

Blurred Boundaries between Work and Non-Work in Flexible Working Arrangements: How to Mentally Detach from Work in Non-Work Time

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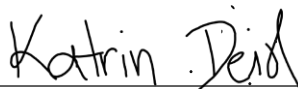
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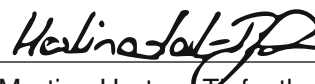
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Blurred Boundaries between Work and Non-Work in Flexible Working Arrangements: How to Mentally Detach from Work in Non-Work Time

DIPLOMA THESIS

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Katrin Deisl, BSc

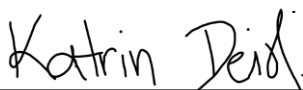
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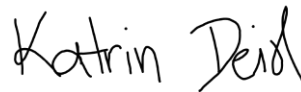
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Kurzfassung

In den vergangenen Jahren war ein Wandel in der Arbeitswelt zu beobachten, der in jüngster Zeit durch die Entwicklungen im Zusammenhang mit der Covid-19-Pandemie weiter vorangetrieben wird. Die Menschen arbeiten zunehmend von zu Hause aus und immer mehr Unternehmen führen flexible Arbeitsregelungen ein. Dies führt dazu, dass die Grenzen zwischen dem Arbeits- und dem Privatleben der Menschen verschwimmen. Die vorliegende Arbeit befasst sich mit dieser Entwicklung und den Auswirkungen, die sie auf die Beschäftigten und die Unternehmen hat. Der Schwerpunkt der Arbeit liegt auf der mentalen Abgrenzung der Beschäftigten von der Arbeit in der arbeitsfreien Zeit und auf ihrem Wohlbefinden. Darüber hinaus wird untersucht, wie die Beschäftigten die Grenzen zwischen Arbeit und Nichtarbeit angesichts der zunehmenden Heimarbeit und flexiblen Arbeit bewältigen können. Die Forschungsfrage lautet daher: "Welche Maßnahmen helfen den Arbeitnehmern, die Grenzen zwischen Arbeit und Nicht-Arbeit herzustellen und aufrechtzuerhalten?". Diese Frage wird sowohl aus der Arbeitnehmerperspektive als auch aus der Organisationsperspektive diskutiert, d.h. Unterstützungsmaßnahmen, die von Unternehmen gesetzt werden können.

Um Antworten auf die Forschungsfrage zu finden, wurden 15 qualitative Interviews mit 8 Arbeitnehmern und 7 Vertretern verschiedener Unternehmen geführt. Das Interviewmaterial wurde anschließend nach dem Ansatz der qualitativen Inhaltsanalyse von Philip Mayring (Mayring 2010) aufbereitet und ausgewertet. Aus den Interviews geht hervor, dass noch immer ein großer Mangel an Bewusstsein für die Bedeutung der mentalen Abgrenzung von der Arbeit in der arbeitsfreien Zeit und des Grenz-Managements sowohl auf Arbeitnehmer- als auch auf Unternehmensseite besteht. Darüber hinaus kann das Grenz-Management für jeden Einzelnen sehr unterschiedlich sein, so dass maßgeschneiderte Lösungen erforderlich sind. Da Vorgesetzte und Führungskräfte ihre Mitarbeiter am besten kennen, wurde deutlich, dass sie eine Schlüsselrolle bei der Sensibilisierung und Unterstützung ihrer Mitarbeiter in Bezug auf die mentale Abgrenzung von der Arbeit in der arbeitsfreien Zeit und das Grenz-Management spielen.



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Abstract

In the past years, a change in the work style could be observed which recently is further driven by the developments surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic. People increasingly work from home and more and more organisations introduce flexible working arrangements. This leads to blurring boundaries between people's work and private life. This thesis deals with this development and the impacts that it has on the employees and organisations. The focus of the thesis is on the employees' mental detachment from work in non-work time and their well-being. Moreover, it is looked at how the employees can manage the boundaries between work and non-work with the increasing amount of home work and flexible work. Therefore, the research question is: "Which measures help workers to establish and maintain the boundaries between work and non-work?". This question will be discussed from the worker perspective as well as from the organisational perspective, meaning support measures that can be set by companies.

For finding answers to the research question, 15 qualitative interviews have been conducted with 8 employees and 7 representatives of various companies. The interview material has then been processed and analysed according to the qualitative content analysis approach of Philip Mayring (2010). The interviews indicated that there is still a great lack of awareness for the importance of mental detachment from work in non-work time and boundary management on both the employee and the organisational side. Furthermore, the boundary management can be very different for each individual, creating the need for customised solutions. With superiors and leaders being very close to the employees, it became apparent that they play a key role in the sensitisation and support of their employees regarding mental detachment from work in non-work time and boundary management.



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Introduction

Over the past years, a significant upward trend concerning flexible working could be observed. The number of people working at least some of their time from home is rising rapidly. In the US alone, 5 million employees were working from home half-time or more in 2018, that is 3.6 % of the US workforce. Between 2005 and 2018, the number of people in the US working from home regularly has grown by 173 % (Lister, 2020). These numbers show that flexible working is already an integral part of our modern working lives. Additionally, the past year reminded us of the huge value of being able to do flexible working from home, the so called ‘home office’, when there is a global pandemic going on. The necessity for reducing personal contact and the safety measures taken in this context, have an additional reinforcing influence on the amount of flexible working (Tavares, Santos, Diogo & Ratten, 2020).

However, having the possibility of flexibly working from home also means that the borders between work and non-work are increasingly blurred. Employees have their work-related devices, such as laptops or mobile phones, with them most of the time and increasingly use these communication technologies in their dedicated non-work time as well (Schlachter, McDowall, Cropley & Inceoglu, 2018). Especially, for workers with high responsibility levels, the interference of work with private life is high (Solís, 2017). A study with knowledge professionals showed that workers deliberately restricted their own autonomy by extensively using mobile email devices in non-work time to be able to increase their work performance. At the same time, it was difficult for the participants to mentally detach from work and to recover due to the lack of downtime (Mazmanian, Orlikowski & Yates, 2013).

Additionally, there is a lack of understanding of the non-availability for relatives and friends at certain times, meaning that the individual living conditions of the employees have a big impact on their ability of working from home (Solís, 2017). Therefore, depending on the employee, flexible working can lead to difficulties for the employees

with mentally distancing themselves from their work in non-work time (Park, Fritz & Jex 2011).

Furthermore, a study with IT personnel has shown that there are negative impacts of flexible working on worker well-being. The stressors of flexible work like social isolation or work overload led to exhaustion and a higher psychological and behavioural strain (Weinert, Maier, Laumer & Weitzel 2014). The recovery from work and from this additional strain is restricted in flexible working, when employees are required to be available in non-work time (Dettmers, Vahle-Hinz, Bamberg, Friedrich & Keller 2016). However, higher levels of home-work interference also create a higher need for recovery. Together with the increased need for recovery, a high home-work interference results in low levels of concentration, leading to a loss in the employee performance (Demerouti, Taris & Bakker 2007).

Hence, this thesis tries to find measures that can be incorporated in the daily working life and allow for a more wholesome approach on flexible work and work from home, which would result in an improved situation for workers and organisations in the long-term. On the one hand, the thesis looks at possible measures taken by the workers in order to enable mental detachment from work and ensure and improve their well-being. On the other hand, a focus is also on how the organisations can support their workers in this process.

In chapter 2, the theoretical background is described in detail, starting with the current developments, the impacts of flexible work on the employees and organisations, such as changes in autonomy and availability of workers in non-work time. Then, the situation regarding mental detachment from work is elucidated, leading to a delineation of boundary management, with the boundary management types, preferences and strategies. From the organisational perspective, there is provided insight into the legal situation and the business view on control mechanisms and trust.

Chapter 3 addresses the methodology of the research, explaining the background, the types and the content of the interviews, as well as the analysis procedure. The findings from the interviews are presented in chapter 4. Together with the knowledge from the literature research, these findings make up the foundation for the discussion and the implications in chapter 5.

Theoretical Background

2.1 Flexible Work

Multiple researchers have been investigating flexible work and its impact on humans and on the environment. There are several views of the definition of flexible work. In general, one can differentiate between flexibility in the organisational perspective and the worker perspective (Jeffrey Hill et al., 2008). First, Dastmalchian and Blyton (2001, p. 1) define the organisational perspective of workplace flexibility as 'the degree to which organizational features incorporate a level of flexibility that allows them [organizations] to adapt to changes in their environment'.

However, in this thesis, the focus is on the worker perspective. In a campaign of the Georgetown University Law Center, common definitions of flexible work arrangements concerning the worker perspective were developed, dividing flexible work into three distinct types (Georgetown University Law Center, 2006):

1. Flexibility in Work Scheduling

In this type of flexible work, the workers can choose their working hours and work breaks flexibly at least to a certain extent. It includes the flextime arrangement, where the worker can schedule the work hours freely within a certain range that is set by the organisation. Further, there is the possibility of compressed workweeks, where the worker works less than five days a week but still achieves full time hours by working more hours per day. Another option of flexibility in work scheduling is the flexible arrangement of shifts and breaks.

2. Flexibility in the Amount of Hours Worked

Here, it is possible for the worker to work reduced work hours, or to work part time in or after certain transition periods where the worker goes through a major life event like becoming parent. Other options are job shares, where a full time

position is shared by two or more part time workers, or part-year work, where the worker works only several months of the year.

3. Flexibility in the Place of Work

This type of workplace flexibility describes the work from a remote place with the use of information and communication technologies (ICT). Working from a different place is also called "telework". There are different kinds of telework, including the so called home work, where the workers work from their own homes, or the work in satellite locations provided by the respective company.

Another possibility is the work in alternating locations, where the worker is situated in a certain location for a part of the year, while he/she is working from a different location for the remaining part of the year.

In this thesis, the main emphasis is on the flexibility of work in terms of time and place, with a special focus on the areas where work encounters private life such as home work. The term "home work" will be used in the way proposed by the definition from the Georgetown University Law Center, i.e. for describing the situation when employees perform their work tasks within their own homes (Georgetown University Law Center 2006).

2.1.1 Developments in Austria

Looking at this broad definition, flexible work has become very prominent over the years. According to a study conducted in Austria by Deloitte, the working model of home work has risen rapidly. While in 2017 only 20 % of the companies in this study were offering home work for at least half of their employees, this number has increased to about 50 % in 2019 (Havranek, Korunka, Kellner & Kubicek 2019). However, there is a controversial aspect in the increase of home work. Although the amount of home work has risen strongly, about 85 % of the companies still highly value the physical presence of their employees at the workplace. At the same time, 39 % of the companies have additional mechanisms of control in place when workers are working from home. The study points out that these expectations might create pressure and negatively influence the worker well-being and therefore decrease the amount of home work in the long-term (Havranek et al. 2019).

Furthermore, according to the Austrian working atmosphere index, employees are increasingly available for work and conducting work tasks in their non-work time (IFES 2016). Especially with higher levels of education, the employees are facing high expectations of availability, leading to an increase in sleep disorders among those employees (IFES 2016). Similar observations have been made by other researchers. Solís (2017), for example, states that employees with a higher responsibility level also are affected more by flexible work, as they experience an even higher interference of work with private life.

