Zapata et al., 2016). This is in line with the so-called ‘stress of higher status’ hypothesis, that suggests that higher-level occupations may suffer increased stress because of additional job demands, work-family conflicts and exposure to resources that might exacerbate demands (Damasko, Zawadzki, & Smyth, 2016; Koltai & Schieman, 2015; Schieman & Glavin, 2016; Schieman et al., 2006). What we learn from these findings is that, in spite of knowledge workers’ autonomy, learning abilities, independence and material and symbolic rewards such as being part of a highly acknowledged organization, there seems to be an increasing tendency for knowledge workers to take individual responsibility for their extensive quantitative and qualitative workload and work intensity. Consistent with the ‘stress of higher status’ hypothesis, Michel (2014) and Lupu and Empson (2015) have highlighted how highly qualified knowledge workers with apparent high levels of autonomy work beyond their limits, burning out and severely harming their health and personal relationships. These workers frequently refer to their activities and efforts as self-chosen, an emerging contradiction that is beginning to be known as the ‘autonomy paradox’ (Lupu & Empson, 2015; Mazmanian, Orlikowski, & Yates, 2013, cited in Pérez-Zapata, 2016; Michel, 2014). This we find particularly interesting in relation to finding out whether there is a similar connection to why knowledge workers seem to work harder in purpose-driven organizations.

Classical critical management and organization literature has addressed similar paradoxes in the past. Particularly well known is Burawoy’s (1979) Manufacturing Consent, where workers treat the labour process and its piece rate system as a shop floor ‘game’, which, in turn,

generates feelings of being in control that end up contributing to an intensification of work (Burawoy, 1979). Moving towards a knowledge work context in engineering, the ethnographic study by Kunda (1992) discusses the so-called normative controls and how maintaining a corporate culture was the way to get workers to want what the organization wanted them to want (i.e. full commitment and sustained effort). This is also in line with Bunting's (2004) 'willing slaves' thesis. These landmark studies, carried out in different contexts, suggest that it is not autonomy, but a perception of autonomy in the workplace that seems to be the critical factor that shapes workers' attitudes and sustains work intensification (Peters, Waterman, & Jones, 1982; Willmott, 1993, cited in Pérez-Zapata, 2016).

It follows that work intensification is seen through the experience of not only quantitative accumulation of tasks and responsibilities but also through the balancing of the increased complexity in the demands of self-management in relation to a sustainability purpose. As employees are subjected to an individual responsibility to understand and manage an exploration of the self while handling the norms of self-exploitation that a self-management culture creates (Muhr et al., 2012), the moral imperatives of doing good creates different kinds of social dynamics to be handled.

### Analytical strategy – Technologies of self aiming for the collective good

In order to operationalize the intersection between the organizational and personal purpose through the experiences of work intensification further, this paper uses a poststructuralist governmentality perspective (Cruikshank, 1996; Dean, 1999; Foucault, 1982, 2008; Rose, 1999). This means, that to the extent that employees internalize the organizational purpose through organizational practices and disciplining techniques, it affords them an opportunity to transcend the definition of purpose themselves, giving them new ways of positioning and manage themselves.

Foucault used 'governmentality' to denote a diffuse and heterogeneous form of decentred power that, in various ways, makes available a possible action field by promoting and restraining specific behaviours and understandings rather than determining them (Foucault, 1982, 2008). When Foucault uses 'governmentality' in relation to neoliberalism or advanced liberal states, the term refers to the multiple ways in which societies are organized with decentred power, where citizens play an active part in their self-government (Foucault, 2008). Governmentality is, simply put, the organized practices (mentalities, rationalities and techniques) through which subjects are governed and come to govern themselves. This active self-governing is inherent in Foucault's definition of governmentality which is also widely quoted in the expression 'conduct of conduct' (Dean, 1999, p. 10) and technologies of power characterizing governmentality as a diffuse power that works 'at a distance' (Burchell et al., 2003), crucial in the identity building of the devoted self-managed knowledge worker. Technologies of power are those 'technologies imbued with aspirations for the shaping of conduct in the hope of producing certain desired effects and averting certain undesired ones' (Rose, 1999, p. 52). Technologies of self are technologies of power applied on an individual level that reduce the scope of explicit government on individuals. They refer to the practices and strategies by which individuals represent to themselves their own ethical self-understanding.



In organization and management studies, a governmentality approach is often used to analyse self-management and employees' understanding of themselves in relation to their working lives (e.g. Bardon et al., 2012). A paradoxical saying is that the more self-control and freedom employees experience, the more productive they are and they will in turn give more of themselves (Bains, 2007, p. 241, cited in Fleming & Sturdy, 2009, p. 569). When working in a purpose-driven organization, the norms of sustainability become part of the moral imperatives of conduct formulated in the technologies of power, and likewise in the technologies of self that may raise new types of inherent conflicts.