Another controversial aspect concerning the work from home can be observed when looking at the existence of clear rules in connection with availability of workers in non-work time. According to a study commissioned by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Labour, merely a quarter of the employees stated that there were clear and official agreements in order to clarify their rights and obligations in flexible work and especially when working from home (Bachmayer & Klotz, 2021).

Most employees did not work longer hours when working from home; however, about half of the employees managed their time differently, meaning that employees would work in the evenings or on weekends (Bachmayer & Klotz, 2021). Other negative effects of extensive home work according to this study were a lack in social interaction, reduced cooperation and teamwork, and work atmosphere was also suffering (Bachmayer & Klotz, 2021).

Flexible Work and COVID-19

Since the outbreak of the global pandemic caused by COVID-19, there has been a reinforcement of the trend in the context of flexible work and in particular home work. Due to the various measures set by the Austrian government since March 2020 to fight COVID-19, the amount of home work has further increased. For 54 % of the participants from the aforementioned study, the concept of working from home was applied by their companies for the first time in 2020. Overall, about 70 % of the employees were working from home at least partially (Bachmayer & Klotz, 2021).

Furthermore, the importance of physical presence of the workers in the companies has decreased a little from 85 % before the pandemic to 70 %. The expectations concerning availability of workers in non-work time have decreased as well from 65 % to 55 % for leaders and from 24 % to 20 % for other employees. However, in 22 % of the companies, availability is still considered as a performance indicator and in 28 %, there have been implemented additional mechanisms of control for home work in the lockdown phases (Havranek et al., 2020).

Together with the amount of home work, the provision of clear guiding rules in connection with flexible work and particularly home work has increased as well. Although the numbers have already risen rapidly before the outbreak of the pandemic from 22 % to more than 60 %, rules have been newly implemented or further concretised in more than 50 % of the companies (Havranek et al., 2020).

2.1.2 Impacts on Workers

The rapid increase of home work in Austria has illustrated what has already been known in research: Flexible work and especially home work affect the workers in several ways. Observations in the literature are divided and controversial to a certain extent. Several studies point out the positive effects of flexible work and home work, including an increase

in performance, productivity and job dedication (Gajendran, Harrison & Delaney-Klinger 2015; Grant, Wallace & Spurgeon 2013).

However, Gajendran and Harrison (2007) point out that flexible work does not have an influence on the subjective, self-rated performance but rather on the objective performance, such as ratings by supervisors. Moreover, the amount of the increase might be depending on the nature and type of the work task (Solís 2017) and would only keep up to a certain point from where it would begin to decrease again (Grant et al. 2013).

Still, other aspects such as job satisfaction and adaptability to new tasks and organisational changes have been found to be positively influenced with the provision of flexible working arrangements (Gajendran & Harrison 2007; Solís 2017). People in flexible work would develop skills and behaviours, such as planning and scheduling in advance, which allowed them to adapt their way of working. Furthermore, people's ability to work flexibly was found to improve over time, giving the workers the possibility of fitting their work life styles in with their private lives (Grant et al. 2013). Additionally, there have also been observed lower turnover intents (Gajendran & Harrison 2007).

2.2 Autonomy and Availability

Moreover, the higher amount of flexibility results in a higher perceived job autonomy (Gajendran & Harrison 2007). Gajendran and Harrison (2007) claim that flexible work has a positive influence on the perceived job autonomy, and moreover, the perceived autonomy of a worker acts as a psychological mediator of the positive effects of flexible work. Another study looked further into this area of advantageous impacts of flexible work and found an increase in performance and job dedication together with a higher amount of perceived autonomy (Gajendran et al. 2015).

It can be beneficial for the psychological well-being and happiness, when people perceive a higher level of control over their own actions, and on the other hand, a lower level of control was connected with negative effects on workers' well-being such as anxiety and depression (Sonnetag & Fritz 2007). Having the possibility of actively choosing how to approach the work tasks allows employees to have a certain extent of freedom and leads to a lower level of work-induced exhaustion (Sonnetag & Fritz 2007).

On the other hand, studies have also shown that a high level of autonomy is not just beneficial. Kubicek et al. (2017) for example observed negative aspects of job autonomy. When job autonomy is necessary to conduct the work tasks, the effort of controlling, structuring and planning is rising and might represent a burden in the end. Moreover, the authors found a negative relation between the intensification of work in flexible work and the positive effects which are caused by this high amount of flexibility, as workers may perceive the independence in decision-making as a liability (Kubicek et al. 2017), which might further increase the necessity of mentally disengaging from work in order to be able to recover.

This relation between job autonomy and engagement in the work context has also been looked into by various other researchers. In a series of interviews conducted by Mazmanian et al. (2013) it was found that workers would deliberately and voluntarily limit their personal autonomy by being available for work-related tasks. This limitation of personal autonomy provides the employees with several benefits, such as a higher level of flexibility and control over interactions and information, as well as peace of mind (Mazmanian et al., 2013).

However, the extent of availability for work in non-work time impacts the ability of mentally detaching from work and the general well-being of employees (Mazmanian et al., 2013; Dettmers et al., 2016). In their study, Mazmanian et al. (2013, p. 1338) observed the workers *"becoming caught in a collective spiral of escalating engagement where they end up working everywhere/all the time"* and called this phenomenon the *"autonomy paradox"*. The employees in the study adapted their behaviour and applied certain patterns of using their work-devices that created an increase in the expectation of availability and accessibility, an intensification of commitment and increased stress (Mazmanian et al., 2013).

Likewise, Dettmers et al. (2016) found significant negative relationships between the extended availability for work in non-work time and mental detachment as well as recovery experiences. Further, in their study they reported increased levels of the hormone cortisol, which indicates higher work-related stress, resulting in negative health effects (Dettmers et al., 2016).

The negative aspects of extended availability for work in non-work time have been reported by other researchers as well. Although they mention the positive effects for the workers with self-determined working hours, Arlinghaus and Nachreiner (2013) depict the negative impacts of flexible work, describing it as a possible interference with the biological and social rhythms which might result in health problems and a higher sickness absence. Apparently, receiving sporadic calls or e-mails from work are sufficient for interrupting the rhythm and for the aforementioned negative effects to show (Arlinghaus & Nachreiner 2013).

In this context, in a study of various qualitative and quantitative research literature, Schlachter et al. (2018) also found evidence for the influence of voluntary ICT use in non-work time on autonomy and availability of the worker, stating that both positive as well as negative aspects could be reported in that context. On the one hand, voluntary ICT use enhances the worker's autonomy by allowing for a higher level of job control and efficiency. On the other hand, the use of ICT might lead to longer working hours and work-life conflict, which again lead to decreased well-being and a higher need for recovery (Schlachter et al., 2018), further emphasising the necessity of mental detachment from work in non-work time.

2.3 Mental Detachment from Work

The term ‘mental detachment from work’ refers to disengaging from work to a larger extent. In addition to the physical separation from the workplace, it is crucial for workers to be able to mentally detach from their work (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). The process of mentally detaching from work describes psychological aspects of being away from work, such as being occupied with other than work-related issues and procedures, and being able to fully engage in non-work activities without being concerned with work tasks (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). In other words, mental detachment refers to the successful transition from the work-role to the non-work-role in the mental way (Fritz, Yankelevich, Zarubin & Barger, 2010).

2.3.1 The Role of Mental Detachment

The increasing amounts of flexible work and home work, and the increased use of communication technologies in the course of flexible work and home work, make it harder for the workers to mentally detach from work in non-work time and to recover properly (Park et al., 2011). However, the importance of mental detachment and recovery for the long-term well-being of the employees is widely known from various literature sources (Sonntag, Binnewies & Mojza, 2010; Park et al., 2011; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2015; Fritz et al., 2010).

There has been found to be a significant relation between mental detachment from work and well-being of the employees, meaning that there is a positive influence of mental detachment on life satisfaction and with increasing detachment there is a decrease in emotional exhaustion (Fritz et al., 2010). Further evidence on the positive effects of mental detachment is provided by Sonnentag and Fritz (2007), who reported negative relations between mental detachment and several adverse influences on well-being such as health complaints, depressive symptoms, emotional exhaustion and the general necessity of recovering from work.

Moreover, a lack of mental detachment is reported to be an amplifier of the negative effects of high job demands such as psychosomatic complaints (Sonnentag et al., 2010). While the amount of mental detachment itself did not contribute to these complaints, the researchers could observe a significant increase of psychosomatic complaints of people with low mental detachment in combination with high job demands (Sonnentag et al., 2010). The same can be applied to work engagement of the workers, where a decrease in engagement could be reported for the workers with a low level of mental detachment (Sonnentag et al., 2010). This further highlights the adverse implications of a lack of mental detachment from work in non-work time.

The moderating effects of mental detachment can be found in various other studies in the research literature (Moreno-Jiménez, Mayo et al., 2009; Moreno-Jiménez, Rodríguez-Muñoz, Pastor, Sanz-Vergel & Garrosa, 2009). Mental detachment has been reported to have a significant influence on psychological strain, implying that workers with a

higher level of mental detachment are better able to cope with psychological strain (Moreno-Jiménez, Mayo et al., 2009).

Furthermore, the researchers found a significant positive influence of mental detachment on life satisfaction (Moreno-Jiménez, Mayo et al., 2009). They also discovered compensatory effects of high levels of mental detachment on work-family-interference (Moreno-Jiménez, Mayo et al., 2009). In addition, mental detachment has moderating effects on role conflict and on psychological strain in workplace bullying scenarios, meaning that mental detachment helps workers to deal with psychologically stressful situations at the workplace (Moreno-Jiménez, Rodríguez-Muñoz et al., 2009). This leads to the conclusion, that being able to disengage from work in non-work time in a psychological sense, helps employees to cope with work-related stressors as well as to recover from work-related psychological strain.

With the increasing use of information and communication technologies (ICT), the mental detachment from work becomes even more difficult, as workers are able to use their work-related devices in their home environment (Park et al., 2011; Schlachter et al., 2018). There has been found to be a significant relationship between mental detachment and work-life-segmentation preferences, meaning that it is easier for workers to mentally detach from work in their non-work time, when they prefer to strictly separate their work and private life (Park et al., 2011).

2.4 Boundary Management

The huge spread of flexible working arrangements, especially since the Covid crisis, requires workers and companies to find ways of dealing with the implications of the change in work-style. According to the boundary theory, people create boundaries in order to manage their work and private life for avoiding or limiting negative consequences for both workers and companies. However, this may also be impeding them with transitioning from their work role into their private role and vice versa (Ashforth, Kreiner & Fugate, 2000). Therefore, this section covers the boundary management, with the blurring boundaries between work and private life, the boundary theory, as well as the boundary management tactics and strategies.

2.4.1 Blurring Boundaries

Next to the aforementioned impacts of flexible work on the workers, such as higher levels of autonomy and the increased necessity of mentally detaching from work in non-work time and recovery, there is also additional strain on the workers due to the increased blending of work and private life. Especially with the increased ICT use and people working from home, the boundaries between work and private life are becoming more and more blurred (Park et al., 2011; Allen, Merlo, Lawrence, Slutsky & Gray, 2021).

One big field of research in this context is the topic of work-family interference, meaning the area where work life and private life come together, possibly creating tension. On

the one hand, there is the work-family conflict, which describes how work related tasks interfere with family life. On the other hand there is the family-work conflict, describing the impact of family related obligations that are interfering with the work life (Golden 2012).