Indeed, we find signs in the narratives of doing good through work that raise new kinds of conflicts that are strongly connected with the previously stated dilemmas of knowledge work of self-control, freedom and work intensification. Further, the technologies of self that are practised through responsabilization, in particular, seem to be of central importance when working in purpose-driven organizations. In other words, argumentations of doing good for others both in general (in a sustainable sense) and towards colleagues become key in understanding the dynamics of technologies of self, where they come to take responsibility for others but potentially also creating intensified conditions for themselves. The analytical themes are structured around these potential conflicts and also show examples of staff that thrive in these dynamics.

The analysis will explore what kind of practices, self-managing technologies and organizational narratives make employees work harder in ways that are simultaneously consistent or raise new dilemmas/paradoxes in relation to the sustainability purpose of the organization.

Case

Several case organizations are involved in the research project, SIW. The case organization providing empirical material for this paper is a large non-profit organization working with cultural events and concerts. It is built around a huge annual event arranging a big music festival. The organization was established in the 70s and, ever since its origin, has been founded on values of sustainability, democracy and non-profit. It is a social enterprise, as the profit solely serves social sustainability purposes, such as diversity, solidarity and empowering projects, and this is an inherent part of the values of the organization. In the part of the organization that we are investigating, there are around 95 members of staff (both knowledge workers and other professionals, most of them with a high degree of self-management and with self-governing teams). In addition to paid employees there are also 30,000 volunteers, of whom 2,450 volunteer more than 100 hours during the entire year (and not only during or coming up to the big yearly music festival). In addition to scaling up and down in employees in relation to the annual cycle and peaking in summertime with the biggest event of the year, the organization offers coaching, consultancy work, helping with logistics for big events, etc. The staff is rather heterogeneous; for example, young newly graduated academics work alongside senior scaffolders. As such, employees vary greatly in terms of both age and educational background. The balancing of social relations and collaborative decision-making processes inside the organization and with stakeholders outside is of central importance in nearly all corners of the organization. Much of the work being done is operative, while business development, strategy, working with volunteers and community building is developing and requiring strategic independent and analytical competences central to

knowledge work (Alvesson, 2001). The values of inclusion, diversity and democracy, for instance, that underlie the organization's purpose play a key role both in attracting employees and in the daily work, establishing a sense of meaningfulness among employees. The case organization is an interesting case because the social sustainability purpose that is embedded in the case puts at stake how much you do at work, while at the same time imposing a limit on what changes one can achieve in the world.

## Methods

The focus of the study was defined in close collaboration with the case organization. The interest was directed at the work conditions and collaborations of employees with different occupational status, such as casual and permanent staff. The actual role of working in a strongly purpose-driven organization became a primary concern when analysing the material, as it became clear that the organizational purpose strongly related to issues of work intensification and motivation.

The ethnographic fieldwork was conducted from May 2019 to January 2020. The case study involves informal observations of employees at meetings with different stakeholders and organizational seminars and generally following employees around. Subsequent semi-structured interviews with employees and management (N=15) were conducted with both middle managers and employees that were all classified as knowledge workers with substantial elements of independent and self-managed work tasks. The interviews were based on and qualified through the field work observations, informal conversations and research within particularly the field of self-management in knowledge work. Analytical workshops were conducted as focus group interviews with three managers and three employees in order to qualify analytical patterns and to develop organizational interventions in the form of digital consulting games.

All the material has been treated according to research ethical standards and anonymously. In the interviews, we focused on issues related to employment status, work intensification, organizational culture, well-being, collaboration and psychosocial work environment from the point of view of the individual staff member. The interview material was transcribed verbatim. Initially we read the transcripts and identified relevant themes and conducted a thematic analysis (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). During the analytical process, we were inspired by the empirical material and drew on our theory, and we generated categories such as 'value', 'job insecurity', 'emotional labour', and 'invisible work' in the coding process. They were all categories relating to the complexity of the interrelation between personal motivation and organizational purpose. As such, we identified purpose as both a personal motivation and organizational practices that pose key dilemmas in understanding work intensification demanded of all staff. From that, we formulated a coding manual in the team focusing particularly on a set of dilemmas relating to the intersections between purpose and experiences with work intensification. The manual and analytical categories were introduced to a selection of employees in order to secure validity and relevance of the research. The entire material was coded by four researchers working in the research team. The broader empirical material for this study, including observation notes taken while shadowing employees' work in informal settings (Bruni, 2005), interview transcriptions, documents, the spatial set up, movements and gestures, etc. (Dupret, 2010), provides background knowledge regarding the organizational framework in which the employees in the study work over an extended period of time (Davies, 2000). This

data has provided rich material for the case description and qualifies the subsequent qualitative analysis.

### Analysis

The analysis is structured around themes of how doing good is shaped by technologies of power and technologies of self that affect experiences with work intensification in different ways. The themes point to how employees negotiate these technologies of power and adapt them into personal technologies of self. The analysis is structured around illustrative examples of how the most existential technologies of self are connected to work intensification. Further, it seems that these strategies can be organized, on the one hand, into dynamics that result in unsustainable conditions for staff, and on the other, examples of the constructive implications of these dynamics. The analysis will be structured first showing examples of unstable conditions and subsequently with a section of positive examples. The table below aims to give an overview of the highlighted empirical material used in the analysis. It also comprises additional examples (non-highlighted) that qualify the points of analysis that have been developed. This is to show that the analytical points have been developed on the basis of a wider empirical material than the singular extracts. Thus, we have chosen to elaborate on an exemplary selection of excerpts in order to qualitatively dive into the complexity of the interrelations between purpose and work intensification, rather than increase the quantitative argumentation. The theme of this article is the interrelation between work intensification and working within an organization with a sustainability purpose. It should also be mentioned that the case study interviews comprise more examples of both work intensification without being related to sustainability and sustainability without being related to work intensification.

[Table 1: data structure – to be inserted here]

### Constant connectivity is ‘part of the game’

Doing ‘good’ somehow justifies long working hours and high working speed. Work-life balance has been swept away by constant connectivity (Alvesson, 2017) and, not least for knowledge workers, the autonomy paradox (Mazmanian et al., 2013), involving a high degree of work devotion in exchange for inspiring and purposeful work. Here, everyone seems to be very well aware of the structural conditions of work. Working in this purpose-driven organization has a long tradition of participatory involvement of different stakeholders and provides employees with a community of collaboration between different sectors. The working hours that the different sectors such as NGOs, volunteers and the public sector require are different. The collaborating requirements of work thus impose certain temporal conditions of availability on employees.

*Bodil, short-term contract: (...) I’m also sometimes kept in late and have a guilty conscience about sending people an email. Because sometimes the emails come in practically 24 hours a day. And when you are out for dinner, it is just stressful and you cannot just leave ...*

*Interviewer: And it's also on Saturday and on weekends and evenings and...*

*Bodil: Yes. And then adding all the contact with the volunteers. They work on the festival in periods when we are off from the festival. But really, if you can't be bothered, then I also think it is the wrong place to be, actually.*

*Interviewer: Yes. So you have to be prepared to ...*

*Bodil: Yes, there are sometimes things on weekends too, and there are meetings in the evenings. And I have often spoken on the phone with volunteers and it is beyond normal ... But that is the heart of the organization. So it would be a bit silly if you couldn't be bothered. But it is actually also in your contract, I actually think that you have to be available on some weekends and some odd hours and the whole festival, it would be a slightly silly time to counterbalance overtime. Although there are many who joke about it.*

Work intensification is something employees should be prepared for in this job and, to some extent, this is also formalized in the contracts. Evening and weekend availability is necessary to be in contact with other stakeholders and volunteers (that are only available out of regular office hours). These aspects involve a legitimization of work intensification during the planning of the biggest event of the organization in summertime. It is also made explicit that it is possible to counterbalance overtime in periods with fewer deadlines. The counterbalancing requires a contract that exceeds the period of high work intensity. Employees, however, express that the development of the organization is creating increasingly fewer possibilities for counteracting periods of high demand, as the organization, to an increasing extent, takes on board short-term projects the whole year around. When constant availability becomes a work condition and part of the norm, employees come to take it as a natural state of affairs, maybe even to the extent that it is internalized as something 'which is socially worthy, statistically average, scientifically healthy and personally desirable' (Rose, 1999, p. 76). While we see in the excerpt that there is a certain element of humour and ironic distancing from this norm of constant availability, as there are 'many who joke about it', employees and the colleagues referred to do work accordingly. So the norm becomes an important aspect of normalizing that is achieved by working on oneself here through both being ironic and distancing oneself from the ones that do not comply with this norm: 'if you can't be bothered [being constantly available – ed.] ... it is the wrong place to be, actually,' implying that the others are 'wrong'. Technologies of self are often enforced through the calculation of shame (Rose, 1999, p. 73). Even though the excerpt above does not directly impose shame on either the person explaining the situation or the abstract Other that potentially does not comply with the norm, the employee does create a distance from those who do not comply. It is a way of justifying to oneself that the conditions of work are acceptable (and normal). Through emotional distancing from others, we are governed into conforming with technologies of power which build on norms of being active, self-sustaining individuals contributing to the paradigm of economic growth (Rose, 1999). Being constantly available adds to this 'normality' and working in democratic and purpose-driven ways seemingly just adds to this normality.

### Proving oneself to be 'sustainable' increases work intensity in the competitive organization

Working with a personal purpose is closely linked to devotion to work (Barley & Kunda, 1992). In an organization where stable traditional hierarchies are to a large extent replaced by a high degree of collaborative (self-managed) measures implementing post-bureaucratic practices, these typically involve a convincing rhetoric that increases employees' sense of belonging and



responsibility (Bardon et al., 2012). They operate as ‘a control strategy based upon internalization of rules’ (Grey, 1999, p. 575). Willmott (1993) suggests this is to enforce a discourse of empowerment, ‘one which attempts to convince individuals that it is in their best interest to become “enterprising” subjects, working better and faster in order to gain social recognition and self-esteem by taking the best advantage of the opportunities offered...’ (du Gay, 1996, 2000; Salaman & Storey, 2008, cited in Bardon et al., 2012). However, at times opportunities arise at a cost of emotional stress.