A study conducted by Grant et al. (2013) identified the exacerbating effects of flexible work on work-family conflict. Study participants came up with several strategies to cope with the work pressure, including over-working, a focus on work instead of family obligations and an intensification of work in non-work hours. The study showed that workers require good management skills for managing the boundaries between work and private life. Moreover, Solís (2017) indicated, that family-work conflict is higher for people who have more family responsibilities. Golden (2012) further pointed out how work-family conflict affects exhaustion. The interference of work related tasks with family life therefore increases the amount of work exhaustion, time-based as well as strain-based. Interestingly, this relation could not be observed the other way around, meaning that the interference of family obligations with work tasks did not influence work exhaustion.

Additionally, the intensity of flexible work has an impact on the increase of exhaustion. People with extensive flexible work and home work had high levels of time- and strain-based work-family conflict (Golden 2012). This increase in work exhaustion was observed to be even higher for people who were working remotely in nontraditional working hours. A higher work-family conflict led to higher levels of work exhaustion. Therefore, a high extent of flexible work and home work in general was connected with an exacerbation of exhaustion and energy drain compared to workers with less flexibility (Golden 2012). Demerouti et al. (2004) similarly concluded that work-family conflict, exhaustion and also work pressure are closely connected and moreover predict each other, sometimes being the cause and sometimes being the consequence of each other.

Further studies provide evidence for the increased work pressure, intensification of work and work-life conflict in flexible working (Russell, O'Connell & McGinnity, 2009). A study conducted by Grant et al. (2013) showed similar results, with people stating that they tend to work more at home than they would in their offices. However, the opposite has also been observed, where people would keep being distracted from work and lack in motivation when working remotely.

Eldridge and Nisar (2011) also found that flexible work and work-life conflict in particular lead to increased exhaustion and stress, reduced effectiveness, and in the long-term, the effects might even include depression and sickness. Other researchers made similar findings, pointing out that the various negative aspects of telework, such as work intensification, work-life conflict, and the reduced social and informational aspects strongly affect the workers' level of exhaustion (Weinert et al., 2014). The lack of informal exchange between colleagues and the social isolation when working from home are other negative aspects, leading to a damaging effect on coworker relationships (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007; Weinert et al., 2014).

2.4.2 Boundary Management Strategies

In general, when managing one's work-life balance, the range from work to private life can be considered as a continuous scale with complete integration of work-related and personal tasks at the one extreme, and strict segmentation of work and private life at the other extreme (Nippert-Eng, 1996).

Integration - More precisely, complete integration of work and private life means that the worker does not distinguish between the work environment and the private environment and there is also no distinction at the temporal and spatial level, meaning that there are no predefined work places and work times and there exist no boundaries in between (Nippert-Eng, 1996). Even on the mental level there is no differentiation made, implying that the worker approaches all the work-related and private tasks with the same mental mindset and encounters with people are handled with the same mentality, no matter their individual social role or their relationship with the worker (Nippert-Eng, 1996). Furthermore, the boundaries between the work and private role are very flexible and permeable (Ashforth et al., 2000).

Segmentation - Segmentation on the other hand is about the complete opposite, with workers who draw strict lines between their work environment and their private life, with a clear distinction between work-related and private tasks concerning space, time, and their mentality in their approach (Nippert-Eng, 1996). The worker is very clear about the characteristics of each of the domains of work and private life and there is no overlap in between, neither on a physical level nor on a temporal level, meaning that the worker needs to perform a role-transition from the work-role to the private role and vice versa (Nippert-Eng, 1996). Other than with the role of the integrator, the boundaries of the segmentor are inflexible and impermeable (Ashforth et al., 2000).

Moreover, a third boundary management type in addition to the existing types of integrator and segmentor has been introduced by Gisin et al. (2014, 2016), the so-called "mix type", which shows characteristics of both extremes. According to the study, it is the mix type that has the most difficulties in the detachment process and also works less effectively in the home work environment.

Overall, the practical implementation of the boundary management types on the continuous range between home and work is somewhere in between strict segmentation and full integration, which also might change throughout time and personal circumstances (Nippert-Eng, 1996; Ashforth et al., 2000).

Based on these definitions of physical and mental boundary management, Ashforth et al. (2000) created the so-called "boundary theory", which is a framework that provides a theoretical examination of role transition in the context of boundary management between work and private life. The researchers describe the process of performing "micro role transitions", meaning transitions that happen on a regular basis, like the change of roles between work and private life. According to the boundary theory, people create certain boundaries between work and private life, in order to get a manageable structure in their lives. In general, a greater focus on role segmentation facilitates the preservation of

boundaries but at the same time, it is exactly those boundaries that constitute an obstacle in the role-transition process, which further emphasises the importance of boundary management (Ashforth et al. 2000).

In the boundary management research area, there are already several strategies known for handling the boundaries between work and private life, for diminishing the negative impact or merely for facilitating the transition process (Nippert-Eng, 1996; Kreiner, Hollensbe & Sheep, 2009; Gisin et al., 2014; Basile & Beauregard, 2016; Allen et al., 2021). Especially for workers with a preference of segmenting work and home, it is more likely that they use certain strategies or rites of passage to achieve the role transition (Ashforth et al., 2000). Kreiner et al. (2009) discovered four broad tactic types for the maintenance and management of boundaries in the work-home context:

- **Behavioural Tactics**

First, there is the aspect of behavioural tactics, in which the worker uses social practices for achieving a good boundary management. One example is the use of other people, such as coworkers, spouses, children, or others, to help in the boundary management process. Other approaches in this category are to use technology, like telephone answering machines, or invoking triage by prioritising simultaneous work and home tasks (Kreiner et al., 2009). Further strategies are to shut down the computer or to turn off the phone in non-work time (Basile & Beauregard, 2016). And finally, another behavioural tactic is to allow a different permeability in the work-home boundary, like making exceptions of a normally strict boundary for very serious or urgent work tasks (Kreiner et al., 2009).

- **Temporal Tactics**

On the temporal level, the focus is on strategic choices regarding temporal work conditions. First, there is the general control over the work time, like deliberately choosing start-, end- and break-times during the workday, and using the work time flexibly. Second, it is beneficial for the boundary management to actively find respite, meaning that the worker takes breaks from work, like a day off, a holiday, or even a sabbatical over a longer period of time (Kreiner et al., 2009). Another strategy could be to end the workday when the children come home from school or to make fixed times for walking the dog or for meeting friends (Basile & Beauregard 2016).

- **Physical Tactics**

Regarding the physical level, it has become more difficult over time, as the strict segmentation of home and work has been impaired to a certain extent by mobile work and home work. Therefore, workers could adapt the physical boundaries by creating some kind of obstacle that keeps work and private life apart. In the home work environment, this could for instance mean to use an extra room for work where workers can leave the room and close the door behind them at the end of the workday. Moreover, these physical boundaries can be manipulated by adapting the amount of space between work and home, e.g. by moving further away from or

closer to the workplace (Kreiner et al., 2009). And then, there is the management of physical artefacts, like using different calendars or different key rings for work and home (Nippert-Eng, 1996; Kreiner et al., 2009), or different computers and different phones (Basile & Beauregard, 2016).

- **Communicative Tactics**

The last of the four categories of tactic types is the one including communicative tactics, which are about making expectations clear upfront. Setting the individual expectations and communicating them clearly to family members, work colleagues or clients can help to improve a worker's boundary management and work-life balance (Kreiner et al., 2009; Basile & Beauregard, 2016). It might also be necessary to confront violators of personal boundaries by pointing out the boundaries to them (Kreiner et al., 2009). In the home work environment, this could be to make a caller aware, when they are calling in the non-work time of the worker.

Based on these four tactics with their respective strategies and their positive contribution to an improved work-life balance, Kreiner et al. (2009) raised awareness for the possibility of actively teaching people the handling of their individual work-home boundary management and especially for managers to support their employees in the process, as this is not only an individual matter but it is also of importance for the long-term well-being of the company.

Furthermore, the researchers found synergies in the use of multiple boundary management strategies, i.e. by using more than one strategy independent from the category, the effects on boundary management can be enhanced (Kreiner et al., 2009). It has to be clear to the leaders/superiors, that each person has individual boundary preferences (Kreiner et al., 2009).

A later study found similar strategies for the boundary management of teleworkers, dividing them into the categories: time, space, technology, and communication (Fonner & Stache, 2012). Equivalently to the physical tactics of Kreiner et al., the space category contains allocating designated spaces for work and home tasks and creating physical barriers between the two areas, which also helps household members to understand the boundaries. Regarding the temporal level, Fonner and Stache (2012) also reported workers to use routines, breaks, and flexible work times.

Like in Kreiner et al.'s behavioural tactics, the category "technology" describes the use of technological devices for the boundary management. Teleworkers would e.g. turn off their computers at the end of the workday to signal that they are not available for work anymore, or they would use their work devices for work-related tasks and their private devices only for home-related tasks. Concerning communication, the workers used strategies such as telling their colleagues and household members when they would start or end their workday, so that they would not be interrupted in the respective opposite environment (Fonner & Stache, 2012).

2.4.3 Boundary Management Fit

It has been shown that the boundary management types can also be found in the area of home work and mobile work, where segmentors tend to keep up the regular work hours, while integrators adapt their work hours to their individual needs (Gisin et al. 2014). However, it is important for the effectiveness of a boundary management strategy and therefore for the worker's well-being that the boundary management fits the worker's personal requirements, as a work environment might be beneficial for one worker, while it might be harmful for another worker's well-being (Kreiner et al. 2009; Fonner & Stache 2012; Mellner, Aronsson & Kecklund, 2014; Bogaerts, De Cooman & De Gieter, 2018). Basile and Beauregard (2016) concluded that a higher level of control over the work and greater job-related autonomy contributes positively to the boundary management fit.

Kreiner et al. (2009), found two main consequences of a bad boundary management fit, or as they call it, work-home boundary incongruence, where a higher level of incongruence leads to an increased perception of these negative consequences. The first of these consequences is boundary violation, where the worker's individual boundaries are impaired by a behaviour or an event, meaning that the worker would prefer segmentation but is forced to perform integration instead ("intrusion") or vice versa ("distance"). Second, there is work-home conflict, where there is some kind of tension between the work and the home/family environment (Kreiner et al. 2009).

2.4.4 Boundary Management Preferences

Various factors have an impact on a person's preference regarding boundary management. Nevertheless, in a study of psychosocial work aspects and individual characteristics of the workers, Mellner et al. (2014) reported a clear preference for segmentation in all groups of research participants. However, especially the female participants had a high level of integration and experienced low control over the personal boundaries, which was perceived in a negative way.

Slightly controversially, Fonner and Stache (2012) discovered that female teleworkers were more likely to use segmenting strategies compared to their male colleagues. Of the aforementioned strategies, time was used most often by women, followed by technology and space. The primary strategy for boundary management of men was space.

According to several studies, a person's boundary management is influenced a lot by the person's environment (Ashforth et al. 2000; Kreiner et al. 2009; Mellner et al. 2014). Kreiner et al. have found five dimensions that influence a worker's segmentation or integration preference and thus, either contribute to the worker's boundary strategies in a positive way, or are perceived as a negative impact on the worker's well-being. These dimensions describe how the individual boundary preferences are supported or impaired by each of the dimensions, consisting of family members, supervisors/superiors, subordinates/staff, customers/clients, and the occupation itself (Kreiner et al. 2009).

The living situation of the workers is another important influence on the boundary

management, as workers with children in their home preferred space- and time-based strategies of segmentation over technology, communication, and integration (Fonner & Stache, 2012). Workers without children but with a roommate, partner or spouse on the other hand, preferred integration of work and home roles, as well as space- and time-based strategies, while people who lived on their own did not prefer integration over segmentation (Fonner & Stache, 2012). Fonner and Stache (2012) also found that the extensiveness of telework and home work affected the boundary management preferences, with workers preferring space-based strategies of segmentation when doing a lot of work remotely, compared to general time-based strategies for all workers, no matter the extent.

Additionally, Kossek et al. (2012) discovered six clusters of worker's boundary management preferences on the range from separation to integration based on the level of control over the boundary management, where the clusters with a low level of control had higher amounts of psychological distress and work and home interference, while the positive outcomes such as time adequacy and work-schedule fit were less, compared to other clusters with higher levels of control. This further highlights the relevance of control over the individual boundary management between work and non-work, demanding for a person-centered approach (Kossek et al., 2012).

Several researchers found that the boundary management preferences of segmentors and integrators in flexible work and in the home work environment can also be described with Kreiner's four categories of tactics (behavioural, temporal, physical, communicative) (Gisin et al., 2014; Basile & Beauregard, 2016). However, it is especially difficult for the mix type to understand their individual needs and requirements regarding boundary tactics and to implement them correctly (Gisin et al., 2014).

Gisin et al. (2014) also provide several recommendations for each of the boundary types. For segmentors, they recommend to introduce some kind of regularity in the work time management for gaining some structure, and to combine this with certain role-transition rituals for a clear separation of work and private life. Integrators on the other hand, should keep a close eye on their actual work time, so that they can maximise their own flexibility without missing out on their recovery time, while for the mix type, it is especially important to understand and define the individual personal needs to be able to implement appropriate boundary management strategies (Gisin et al., 2014).

In general, segmentation of work and private life is a more complex process compared to the integration of the two domains, and moreover, flexible and remote working arrangements leave the worker in the dichotomy between the freedom of flexibility and the desire for structure, which might fail to increase the work-life balance after all (Fonner & Stache, 2012).

In a recent study, Allen et al. (2021) further looked into the boundary management preferences of workers who were more or less obliged to work remotely due to Covid-19, meaning that conducting the work remotely was not a voluntary decision of the workers but rather prescribed by the company or the government. The findings in terms of boundary management strategies can again be distinguished according to the four

categories of Kreiner et al., with additional sub-categories like "emulating the office routine" as a behavioural tactic, or "purposefully disconnecting" and "reducing work and home role overlap" as temporal tactics (Allen et al., 2021). The most used strategies in the study were the temporal strategies and the creation of dedicated spaces at home, like an office space and a private space (Allen et al., 2021).

Furthermore, a significant positive impact of a dedicated work space at home on work-life balance has been observed, the same goes for the number of people in the household, where fewer people could be related with a higher level of work-life balance and vice versa. However, these factors did not have an influence on the segmentation preferences of the individuals (Allen et al., 2021). Allen et al. (2021) also point out that segmentation-integration behaviours could be seen as an ability that the workers can develop, implying that there might also be possibilities of training and other organisational support in this process.

2.5 Organisational Perspective

As an individuals' scope of action is always depending on the organisational structures and specifications, this master thesis also looks at the area of mental detachment from work in non-work time from the organisational perspective, in addition to the worker's perspective. In this context, several major topics become apparent: the legal situation in relation to work time and well-being of employees, the organisational control of performance of remote workers, as well as the increased necessity of trust in the remote work setting. And finally, known strategies for organisational support in the workers' boundary management are presented.

2.5.1 Legal Situation

Concerning the well-being of the employees, there are several legal guidelines that have to be taken into account from the organisational point of view. Companies are obliged by law to protect their employees in certain ways. The Austrian working conditions act ("ArbeitnehmerInnenschutzgesetz") declares the legal situation in this context in more detail. Thus, it is the employer's duty and responsibility to take care of the protection of the employees, regarding health and safety issues and to ensure employee welfare (ADVOKAT, 2021a).

The legal framework from the Austrian Government states that an organisation has to protect the employees from potential health risks by providing a safe work-space and evaluating the work environment and any measures that have been taken to mitigate risks. However, these legal frameworks are rather occupied with the physical health and well-being of the employees than with the mental well-being, meaning that the guidelines are aiming at creating a safe environment for the workers without putting them in danger of direct or indirect physical harm in the short-, medium- and long-term (Unternehmensservice Portal, 2021).

Concerning work time, there is the Austrian working hours act ("Arbeitszeitgesetz"), which determines the work conditions in the temporal context. The act states that there has to be an uninterrupted resting period of eleven hours between two work days, to allow the workers to recover. Additionally, it is specified that employees have to take a break of at least 30 minutes if they work for more than six hours a day (ADVOKAT 2021b). Other topics such as the occasional availability of workers in non-work time or the mental detachment from work are not covered in the act.

2.5.2 Trust

A big issue on the organisational perspective in this context is trust in the employees. It has been shown by various studies that trust is an important factor for workplace performance (Brown, Gray, McHardy & Taylor 2015; Breuer, Hüffmeier, Hibben & Hertel 2020). Breuer et al. (2020) found that a base of trust within virtual and face-to-face teams improves the team behaviour regarding the open discussion of mistakes and conflicts, as well as requesting help and sharing confidential information. The study from Brown et al. (2015) showed a positive connection between trust and several workplace performance criteria such as labour productivity or product and service quality.

Additionally, Grant et al. (2013) describe the importance of trust for a well-functioning remote work system. However, trust in flexible working arrangements might also be compensated by practices of workplace monitoring and the introduction of other control mechanisms. The benefits of autonomy could be destroyed by monitoring practices (Mazmanian et al. 2013). Solis (2017) also found a negative relation between supervisors' control and the workers' pro-activity and adaptability in a study regarding teleworking, meaning that the workers' overall performance did decrease through the high level of control by their supervisors when working remotely.

Another view on trust in flexible working arrangements is provided by Gajendran and Harrison (2007), who found that working remotely had a positive impact on the quality of the employee-supervisor relationship, however, this could as well be caused by the circumstance that having the option of working from home might already be linked with a good performance and a certain level of trust between the supervisor and the employee. Gajendran and Harrison (2007) also point out that the supervisors and the workers might deliberately counteract the decrease in quality of the relationship in flexible work by placing a focus on the maintenance of the relationship with means such as regular reports and structured communication for keeping up the control. In any way, trust is an important influencing factor for flexible work and home work.

2.5.3 Organisational Control

With employees working from other places than the company itself, it becomes difficult to control their work time and also their performance. Several researchers have created the organisational control theory (Ouchi 1977, 1979; Eisenhardt 1985; Snell, 1992), which provides a model for managers to choose an appropriate control mechanism (see figure 2.1)

(Liu, Yetton & Sauer, 2010). On the two axis "knowledge of the transformation process" and "ability to measure outputs", each with a scale from low to high, a manager's control mechanisms can be distinguished between *output control* with high output measurability and low to high task programmability, and *behaviour control* with low output measurability and low to high task programmability (Liu et al., 2010).

		Knowledge of the transformation process (Task Programmability)	
		Low	High
Ability to measure outputs (Output Measurability)	Low	Output	Behaviour or Output
	High	Input	Behaviour

Figure 2.1: Model for the choice of organisational control, provided by Liu et al. (2010), adapted from Ouchi (1977, 1979), Eisenhardt, Govindarajan and Fisher (1985)

In the event that none of these two control mechanisms can be used effectively due to the nature of the task - meaning that there is low output measurability and at the same time there is low knowledge about the task itself and the behaviour that is necessary to complete it successfully - the model provides a third control mechanism: *input control* (Snell, 1992) or *clan control*, meaning control through an informal social system (Ouchi 1979). Overall, these types of control mechanisms have to be balanced to a certain extent, to avoid adverse effects on the workers' performance. Moreover, a strong focus on output control would lead to a decrease in intrinsic motivation (Liu et al., 2010).

2.5.4 Boundary Management Support through Companies

The second part of the research question focuses on the organisational support of employees in the context of mental detachment and boundary management. Literature shows that the constant availability of employees for work has a negative impact on their well-being (Mazmanian et al., 2013; Dettmers et al., 2016). Therefore, Basile and Beauregard provide suggestions for companies and their HR departments in order to help their employees with their boundary management. They emphasise the importance of creating a general understanding of the individual situations and preferences of the employees, which also lead to individual requirements regarding the boundary management. Coaching the employees and providing them with knowledge about the boundary types and with concrete strategies is recommended (Basile & Beauregard, 2016). Additionally, it might be possible for the workers to learn from one another, when the organisational environment leaves room for it (Grant et al., 2013).

It might also be helpful to allow a certain extent of autonomy and control in order to support the creation and maintenance of these individual boundary management strategies

(Basile & Beauregard 2016). In this context, Solís (2017) highlights the importance of trust in the employees, also by suggesting a reduction of the level of organisational control over the employees. However, there should be a clear communication in terms of a framework of rules and guidelines in order to prevent over-working of the employees and to foster transparency within the company, as remote work requires more communication (Grant et al. 2013).

Moreover, literature indicates that it is important for managers to be aware of their employee's surroundings and environments, as mentioned before, because the impacts of flexible work and home work might differ for each individual. This means that the managers, who represent the organisational position, should include that information regarding their employees' personal situation in their decisions (Golden 2012). There should be a close connection with regular exchanges between the employees and their supervisors, so that any problems and negative aspects of flexible work and home work can be noticed and solved at an early stage (Grant et al. 2013).

2.5.5 Occupational Health Management

Finally, there is another approach of improving the workers' well-being and enhancing awareness for the necessity of mental detachment from work, it is occupational health management. Several organisations are already focusing on improving their employee's situation with training programs and awareness creating measures. There are also some companies that have specialised in this area and provide consulting, such as IBG (*Betriebliches Gesundheitsmanagement für Unternehmen*, 2021).

Furthermore, in Austria there is a governmental campaign, the so-called workplace health promotion ("Betriebliche Gesundheitsförderung"). This campaign supports companies with their health management and tries to establish a holistic view on health and healthy work conditions. Healthy workers benefit the companies, which is why companies can voluntarily take part in this program and receive support in the implementation process (Bundesministerium für Soziales, Gesundheit, Pflege und Konsumentenschutz (BMSGPK) 2021).

2.6 Summary and Research Question

As described in this chapter, the rise of flexible work and home work challenges workers to manage their boundaries between work and non-work in order to detach mentally from work during non-work time. Various studies have been conducted, finding that flexible work is impacting the workers in several ways. There is the work-home interference, and the influence on work-life balance, effectiveness, stress and exhaustion (Solís, 2017; Golden, 2012). Moreover, a worker's ability of mentally disengaging from work is affected by the change in the work environment (Park et al. 2011; Dettmers et al., 2016). However,

it is necessary for workers to detach from work in non-work time, for being able to recover properly (Fritz et al., 2010; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007).