*Sif, tenure track position: No. (...) I think that it is very much related to it being my first real job. So this is my first full-time job after I graduated. I felt I had to prove ..., that's not my original field of expertise – sustainability. I could do a lot of things, but I felt like I had to go out and prove a lot. Many crave a job [in this organization – ed.] and there are many who really want to work with this field (...) And I was like... if I'm not good enough, then somebody else will come and take my place, so with such a feeling I felt I had to prove something. It's turned around for me now.*

This employee got her first tenure track job within the organization after several years of volunteering followed by short-term contracts. However, she expresses that the sense of pressure and work intensification can be related to her not feeling secure about her own professional worth and having a highly attractive position. From the subsequent conversation with this person, we know this has changed. But it has taken time, more time than the duration of the first paid contract allowed for. Insecurity in work conditions, whether contract-based or based on the high level of responsibility allocated knowledge workers that are new in the position, is in some aspects incompatible with short-term project organization, and may increase work intensification. Also, what we see in this example is that the commitment to the organizational purpose is a constant balancing between work requirements and the inner reflection of what is necessary to create the actual fulfilment of the sustainability that the organization is aiming for in its purpose. It shows that working in a purpose-driven organization is highly culturally valued. This creates a competitive infra-structure that adds to the incentives of working harder. Employees know that competitors are queuing up to get their jobs.

### Loving working with the right values

In an governmentality approach, ways for employees to be set free can be seen as an invitation to express one's true self by breaking the traditional work/non-work boundary, particularly by being playful and having fun at work (Fleming & Sturdy, 2009, p. 570), and engage in deeply affective relationships with one's work (Donzelot, 1991; McRobbie, 2002). But rather than proposing a new type of neoliberal self-managing techniques that are organized around individually defined needs of flexibility and remuneration, we see in the case-organization that the love for work is ethically argued as related to a common good. In other words ‘Best places to work’ in this case tap into the individualistically defined needs of having a job with the ethically correct (socially sustainable) values of collectivity and solidarity. ‘Employees are encouraged to be themselves rather than normatively conform to an externally engineered, homogeneous and organizationally based identity’ (Fleming & Sturdy, 2009, p. 570).

*Karen, tenure track position: Right, for me it is that I'm totally emotional about my employment. That's probably also why it was so hard for me staying in banking. I had a clash of values (...) I witnessed so much greed. I have a total love relationship with [the case organization – ed.]. And that is also very unhealthy, right! (laughs). (...) I have such enthusiastic colleagues (...) everything has to be bigger, wilder, better, more fun.*



*Interviewer: Why is that a challenge?*

*Karen: Because we are only the number of people we are, with the hands and heads available.*

To some extent, middle-class status nowadays rests upon the idea that work is something to which one has a passionate attachment (McRobbie, 2016). Workers declared this kind of personal investment in work, despite long hours and low returns (McRobbie, 1998). Indeed, the idea of 'pleasure in work', as Donzelot (1991) puts it, marks out the institutional terrain for new forms of post-welfare governmentality. The argument posed by Donzelot is that when people love their job, the role of the trade unions is diminished, reflecting the dismantling of organized labour. Donzelot sees the enriching 'self-management' strategies developed by employers in the same light. However, it seems that individual liberal values that are based on entrepreneurship, individual choice, personal remuneration and glory, for example, is not the primary focus here. The employee quoted above quit her former job due to conflicting values. The emotional ties and happiness with the job and normative control are closely connected with the ethical values of doing good, at the expense of working hard. The choice of a job one can be 'in love with' is connected to universal social sustainability values that make it more important than the organization itself. The flipside of this is that it creates work intensification when love is translated into an extensive work load.

### Working hard with the heart may create invisible criticism

In spite of new identities with a solidarity focus, when the personal sense of purpose is totally integrated with that of the organizational purpose it risks nullifying criticism directed towards both what is healthy in terms of the individual and in terms of how work conditions should be handled. When organizations have a strong sustainability purpose, this may be glorified in ways such that employees tend to initially accept poorer work conditions and maybe even prevent them from raising organizational resistance and objections.