Additionally, it has been found that workers would deliberately restrict their own autonomy by being available for work and by using work-related information and communication technology in their non-work time, although the extended availability is known to impact the worker's well-being in a negative way (Mazmanian et al., 2013). Another focus was trust, which is a fundamental prerequisite for flexible working arrangements (Grant et al., 2013).

And finally, boundary management has been explained, with the segmentor, the integrator and the mix type, and with the various tactics, preferences and strategies, which are known from literature so far (Kreiner et al., 2009; Fonner & Stache, 2012; Gisin et al., 2014). Moreover, the organisational perspective has been looked at, with the legal situation, organisational mechanisms of control and organisational strategies of support in boundary management, such as occupational health management systems (*Betriebliches Gesundheitsmanagement für Unternehmen*, 2021). Another aspect is the need for knowledge and awareness in the field of boundary management, as this area will further emerge with the increasing amount of flexible work and home work (Allen et al., 2021).

Therefore, this thesis looks further into the topic of boundary management strategies, shedding light on the diverse strategies in the context of flexible work and home work in times of Covid-19, with all the limitations and their impacts on the workers and their work environment. The main subject of this thesis is the work-home interface, exploring mental detachment from work in non-work time, with a focus on the worker's measures to set and improve the mental detachment, as well as the organisational perspective, meaning measures to support the workers in the maintenance of the boundaries and the detachment process.

The research question of the thesis is as follows:

Which measures help workers to establish and maintain the boundaries between work and non-work?

For gaining a holistic view on the topic, this question is further divided into the two perspectives of workers and organisations:

- (a) *Which measures can the worker take?*

This sub-question is focusing on the measures and strategies that the workers themselves can implement and use to mentally detach from work and maintain the boundaries.

- (b) *Which measures can the organisations set?*

This sub-question is occupied with the possibilities of organisational support in the process.

Methodology

In order to find an answer to the research question, 15 qualitative interviews have been conducted with 8 employees and 7 representatives of various companies, to be able to examine the topic from both perspectives. For the workers' perspective, the interviewees have been selected via a study on the use of the mobile application "swoliba". This mobile application aims at creating and improving the work-life-balance by providing exercises that can be easily integrated in the daily routine. The mobile application was created and implemented by the TU Wien (Institute of Management Science and Industrial Software) in the frame of the project "Work-Life Balance 4.0", financed by the chamber of labour of Lower Austria. At the end of the project, each participant had the option to make themselves available for an interview for this master thesis by leaving their contact details.

The selection of the interviewees for the organisational perspective was done with a cooperation with the researchers Dr. Martina Hartner-Tiefenthaler and Dr. Simone Polic-Tögel, who conducted the interviews in the frame of the project "Work-Life Balance 4.0". The interviews in this case came about through personal contacts of the researchers.

The questions for these interviews have been based on the knowledge from the literature and the research that has been carried out in advance in the fields of boundary management, mental detachment and worker well-being. The gathered interview data has then been analysed with a structuring content analysis of the interview data, following the guidelines of the Austrian psychologist Philip Mayring (2010).

Conducting interviews is a common research method for collecting data in studies. This method allows the researcher to dynamically adapt questions and to go beyond the scope of other methods e.g. questionnaires. In general, researchers can choose from several types of interviews, i.e. structured, unstructured, or semi-structured. The method of semi-structured interviews was chosen for this particular master thesis, which is the most common type of interviews in social science. There is an interview guide like in structured

interviews, but the researcher may also go further into the topic by asking additional and especially open-ended questions that allow for new concepts to emerge (Doody & Noonan 2013; Dearnley 2005). Furthermore, the order of the questions and the wording can be adapted, depending on the direction of the interview (Alsaawi, 2014; Doody & Noonan 2013).

Semi-structured interviews have the property of being able to explore new facets and uncover new aspects in the corresponding field of research. According to the insights that one gets while conducting the interview, the order of the questions can be adapted as well. The use of several guiding questions leaves a level of freedom that allows for finding new insights and examining the perspective of the workers and organisations on the topic of boundary management, as well as recovery and psychological detachment from work, and measures for improving those (Alsaawi 2014; Doody & Noonan 2013; Dearnley, 2005).

3.1 Conducting the Interviews

Before conducting the interviews, the researcher should consider certain ethical guidelines, such as issues of purpose, consequences, consent, or confidentiality (Rabionet, 2011). Therefore, a consent form with information and explanations has been given to and signed by all participants.

When performing a qualitative content analysis according to Mayring (2010), the process starts with setting the initial situation regarding the material. This comprises of three distinct steps: First, there is the definition of the material, in which the researcher needs to establish the basis for the analysis, by specifying the content of the data. Then, the originating situation has to be analysed, and finally, the formal characteristics of the interview material need to be declared (Mayring 2010).

3.1.1 Definition of the Material

Based on the gathered information on the relevant topics in the literature review, the interview guide was created, which provides the researcher with a coarse structure regarding the questions to be asked during the interviews (Rabionet, 2011) and helps the researcher to keep the focus of the questions on the actual task, to increase the relevance of the collected data (Kallio, Pietilä, Johnson & Kangasniemi 2016). A proper understanding of the subject is important for understanding backgrounds and connections and for gaining general insights into the topic, and allows to transform the knowledge on the topic into a well-structured, logical, and coherent form which covers the main aspects of the research topic (Kallio et al., 2016). Other observations during the interviews, such as the overall awareness for the necessity for additional support of the employees in flexible working were also looked at.

The interview guide was then tested and slightly adapted. There was one interview guide for the worker's perspective and one for the organisational view. An excerpt from the

translated guide for the worker's perspective can be seen below. Once the interview guides have been completed, the semi-structured interviews were carried out. The full interview guides in the original language can be found in the appendix.

————— *Excerpt from the Interview Guide* —————

Current situation:

- In which position do you work and what activities do you perform?
- Please tell me about a typical working day in the last few months.
 - Do you work from home? How do you feel about it? (is home work/digital communication perceived as a stress factor, or does it make certain processes easier?)
 - How suitable do you think is home work for your activities?
 - How flexible is your work in terms of working hours and location?
- Have you worked from home before Corona? Do you want or should you continue to work this way in the future?
- What does your workplace look like in the office or at home? Influencing factors, disturbing factors, ...
- How do you feel about the demarcation between work and non-work? (-> preferences integrator/separator)
 - How do you organise your working time - also with regard to breaks? Are there any guidelines from your manager? How do you record your working time?
 - How does work flow into your private life? (e.g.: reading emails on the way to work)

————— *End of Excerpt* —————

Hence, for this thesis, the material consists of the interview data of 15 semi-structured interviews. On the one hand, seven of these interviews have been conducted with representatives from various organisations, to capture the organisational knowledge and the organisational view on mental detachment, as well as their efforts on supporting their employees with mental detachment and recovery processes. On the other hand, eight interviews have been conducted with employees, in order to understand their view on the topic, including the requirements of the workers themselves for being able to mentally

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Profession
Worker 1	Female	31-40	secretary
Worker 2	Male	51-60	manager
Worker 3	Female	51-60	consultant
Worker 4	Male	51-60	IT operations
Worker 5	Female	41-50	deputy director
Worker 6	Female	41-50	lecturer
Worker 7	Female	21-30	HR specialist
Worker 8	Male	21-30	software developer

Table 3.1: Demographics of the participants of the semi-structured interviews for covering the workers' perspective.

Interviewee	Gender	Professional Area
Company 1	Male	Consulting
Company 2	Female	HR
Company 3	Male	Works Council
Company 4	Female	eLearning
Company 5	Male	Management
Company 6	Female & Male	Work Expert HR
Company 7	Male	Management

Table 3.2: Demographics of the participants of the semi-structured interviews for covering the organisational perspective.

disengage and recover from work. The demographics and the professions of the interview participants can be seen in table 3.1 and 3.2.

From the resulting interview data, only the relevant parts for this thesis were used for the analysis, and interview passages that focused on different topics than the ones previously defined, such as explanations of the professions of the workers, and interview passages that did not contribute anything to one of the categories in the category system, were left out in the analysis process.

3.1.2 Analysis of the originating situation

The next step is to declare and describe the way in which the data was gathered, including the predominant conditions in the creation process of the material (Mayring, 2010).

The interviews for this thesis were semi-structured interviews with open questions and were conducted in German. For the worker-perspective, participants of the study on the mobile application "swoliba" were invited to this interview study. As described earlier, the mobile application "swoliba" is an application designed to help employees in creating

a smart work-life balance and was subject of a study conducted by the Institute of Management Science (TU Wien). At the end of the study, the participants received an invitation to a voluntary interview. On the organisational perspective, the interviewees were representatives of various organisations and operated in diverse areas within those companies, such as HR, Works Council, Management or Consulting. Additionally, some of these interviewees had knowledge of the mobile application "swoliba" or have even been using it themselves.

3.1.3 Formal Characteristics of the Material

In the following step, the formal characteristics of the material used for the analysis process had to be defined, like transcription rules and other modalities (Mayring, 2010).

For this master thesis, the semi-structured interviews have been carried out with a videoconferencing tool. The interviews have been recorded and transcripts were created. The transcription was conducted in the way of an intelligent verbatim transcription, meaning that filler words such as "ah" or "mh" and general noises or pauses have been left out, and the Austrian dialect has been transformed to standard German. Additionally, for ensuring the anonymity of the employees and the company representatives, any company-related data has been anonymised, e.g. by replacing the concrete company name with "the company".

3.2 Qualitative Content Analysis

The gathered interview data from the semi-structured interviews has then been analysed with a qualitative content analysis for finding similarities and emerging concepts. The qualitative content analysis has been performed according to the guidelines of the Austrian psychologist Philip Mayring (2010). Several researchers propose the use of a software tool for the analysis process (de Casterlé, Gastmans, Bryon & Denier, 2012; Mayring, 2010). Due to the manageable amount of interviews for this master thesis, the analysis was conducted with the use of Microsoft Excel.

Qualitative content analysis in general provides a systematic rule- and theory-based approach of analysing communication (Mayring, 2010). The idea is to diminish the subjectivity of qualitative methods by introducing the systematic concept, comparability, reliability, validity, and reproduceability. This allows to utilise the advantages of quantitative methods while doing qualitative research. For ensuring the systematic and rule-based approach, a model is defined in advance, which contains the individual tasks in the analysis process and their order (Mayring, 2010).

Another essential component, which helps to guarantee these benefits also in the qualitative content analysis, is the use of a category system, just like in a quantitative content analysis (Mayring, 2010). In this thesis, 20 % of the text passages of the interview data have also been categorised by another researcher to increase reliability and to improve the quality of the category system.

One should be aware, that the data in the qualitative content analysis has to be regarded in the communication context. Moreover, the approach and the individual steps are always aligned with the general context of the material and its background (Mayring 2010).

3.2.1 Direction of Analysis

After setting the basic modalities of the interview data and the material for the analysis process, the next step, according to Mayring (2010), is to take a closer look at the problem statement and the objectives of the analysis.

The objective of the research in this master thesis is to find already existing and potential future measures that enable the workers to mentally detach from work in non-work time and to recover from work. Additionally, the second focus on the organisational perspective should reveal potential options of supporting the employees in this process.

3.2.2 Theory-based Differentiation of the Problem Statement

With the theoretical knowledge on the topic in mind, the problem statement and research question can be defined. Like already presented in the section 2.6 the research question of the thesis is as follows:

Which measures help workers to establish and maintain the boundaries between work and non-work?

with the division of the question into the workers' perspective and the organisational perspective:

- (a) *Which measures can the worker take?*
- (b) *Which measures can the organisations set?*

In the analysis process, the previously described knowledge on boundary management processes, strategies and mental detachment, as well as recovery from work, are taken into account for identifying possible answers to the research questions. Especially with the great rise in the amount of flexible work and home work due to the pandemic, the relevance of these research fields has increased massively.

3.2.3 Process Model for the Analysis

Mayring (2010) recommends a general process model for all types of content analysis, which contains the basic steps of the analysis process. He describes the decomposition of the analysis into predefined individual steps, as the great advantage of the qualitative content analysis, because it creates transparency and intersubjectivity, which are preconditions for a scientific method.

This general process model is then refined and adapted, depending on the objectives of the analysis and the material. There are three basic types of qualitative content analysis that a researcher can choose from, in order to create the ideal way of acquiring knowledge from each individual type of data (Mayring, 2010):

- **Summary** - When performing a summarising content analysis, the researcher can narrow down the interview data to the main contents, and concentrate on the major insights and information. This allows for getting an overview of the data without losing any of the main information (Mayring, 2010).
- **Explication** - In the case of an explication, the idea is to extend the main material with additional information for improving the understanding of certain parts of the text which are unclear or ambiguous (Mayring, 2010).
- **Structuring** - The structuring content analysis focuses on gaining impressions of certain components of the material, or on evaluating the interview data according to specific predefined criteria (Mayring, 2010).

The goal of this master thesis was to find strategies and supportive measures regarding the mental detachment process; therefore, a structuring content analysis has been chosen. This type allows to define main categories for the classification of the material in advance and in a deductive way, meaning that the main categories are derived from the theoretical knowledge on the related topics. Then, the sub-categories for the classification of the material are defined inductively, meaning that the various pieces of information from the interview data itself specify the concrete sub-categories (Mayring, 2010).

Within the structuring content analysis one can further distinguish between four types:

- **Formal Structuring** describes a method for obtaining the inner structure of the material according to specific formal structuring aspects (Mayring, 2010).
- **Content Structuring** is about gaining further insights in the predefined areas of research interest and summarising that content (Mayring, 2010).
- In **Typecasting Structuring**, the aim is to find and describe certain prominent characteristics in the material (Mayring, 2010).
- **Scaling Structuring** is about defining scales for certain characteristics and assessing the material in relation to those scales (Mayring, 2010).

With the goals of the thesis in mind, the content structuring has been chosen, as it allows to gain deeper knowledge on the research areas and the predefined categories, and aggregate that knowledge in a clear way. With these specifications in mind, the process model for the qualitative content analysis of this master thesis, using the content structuring method, could be defined and is provided in figure 3.1

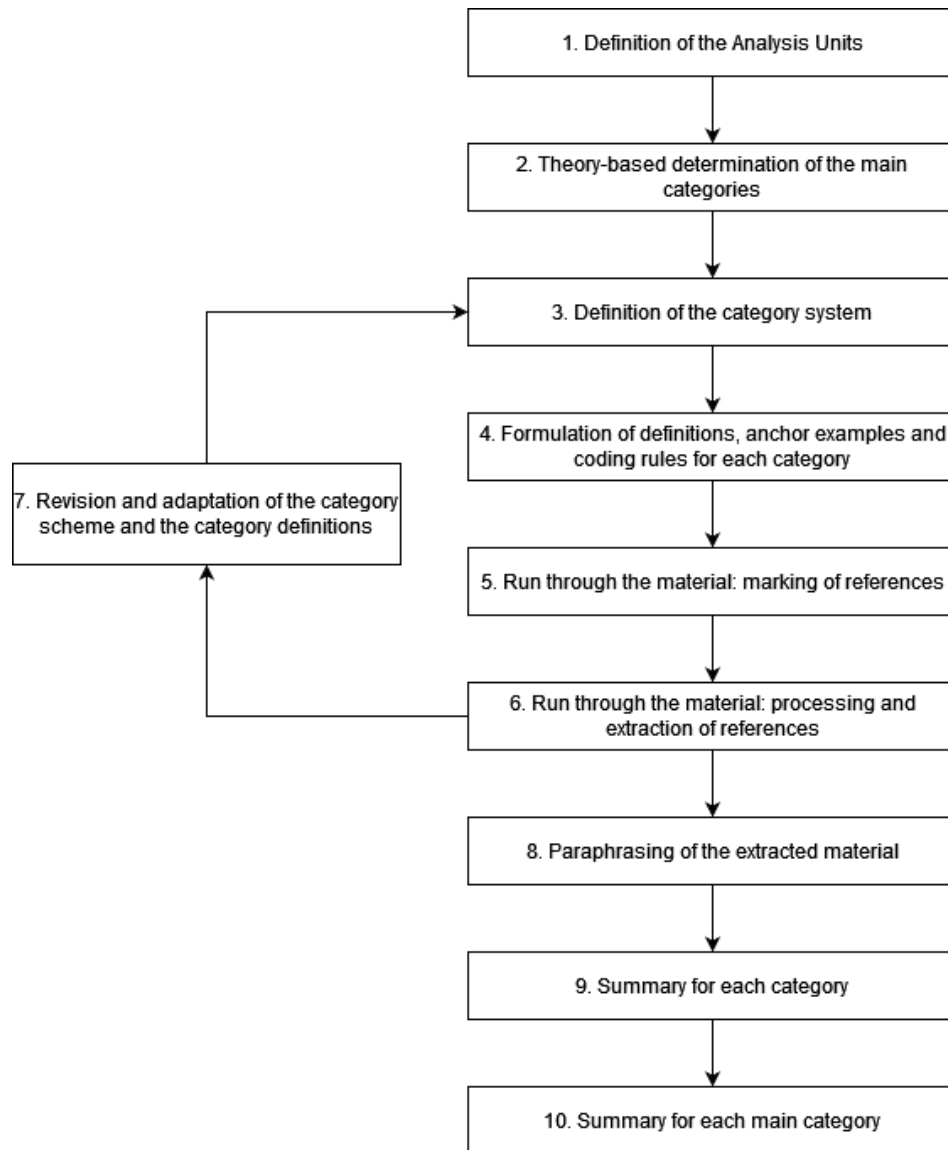


Figure 3.1: Process model for the content structuring method of the qualitative content analysis, translated and slightly adapted from Mayring (2010)

Step 1: Determination of the Analysis Units

The first step in the process model is the determination of the analysis units, meaning that a definition has to be provided for the following units:

- Coding Unit: This unit defines the smallest component of the material that is allowed for categorisation and evaluation (Mayring, 2010). For the analysis in this thesis, the coding unit is defined as a single word.

- Context Unit: This unit is about the biggest component of the material which can be assigned as a whole to one category (Mayring, 2010). In the case of the thesis, this is a text passage.
- Evaluation Unit: This unit defines the sequence of the parts of the material for the evaluation (Mayring, 2010). In the thesis, the evaluation is done sequentially per coherent text passage or text chunk.

Step 2: Theory-based determination of the main categories

On the basis of the findings from the literature presented in section 2, the main categories 'C1' and 'C2' for the analysis were defined deductively. On the next level, there is one category in the category scheme for each of the major fields in research, i.e. autonomy and well-being from the worker's perspective, and Organisational Control and Communication from the organisational perspective or from the worker-company interface. Additionally, there are categories to capture the worker's personal situation, and organisational measures in the context of support in boundary management. Finally, one category has been added for summarising the experiences with the mobile app swoliba from both perspectives, in order to gain insights on the potential of a mobile application in the support of the mental detachment and recovery process. These categories have been added deductively and they have been adapted and divided into sub-categories in the iterative categorisation process. The resulting categories are shown in figure 3.2 and 3.3

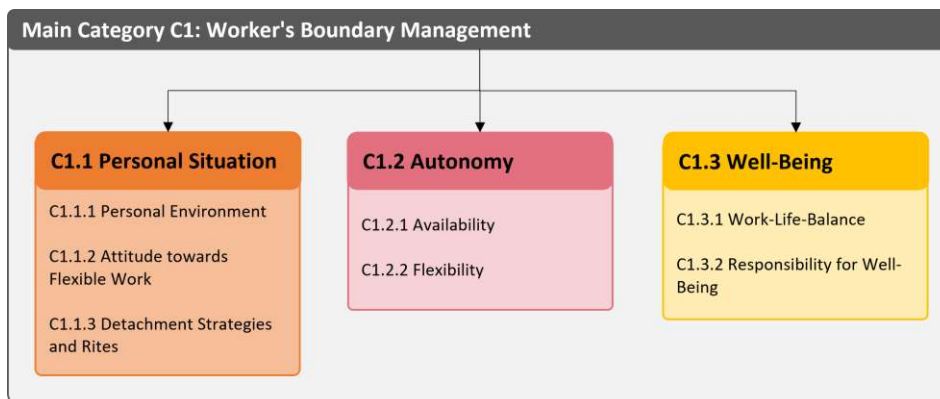


Figure 3.2: Sub-categories from the category scheme from the worker's perspective.

Steps 3 to 7: Creating the Category scheme

Then, in an iterative process, the sub-categories of the category scheme were developed inductively. For this purpose, the transcript of the first company-interview was taken as a starting point. The individual text passages of this interview were processed and assigned to one of the main categories. Additionally, the text passages with similar content were inductively aggregated in sub-categories, allowing to observe emerging patterns within the material.

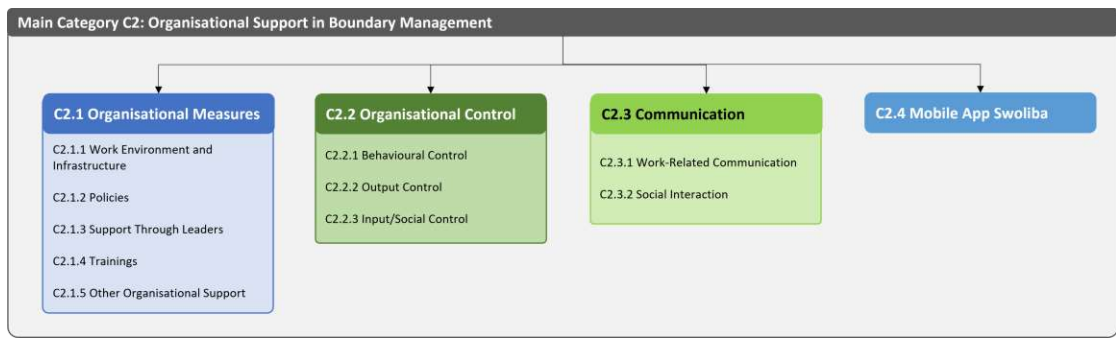


Figure 3.3: Sub-categories from the category scheme from the organisational perspective.

For each of these sub-categories, a definition has been provided. In addition, anchor examples were selected, i.e. particularly clear category-assignments, which promote the understanding of the individual categories. Moreover, the coding rules for each sub-category were extended constantly, in order to make the assignment of the categories clearer. An extract of the final category scheme can be seen in figure 3.4.