*K: Why is it not promising the moon to the employees [glorious work conditions –ed.]?*

*Christian: Because I think it's hard. (...) I think many people are driven by a vocation or they maybe started getting involved as a hobby, or interest, or volunteering, or something that drives them to do something. They find that when you work with it full time, it is not necessarily as great as they had hoped it would be. Or even if it is, then it's just bloody hard and it suddenly becomes a bit more mundane. And I think, (...) the wages are not so good. I do not have a complete overview of it, but my feeling is that the salaries are not so good. Which is fair enough because it is an NGO – well, it isn't really, but a no-profit organization and they distribute the money. So you might be a little pressed on the salary and you have worked hard and maybe you are still a volunteer next door and therefore work even harder for more than 37 hours or something. And there my intuition tells me that there may be some people around who feel frustrated about some of those things. Or finally they accomplish [work tasks – ed.] what they want and then they realize that it might not be as great as they had hoped.*

As we have seen, technologies of power have been used to manage employees, and purpose and productivity have traditionally been closely interlinked (Fleming & Sturdy, 2009). However, if general work conditions in terms of long working hours and requests for late night availability and poorer salary are worse than in similar organizations, employees may start

thinking about whether investing one's true self is 'worth it', and this in spite the strong purpose of the organization. Expressing this imbalance we see as a critical reflectivity that is important in sustaining a feeling of fairness internally in the organization and thus also an important practice in nurturing a sense of internal sustainable purpose. However, if the criticism is made invisible either through lack of reflective internal practices or simply because employees are only working intensively and on fragmented projects (and are therefore not involved in the strategic development of the organization and the nurturing of solidarity among colleagues), this potentially takes away the possibility of criticism and democratic dialogue. This endangers the relationship between the organizational purpose and individual employees' sense of purpose. And, not least, it makes it impossible to nurture grounds of 'productive resistance' that is concerned with concrete activities that aim to voice demands and interests that are usually not taken into account in management decisions (Courpasson et al., 2012). The goal of productive resistance is to foster the development of alternative managerial practices that are likely to benefit the organization as a whole (Courpasson & Dany, 2009).

### Working with sustainability boosts your self-esteem, making you work harder (for others)

For some people, doing good and doing it a lot seems to boost their self-esteem. Self-esteem is a practical and productive technology of the self that is linked to the technology of power. It is a technology in the sense that it is a specialized knowledge of how to esteem ourselves in order to estimate, calculate, measure, evaluate, discipline, and judge ourselves (Cruikshank, 1996, p. 273).

*Interviewer: But I'm still curious about this thing with acceleration and intensification. Is it about getting a boost, a personal self-esteem boost because people want you, or is it because you're curious, or because you can't say no or...*

*Christian, short-term employee: (...) So there is both self-esteem and some self-confidence that comes from interacting with other people and succeeding at what one is doing and getting status in some way. For sure that is part of it. And then there is something about me liking being busy and I want to make a difference for other people. I want to change the world so that it becomes more positive and I believe this is only possible if I constantly struggle to reach a bit higher somehow. I really want to reach paying the top rate of tax because I then give more to the community. And not only because I want to make a lot of money. Generally I just want to influence the places where I am, because then I can do things better.*

Personal motivation, understanding of career and a greater purpose through 'changing the world in order for it to become more positive' and 'paying the top rate of tax' (the level of taxation in Denmark depends on level of income, the highest rate of income tax being 70%) and 'giving more to the community' drive this employee to work tremendously hard. In line with research by Web (2004) and Fleming & Sturdy (2009, p. 570), we find individualism, entrepreneurial risk-taking and self-reliance. This employee does not simply formulate the personal purpose in close concordance with the rhetoric of unitary values of the organizational purpose, nor as an ambition of economic benefit alone, but also aims to reach a point in his career that would allow him to have greater influence to 'be able to do things in a better way.' Purpose at both a personal and an organizational level is closely linked with work intensification in this example. The reasoning is that the more he works, the more he can make a difference to others. The subjectification is individualistic, but the goal is solidarity. The organizational purpose complies with his own purpose. And that is why he is there. Not the other way around. However,

it requires work intensification. One can argue that this type of self-technology is nurtured by a kind of self-assessment that is dependent on how much good one is doing to others, rather than simply feeling that one is the kind of person one is satisfied with showing the world. Lemke (2001, p. 202) points to the fact the tools to enhance self-esteem are to continuously be measured, judged and disciplined in relation to collective goals. In this example, the collective goals are both ethically and existentially determined and go beyond the culture of the organization, whilst also being in alignment with it. They are determined by norms of social sustainability, i.e. collaboration with volunteers, solidarity, equality (Dupret & Langergaard, 2020), that are part of this particular organization's culture and practices. This self-technology of self-esteem also allows ourselves to be governable from a distance, because the individual takes on the responsibility to govern himself nurtured by the quest for boosting self-esteem. While it is often argued that self-esteem in neoliberal societies is closely tied to ideologies of neoliberalism through consumption (self-help books, videos to be purchased continuously), boosting self-esteem through aspirations and actions of doing good in relation to others does not make the individualistic and measurement dimension of self-disciplining practices go away but does also create technologies/motivation of solidarity. We see here an extension of how self-esteem is not only connected to personal, individualistically defined motivation, but also to a solidarity and sustainability agenda and a wish to contribute to a common good.