After the first interview transcript had been processed, the preliminary category scheme has then been tested on the first worker-interview transcript and adaptations and refinements of the category scheme have been made. The adaptations have then been re-checked with the first company-interview. Then, the second company-interview was processed, and again, the category scheme was adapted. This process was repeated for the next few interviews. Once there were no more changes to be made to the sub-categories and their definitions, the category scheme was finalised and the rest of the interviews were processed. The resulting final category scheme is the following:

Main Category 1: Worker’s Boundary Management

C1.1 Personal Situation The first category from the worker’s perspective on boundary management is the personal situation. This category looks at the workers’ personal environment at home, such as their work equipment and rooming situation, as well as their living situation regarding family and housemates. This category is also about the workers’ general mindset and attitude towards flexible work, as well as strategies for disengaging from work. The interview passages in this category provide insights for analysing the relationship between a worker’s surroundings and their mental detachment and boundary management situation.

C1.1.1 Personal Environment

A worker’s personal work space at home, including the infrastructure, the work environment, and any influencing factors such as family members or pets.

C1.1.2 Attitude towards Flexible Work

The person's comprehension and attitude regarding home work and flexible work, as well as potential difficulties with the home work setting. This category also includes the personal background in the context of home work and flexible work.

C1.1.3 Detachment Strategies and Rites

This category is about the rites, symbols and strategies that the worker uses, in order to detach from work in non-work time, or to conduct the role-transition between work and non-work, as well as the perceived necessity of detaching from work in non-work time.

C1.2 Autonomy The second category is about a worker's personal autonomy regarding the management of their work time and work place. Requirements about availability for work in non-work time are looked at, as well as the autonomy-paradox, meaning that workers would voluntarily and deliberately be available for work in their non-work time. Furthermore, the category covers the amount and type of flexibility that a worker is allowed from the organisation in the self-management of the work time and place, and the amount of flexibility within an organisation.

C1.2.1 Availability

The necessity or perceived necessity of being available for work in non-work time, from the perspective of the worker and their colleagues. This category is looking into the autonomy-paradox, covering the workers' autonomy regarding self-management and (perceived) expectations.

C1.2.2 Flexibility

Flexibility in terms of work time and place, self-management of work time from the worker and their colleagues, as well as organisational flexibility. Also covered in this category is a potential lack of flexibility and therefore a lack of autonomy, or limitations of flexibility.

C1.3 Well-Being This category is about the perceptions of the employees regarding their personal well-being and their work-life balance. It covers the impacts of a worker's boundary management strategies on the well-being and work-life balance, meaning how the worker is coping with their boundary management. Additionally, the category "well-being" is also about the perceived responsibilities for a worker's well-being in the home work environment.

C1.3.1 Work-Life-Balance

The sub-category covers the Work-Life-Balance and the general handling of the work-non-work-boundary from the worker regarding its influence on the well-being of the worker. It is also about personal preferences of integration/separation of work and non-work, and blurring boundaries.

C1.3.2 Responsibility for Well-Being

The question of the responsibility for the workers' well-being, when the worker is working from home, is covered by this category.

Main Category 2: Organisational Support in Boundary Management

C2.1 Organisational Measures The first category from the organisational perspective contains a worker's work environment and the infrastructure at the organisation. Moreover, the category covers the measures that an organisation has taken in order to support with the workers' boundary management, such as organisational trainings, or the implementation of certain regulations or policies, or the provision of support through the superiors and other organisational roles.

C2.1.1 Work Environment and Infrastructure

The work space and work environment at the organisation, as well as the physical and virtual infrastructure for work that is provided by the organisation. Furthermore, the staff situation and the corporate culture are covered by this category.

C2.1.2 Policies

Policies, guidelines, frameworks, agreements for mobile work and home work and their impact on workers' well-being, collaboration, and detachment.

C2.1.3 Support through Leaders

The behaviour of leaders and head of the company regarding the support of workers with self-management and work-life-balance, or the implementation of policies. Role-model effects and impacts on the workers. Also covered is the communication in terms of work and work style, as well as a potential lack of support.

C2.1.4 Trainings

Training possibilities on topics such as self-management, work-life-balance, boundary management. This category looks at general awareness in this context, existing trainings as well as any programs planned for the future.

C2.1.5 Other Organisational Support

Other support measures that are not covered by the aforementioned categories, such as further support through the works council or occupational physicians.

C2.2 Organisational Control This category is about the levels of trust and the mechanisms of control within an organisation. It is looking into the various types of control that are applied and the way that they are implemented. Another topic in this category is mutual trust between workers and the organisation.

C2.2.1 Behaviour Control

The category of behaviour control covers the organisational control through monitoring a worker's behaviour and time management.

C2.2.2 Output Control

Output control is about the organisational control through measuring a worker's output.

C2.2.3 Input/Social Control

This category is about organisational control through an informal social system, like mutual trust from workers, leaders and other company representatives.

C2.3 Communication This category contains all communication-related topics, such as the social interaction of employees, as well as the way in which the interpersonal communication takes place in the remote setting. Furthermore, the way of communicating and collaborating on the work-level is a focus of this category. It is looked into the work style regarding the communication of work-related content.

C2.3.1 Work-related Communication

The communication in terms of work-related content, work style, methods and procedures, as well as organisational topics. The question is: How do the workers communicate and collaborate?

C2.3.2 Social Interaction

The social processes in the daily work-life and the way that workers are interacting on a social level in the home work setting is covered by this category, including interpersonal communication with co-workers and leaders.

C2.4 Mobile App Swoliba

The last category gathers all content on the mobile application "swoliba", showing impacts and experiences with the use of the application, in order to find out about the benefits and drawbacks of a mobile application for mentally disengaging from work in non-work time and improving the work-life balance.

The full category scheme with all the definitions, anchor examples and coding rules can be found in the appendix. Figure 3.5 shows the number of text chunks from the interview material that have been assigned to each category from the category scheme. The category "C1.2.2 Flexibility" contains 61 text chunks, which is the most. The least text chunks have been assigned to the category "C2.2.3 Input/Social Control".

For validating the category scheme and the resulting categorisation, 100 of the approximately 500 text chunks have been selected randomly and discussed and categorised by another researcher. In this process, 6 of those 100 text chunks have been assigned to a different category, meaning that the categorisations corresponded to 94 %. A discussion on the deviations led to a slight adaptation of the category scheme, the descriptions and the coding rules. In that way, the discrepancies could be resolved.

Step 8: Paraphrasing of the extracted material

With all parts of the material being assigned to one of the sub-categories in the category scheme, the extracted material could then be paraphrased. According to Mayring (2010), this process is done with removing those parts of the text that do not contain relevant content, such as repeating or illustrating phrases. The remaining text passages were then

brought to a uniform level of language and transformed into a grammatical short form (2010).

Next, the paraphrases were generalised to the defined level of abstraction (Mayring 2010). For answering the research questions, the level of abstraction was set as follows: The paraphrases should have a general informative value, without completely losing the connection to the individual, meaning that e.g. statements about experiences with specific detachment strategies of an individual should be generalised to a broader level for making universal observations, but for deriving conclusions, it should still be clear, that this is a personal experience. However, statements that are already at a higher level of abstraction should be left at that level (Mayring, 2010).

Steps 9 and 10: Summary for each category and main category

The resulting abstractions of the text passages of the material were then reduced to their main information, and summarised. The summary process started by summarising the abstractions for each category, and then, the resulting statements were again summarised for each main category, so that insights could be gained and conclusions could be drawn (Mayring, 2010). An example can be seen in figure 3.6

After paraphrasing, generalising and summarising the material of each category, the next step was to make observations and to identify striking characteristics of the categories. The findings of this process are presented in the following chapter.

C2 Main Category 2: Organisational Support in Boundary Management		Anchor Example	Coding Rules
Category	Inductive Sub-Category	Definition of the Category	
C2.1	Organisational Measures	Workspace and work environment at the organisation, as well as the physical and virtual infrastructure for work that is provided by the organisation.	Infrastructure and facilities provided by the employer. Workplace at the employer's.
C2.1	C2.1.1 Work Environment and Infrastructure	Furthermore, the staff situation and the corporate culture are covered by this category.	But I also have a very quiet environment in the office, we have an office where a maximum of four of us sit inside at the same time. Now in Corona times alone or a maximum of two when we were in the office." (W7 - 11)
C2.1	C2.1.2 Policies	Policies, guidelines, frameworks, agreements for mobile work/home work and their impact on workers' well-being, collaboration, and detachment.	But also: HOW is the work done, e.g. are meetings held online or in presence, ... Communication regarding policies (how are regulations/policies/... communicated). Other communication is assigned to the category "2.3.1 Work-related Communication".
C2.1	C2.1.3 Support through Leaders	Behaviour of leaders and head of the company regarding the support of workers with self-management and work-life-balance, or the implementation of policies. Role-model effects and impacts on the workers. Communication in terms of work and workstyle. Also: lack of support.	"Clear frameworks means a level playing field for everyone within a certain activity and experience group. So to speak, activity group and seniority. I have to design frameworks suitable for activity groups but also suitable for seniority." (C1 - 28) "We have flexitime, no more core time, that was also a wish of the colleagues that we implemented a few years ago." (C3 - 4) "How far do I have to go? Would you allow someone to take no break at all, really no break at all, and just sit in front of the computer for 10 hours, with just going to the toilet under high pressure and back again? No! Where do you draw the line. You don't allow everything as a leader, but where is the line? Where does it make sense to draw the line, and so on and so forth." (C1 - 35)
C2.1	C2.1.4 Trainings	Training possibilities covering topics such as self-management, work-life-balance, boundary management. This category looks at general awareness in this context, existing trainings as well as any programs planned for the future.	"We have made various offers available. On the one hand, as mentioned before, there was this seminar series in November 2020, where an external trainer presented strategies to enable the individual to separate private and professional life." (C2 - 40)
C2.1	C2.1.5 Other Organisational Support	Other support measures that are not covered by the aforementioned categories, such as further support through the works council or occupational physicians.	Support measures for detachment, work-life balance, ... that are not covered by the aforementioned organisational measures, belong to this category. But: Support measures for the workstyle, e.g. communication of information regarding "HOW is the work done" belong to category "2.3.1 Work-related Communication".
C2.2	Organisational Control	Organisational control through monitoring a worker's behaviour and time management.	"When I'm working from home, I open my laptop, I log in, there are various app solutions or programmes where you can register or log in and out again. We deliberately don't do that." (C2 - 33) Monitoring, supervising, watching a worker's behaviour; keeping track of work time
C2.2	C2.2.1 Behaviour Control	Organisational control through measuring a worker's output	"I think that this is already expected, and as I said, that the work you have to do is done. That emails are looked at and answered. and Measuring output e.g. the number of reports, emails, ..."
C2.2	C2.2.2 Output		

Figure 3.4: Extract from the category scheme with the definitions, anchor examples and coding rules for the sub-categories.