### The organization has to give something back

Even though some employees can be silenced, research within the field of resistance in organizations suggests that in some situations employees can influence top management decisions and produce eventual changes (Courpasson et al., 2012). Understanding oneself as able to criticize and demand changes is, in some respect, in accordance with an understanding of oneself as being authentic and entrepreneurial. It is one's own personal freedom and acknowledgement that is at stake.

*Astrid: [When negotiating my freelance contract – ed.] it was a requirement that I had to be physically present/sit around and participate [without being remunerated for the extra time spent – ed.]. Nope, I couldn't be bothered. Then I preferred to assert myself, then they would get the entire 'me'. But reciprocally, I also want something in return, right [i.e. a tenure track contract – ed.].*

Even if we see examples of the muting of internal organizational criticism, others do find the strength to demand better conditions of work. However, this is not necessarily possible in all organizations on an international level. There may be great cultural differences at stake. In a Danish organization with flat hierarchical patterns of authority and long traditions of collaborative work procedures, it may be a real possibility that individual employees raise their voice in terms of demanding consistency and balancing between organizational ambitions of sustainability and internal conditions of work.

### Discussion

The analysis has shown that organizational culture adds to a normativity that makes employees turn constant connectivity into normality. More specifically, the analysis has focused on examples where employees express forms of work intensification that result in creating states

of constant connectivity to the extent that nearly all social life is affected by the ‘purpose’ of work and how being driven by a purpose may also nullify criticism within the organization. On the other hand, the analysis has also shown how purpose-driven work is a way of boosting self-esteem, where a new dimension of the individualized self-realization project is added to a solidarity dimension and employees at times find the strength to demand better work conditions with positive results. These examples not only show the psychosocial consequences of intermingling the organizational purpose with the personal one, but also accentuate the need to discuss how working hard with the heart may have psychosocial consequences and to challenge organizations’ trustworthiness in their definition of sustainability purpose.

When working with purpose-driven organizations, normative control seems at least in some situations to have different effects. The nature and role of normative control has been discussed in modern liberal societies and organizations. Opinions are divided. Optimists welcome the greater variation in identities and lifestyles in the workplace and suggest that employees are not only task-empowered, but also ‘existentially empowered’ (Bains, 2007, cited in Fleming & Sturdy, 2009, p. 571; Peters, 2003; Pink, 2001). To others, such developments reflect organizational control assuming a laissez-faire, instrumental form (Kunda & Ailon-Souday, 2005, cited in Fleming & Sturdy, 2009, p. 571). Working with the heart is adding to self-technologies of freedom; there may be a risk of increased normative control, as we have seen in the analysis. The paradox is that governmentality implies societies that force individuals to be free: control and intervention becomes the entire basis of freedom. Freedom must be manufactured by control rather than simply ‘counterweighted’ by it (Foucault, 2008, p. 67).

However, it may be neither one nor the other. As described initially, a sustainability purpose is becoming more and more central to motivating employees. An example is organization scholar Laloux (2014) describing how the balancing of individual motivation and doing greater good through his theory of human consciousness development related to organizing should be the balancing ambition of future organizations. In Laloux’s (2014) recipe of the future of work, employees are driven by genuine attachment to the purpose they serve. Also, inspired by social movement theory (e.g. Maeckelbergh, 2009) and research in alternative organizations (Parker et al., 2014), Reedy et al. (2016) investigate new forms of identities in organizations that are re-siting the norms of an individualized society. Through their study they find that identity work extends beyond the dualistic struggle between control and resistance via identification/dis-identification processes that are the common focus in organization studies (Mumby, 2005, p. 1567). They suggest that the individuated self has the capacity to pursue its own projects in collaboration with others. The individuated self appears to be behaving agentially while actually conforming to external social influences (Reedy et al., 2016, p. 1556). In this light, practices of self-management suggest that ‘normative control’ put forward by governmentality scholars acquires a whole new meaning. It is not less productive in producing disciplined work-intensified selves, but when committed to a sustainability purpose it is no longer just an individualistic self-realization project. It has a collective, solidarity dimension.

## Conclusion

This paper has discussed how purpose-driven organizations with a sustainability focus in their daily practices are related to work intensification among knowledge workers.



We identify technologies of self in the analysis summed up in the following.

- Working in such an organization is 'life' itself. With no time for hobbies, work becomes one's existential goal, and you bring to work your 'true self'. It is 'part of the game', and it normalizes constant availability
- Working in a purpose-driven organization becomes highly attractive, but also makes invisible the emotion work (fear of losing one's job to another competent worker) and work intensification.
- Purpose increases the justification of work intensification, which is a better narrative to oneself (and others) and may explain the disappearance of internal criticism of the organization and potentially also increase normative control.
- Work intensity is justified by making a 'difference' to others and boosts one's self-esteem.
- Some employees obtain better work conditions using work intensification and own competences as arguments to rest their case.

The analysis shows that the quest for (sustainable) purpose of organizations is closely tied to acknowledging workers as resourceful and inherently valuable human beings. Employees work boundlessly. It may produce a type of work intensification resulting in stress and poorer well-being. This adds to the point that purpose-driven organizations should also take a closer look at their internal sustainability.

How can we theorize about purpose in this light? To make a difference in the world is a political question. Or is it purely subjective? We argue that it is both, as we see that sense of purpose can be closely linked with the organization, but also to a more universal definition of doing good in society. The individualized project of realization is connected to other normative ideals of doing good that are collective.

It seems that maintaining a high work intensification is also nurtured by the technologies of power embedded in the organization. The organization is founded on non-profit, democratizing and inclusive values and, from its origin, it is shaped by dedicated and passionate people who volunteer. The culture of collaborating with volunteers shapes a normative ideal in the organization in which paid staff also have to be willing to invest much of their time and energy, as well as personal and social investment.

The sustainability purpose is collective and, on an ideological level, obliges organizations to be consistent in terms of internal sustainability as well. Perhaps naively, one can say that organizations that have a purely commercial purpose can more easily get away with technologies of power in the organization that nurture hyper-individualism and individual freedom. Sustainability requires technologies of the self that are solidary and not purely individualistic, as sustainability, in its premise, is collective and necessitates collaboration with others, and as already mentioned, the individuated self appears to be behaving agentically while actually conforming to external social influences (Reedy et al., 2016, p. 1556). Practices of democracy, multiple stakeholders, and solidarity are strong elements of the materialization of the organizational purpose. But how does employee work intensification mirror this? As we have seen, work intensification tends to be individualized and justified on an individual basis, very much in contrast to the intentions of solidarity and inclusion put forward by the organizational culture and concrete interventions with local initiatives of social entrepreneurship. Additionally, employees reach out to each other, and help and cover for each



other when needed. We argue that the employee community serves a crucial role in developing the close interconnection between the technologies of power and technologies of the self. The structural formulated purpose of sustainability becomes intimately interwoven with the sense of self. In the self-management literature, there tends to be a mainly individualistic focus on how self-technologies are objects of control or intrinsically motivation strategies of the individual. Organization and management studies may become inspired by practices, especially within strongly purpose-driven organizations, in order to develop new understandings of self that are committed to a collective and solidary external purpose, closely connected to social dynamics in society and outside the organization itself. At least we found that the investigation of how the purpose (of social sustainability) that inherently contains commitments to the collective is translated into intimate technologies of self.

Where does this leaves knowledge workers with a high degree of self-management and autonomy? Slightly optimistically, we argue that the kinds of purposes where sustainability is the aim are normative in the sense that the collective good becomes an important dimension of its definition. It is no longer only existentially individually defined, and no longer a solely individual responsibility. However, certain dimensions, such as responsibility for work intensification, are only to some extent part of the organizational consciousness, as it is written in work contracts that, in theory, people can take time off after peak periods. On the individual level, the internalization of sustainability purposes provides a fruitful sense of meaning and work devotion but potentially also brings about stress and structural disadvantages in employees' private lives, such as lack of holiday, decrease in social relations outside work, no leisure activities outside work, etc. One may argue that it potentially creates a totalitarian sense of solidarity.

Hardt and Negri (2000, 2004) argue that the emerging predominance of immaterial labour will provide a further impetus to a shift away from traditional work organizations and towards self-organizing networks. The possibility of renegotiation of one's identity is to be seen in contrast to prevalent studies within management and organization studies, where the definition of identity tends to be linked to an approach to individualization. The individualization thesis has influenced how organization studies understands identity: i.e., as a precarious biographical project vulnerable to capture by ready-made identities and therefore subject to managerial control (Collinson, 2003; Whittle, Mueller, & Mangan, 2009). Work organizations are seen as arenas where individuals embrace, modify or resist such identities (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Beech, 2008) and are often seen as sites of determination rather than autonomy (Barratt, 2003; du Gay, 1996; Hodgson, 2000; Rose, 2000). This may sound totalitarian, and this paper suggest nuancing the above-mentioned conclusions slightly, as certain technologies of self related to sustainability purpose seem to be a move away from hyper-individualism. With inspiration from Reedy et al. (2016), this extends organization theory beyond this limited view. In our study, one can argue that employees apply a form of politics in ways where normativity does not praise the individual freedom alone, but extends beyond the local sense of self and reaches out to collectively based senses of selves in the ambition to create new communities based on solidarity. On the other hand, the work intensity that is also found among employees in strongly purpose-driven organizations may cancel out or mute criticism towards the organization, with the result of poor health and difficulties in letting employee voices be included to allow for a stronger participation and co-determination of workers in defining sustainable organizing.

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<sup>i</sup> An individual's performance is 'efficient' if it could not be improved without raising either skill or work intensity or both. Performance is inefficient if it could be raised without working harder or using greater skill – for example, through a different ordering of work tasks (Green, 2006, pp. 47–48). However, it does not imply that simply raising the work intensity will also raise the efficiency. In other words, productivity gains are not to be taken to be efficiency gains. Worker intensification as a source of greater productivity is contested (Green, 2006, p. 48).

<sup>ii</sup> Since work effort is sometimes conflated with the related concept of 'performance', or with 'efficiency', or even 'skill', it is also useful to make their relationships and conceptual differences explicit, as follows. 'Performance' is constituted by the extent to which an individual performs contractual tasks (and is synonymous with the individual's 'productivity'). An individual's performance is raised both by greater skill and by increased work intensity (Green, 2006, p. 47).



iii The research project is financed partly by Innovation Fund Denmark. The project investigates the future of knowledge work and its potentials and pitfalls. It comprises three case studies. Further information can be read here: [www.futureknowledgework.com](http://www.futureknowledgework.com)

iv The Social Change and Economic Life Initiative (SCELI) is an independent data source with respect to the work intensification debate for the early 1980s. Respondents were asked to consider the job they had held five years previously (if they had had one), and to say whether there had been a 'significant increase', a 'significant decrease', or 'little or no change' between then and their current job with regard to, among other things: 'how fast you work' and 'the effort you have to put into your job' (Green, 2006, p. 51).

v This paper deals with the interrelation of work intensification in purpose-driven organizations, therefore we do not elaborate further on the interrelation between work intensification and stress. However, it should be noted that the widespread amount of stress does not in itself prove or can it be said to be a reliable indicator of work intensification. The perception of stress, and its portrayal as an individual neurosis, is partly a reflection of the individualization of work relations.



# Hard/heart worker – Work intensification in purpose-driven organizations

Table 1: data structure

Dimensions	Themes	Quote extract
Negative impact of work intensification when working in a purpose-driven organization	Constant connectivity is normalized as required when working for social sustainability (cross-sectoral collaborations)	<p><b>Bodil: I'm also sometimes kept in late...</b></p> <p>Asger: I know that this Spring will be one of the hardest in my life. I'm totally aware of that. (...)</p> <p>Camilla: (...) Employees work at all times of the day. There is a sort of collapse between private life and working life. It requires an extremely tough discipline to maintain a healthy balance between the two.</p> <p>Peter: I feel that it's high speed, but I also feel checked out, sort of in a cool way, then I sort of know there is this carrot [of a possible contract extension – ed.]</p>
	Proving oneself to be 'sustainable' increases work intensity in the competitive organization	<p><b>Sif: (...) If I'm not good enough, then somebody else will come and take my place, so with such a feeling I felt I had to prove something.</b></p> <p>Peter: I'm just really dedicated to it. Just because I don't have much experience, I'm not stupid, right. I just haven't had the time to show that I have lots of visions. I really think I have fought. Maybe just as much as an internal battle. But I have felt that I sort of had to prove myself (...).</p>
	Love working with the right values	<p><b>Karen: (...) I have a total love relationship with [the case organization – ed.]. And that is also very unhealthy, right!</b></p> <p>Asger: One thing is the politically correct, but also to some extent true about our common good purpose. What we help change for young people. My tradition is that every year, on one of the last days of the big event, I stand in front of the big stage and weep for the sake of everything we have created and built together. Some of the things I deal with and we make together are totally cool... It's so wild.</p>
	Working hard with the heart may create invisible criticism	<p><b>Christian: ... So you might be a little pressed on the salary and you have worked hard (...) And there my intuition tells me that there may be some people around who feel frustrated. ...</b></p> <p>Camilla: ... If you work on a short contract, then you have different terms and in my experience also a different mindset. Then there may be issues that are really difficult to discuss. Also, the more value-based issues [in comparison with volunteers that do not necessarily put conditions in terms of counting hours or are willing to 'give their right arm' – ed.] ... It appears/feels wrong to highlight short-term employees, but short-term project workers have to live off their salary.</p>
Positive impact of work intensification when working in a purpose-driven organization	Working with sustainability boosts your self-esteem, making you work harder (for others)	<p><b>Christian ... And then there is something about me liking being busy and I want to make a difference for other people. I want to change the world so that it becomes more positive and I believe this is only possible if I constantly struggle to reach a bit higher somehow.</b></p> <p>Camilla: It's a place where the community pulls together. So if I suddenly went out and took a whole lot of credit for things, I would feel inappropriate.</p>
	The organization has to give something back	<p><b>Astrid: [on the condition of having to be present in the organization, she negotiated her contract to be a tenure track position rather than freelance – ed.] There was a requirement that I had to be physically present/sit around and participate [without being remunerated for the extra time spent – ed.]. Nope, I couldn't be bothered. Then I preferred to assert myself, then they would get the entire 'me'. But reciprocally, I also want something in return, right.</b></p> <p>Sif: I'm so damned good at my work, and I have to be acknowledged for it. Surely, something has changed since I came down with stress. If [my work] is worth investing in, then I also have to get something in exchange. It should not only be me giving.</p> <p><a href="http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/qrom">http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/qrom</a></p>