3. METHODOLOGY

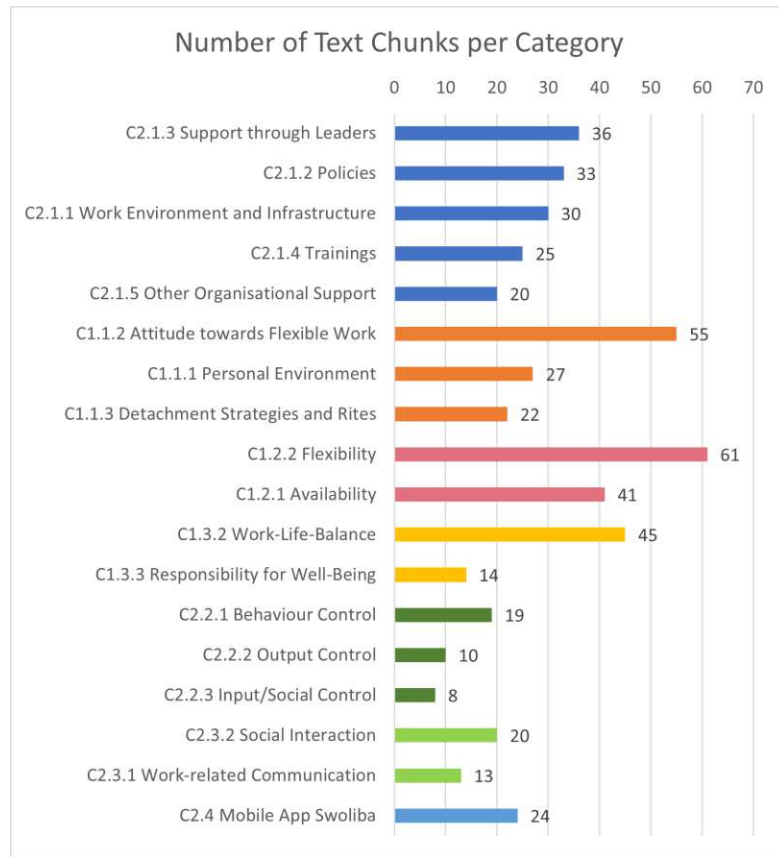


Figure 3.5: Number of text chunks that have been assigned to each category from the category scheme, ordered by the frequency of the categories. The sub-categories are coloured according to the related category.

Paraphrase	Generalisierung	Reduktion
Eine große Herausforderung beim mobilen Arbeiten ist die Prävention technischer Regulationsbehinderungen beispielsweise Persönliches Umfeld der Mitarbeiter muss beachtet werden bei der Verteilung der Arbeitsaufgaben, wenn Mitarbeiter im Homeoffice Rahmenbedingungen der Mitarbeiter im Homeoffice müssen differenziert betrachtet werden. Bsp.: Familie, Räumlichkeiten, Infrastruktur und Ausstattung mit ergonomischer Büroeinrichtung	Herausforderung beim mobilen Arbeiten: technische Rahmenbedingungen Persönliches Umfeld im Homeoffice beachten bei Verteilung der Persönliche Rahmenbedingungen im Homeoffice beachten	Herausforderungen im Homeoffice: o technische Rahmenbedingungen o familiäre Situation o gesundheitliche Einschränkungen/Pflege von Angehörigen o Ausstattung am Arbeitsplatz und Arbeitsumgebung o Selbstdisziplin (hinsichtlich Ernährung) o Abstimmung mit Familienmitgliedern bezüglich Platzbedarf
Kinderbetreuung und Homeoffice gemeinsam zu meistern, gestaltet sich als Herausforderung und vermischt sich stark.	Herausforderung im Homeoffice: Kinderbetreuung	Störfaktoren im Homeoffice: o Familienmitglieder, insbesondere Kinder o mehr Ablenkungen
Vereinbarkeit von Arbeit und Privatleben als große Herausforderung wenn man Kinder, gesundheitliche Homeschooling der Kinder und nebenbei arbeiten ist schwierig. Deshalb großer Unterschied je nach Familien-Situation, und eigenes Arbeitszimmer und Arbeitsumgebung.	Herausforderung im Homeoffice: Kinder, gesundheitliche Einschränkungen, pflegen	o Laute Nachbarn o Haustiere
Arbeit im Homeoffice auf kleinem Gartentisch als temporäre Lösung, solange zu zweit im Homeoffice gearbeitet wird. Zuvor am Küchentisch, wo man jedesmal die Sachen wegräumen musste.	Herausforderung im Homeoffice: Familien-Situation, Arbeitsplatz und -umgebung	3 Mal: keine (zusätzlichen) Störfaktoren im Homeoffice wahrgenommen
	Suboptimale Arbeitsumgebung im Homeoffice	Oftmals suboptimale Arbeitsbedingungen im Homeoffice

Figure 3.6: Extract of a paraphrase, a generalisation and a reduction of the sub-category "C1.1.1 Personal Environment".

Findings

In the following, the content of the interviews regarding boundary management, mental detachment from work in non-work time and worker well-being is presented, and the findings obtained from those interviews are revealed. Therefore, the initial division of the categories into worker and organisational perspective is restructured according to connections and dependencies among the content of the categories.

The interview material provided evidence for a connection between the level of autonomy and the well-being of employees. Therefore, these two categories and their relation are described first. Then, the findings from the remaining categories are presented with the various influences that they have on autonomy and well-being and their relation, and the resulting detachment strategies are described. The structure is shown in figure 4.1. Finally, the findings are summarised and three theses are derived, which will be further discussed in chapter 5

4.1 Autonomy & Well-Being

It was found in the interviews that the sudden change in work style caused by the Covid-19 pandemic increased the amount of autonomy and flexibility, which further impacted the mental detachment from work and the well-being of employees. There were some factors that had an influence on the (perceived) autonomy: On the one hand, there was flexibility in terms of place and time, on the other hand, there was the availability for work in non-work time.

Flexibility

The interviews showed that the amount of flexibility varied a lot between the different companies within the researched group, with some of them allowing for high flexibility and others being very patronising. However, it became apparent that the employees

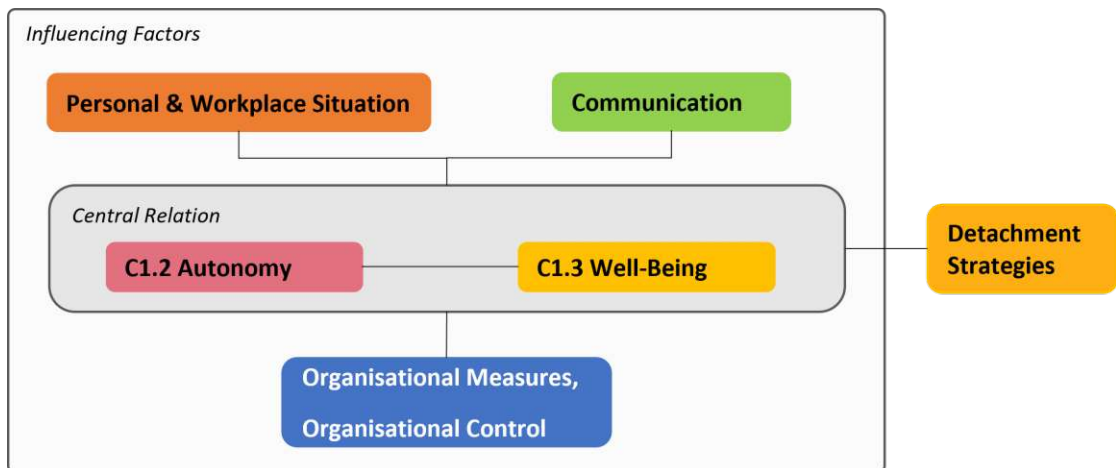


Figure 4.1: Connections between the individual categories of the category scheme.

in the study wanted a certain degree of flexibility when arranging and scheduling their working time, in order to improve their personal comfort and well-being.

"So the question is, what is it that people really like about working from home? [...] I think it's more the autonomy to decide when I start working than the actual 'working at home'. Of course, that's also pleasant, because you can quickly make yourself something to eat. But I don't think that's the only reason why people like to work from home, but rather this ability to start, or take a break, continue working in the evening, simply organise the day differently, autonomously." (W6 - 7-2)

The different boundary management types of segmentors, integrators and mixed types described in section 2.4.2 could also be found in the interviews. While some interviewees preferred to keep their schedules relatively fixed and to work at their office sites, others wished for a high degree of flexibility in terms of time and place, which allowed them to improve their boundary management between work and non-work and hence their well-being.

"Yes, the company has a flexitime system and [the weekend work] is included in this flexitime system and I have no problem with that. In return, I spend half a day in the garden or doing something else on a Tuesday or Wednesday. Or I leave early on Friday for the weekend, so I see that more as an advantage. I don't see this flexible working time [...] as a disadvantage, but rather as an advantage. There may be people who have a very fixed rhythm of life, who are expected to be flexible, who don't want that. I can see their problem, but for me it's an advantage." (W4 - 5-3)

The introduction of home work increased the flexibility in many organisations from the study. However, one of the huge challenges of flexible work and home work for the interviewees was to keep the right balance between flexibility and communication without destroying the social structures of a company, meaning that there often had to be a limitation on the amount of flexibility, e.g. by allowing a maximum of two home work

days per week. Such a limitation had been set by many companies with the introduction of a works agreement or a joint day of attendance, where the entire team gathered at the office. Most interviewees reported that they preferred to work some days per week at the office site anyway, due to the social interaction with their colleagues and other reasons.

Other limiting factors to flexibility were the company's area of operations, the personal job profile, agreements with colleagues on a certain division of tasks, or meetings. Furthermore, being in a leadership position also put the people in a slightly different position, as there could be all-in contracts which make the implementation of the personally desired amount of flexibility more difficult.

For enhancing the well-being of the employees, it seemed therefore to be important for organisations and people in leadership positions to be aware of the differences in personality regarding boundary management types and to take them into account when it comes to implementing supportive measures for the detachment process. From the employee perspective it was discovered to be important to communicate the personal needs in this context.

Availability

Regarding the availability for work-related tasks in non-work time, the employees from the study worked on weekends or evenings voluntarily because the autonomy and flexibility were more important to them than a strict boundary management, leading to a subjective increase in well-being. However, this development could be observed to be very extensive, with many workers being very demanding with their self-management and preferring the constant availability over not knowing what was going on at work. However, the interviewees also reported a feeling of frustration in this context.

"It's very hard for me not to think about work, especially when I don't meet my own expectations. But I try to distract myself with hobbies. Sometimes it's better, sometimes less, but if you don't finish something on Friday that should be finished on Monday, then I feel that my weekends are not as relaxed as they usually are. [...] It feels frustrating because somehow you feel like you're doing unpaid work and you're solving a problem that you would solve in working time." (W8 - 23-2, 25-2)

Still, the interviewed workers would also report a feeling of relieve when being able to deal with certain e-mails in their non-work time, although some superiors would question the constant availability of their subordinates. Then again, availability was sometimes expected or even required from employees, which at times left them with a feeling of distress. Some interviewees described this as a structural problem, when requiring the availability of certain persons in their non-work time due to a lack of substitutes. Also, availability was expected in certain situations or positions, like in leadership roles, and sometimes the expectations depended on the superiors and their personal view on availability.

"I think it's also important that people have a rest. At the same time, I wouldn't understand it if a manager said, 'I won't pick up the phone on Saturday and Sunday.'" (C7 - 43-2)

Therefore, the study indicated that it takes sensitisation on both sides to inform the people involved about drawbacks and potential dangers of constant availability for work in non-work time. It became apparent that there is a necessity for the creation of awareness for the value of recovery and for a change in the culture of the perceived necessity of constant availability in the long-term.

In the interview material, another major factor in this context were business mobile phones, as they enforced the constant availability of employees for work in non-work time. Workers reported that the use of business mobile phones in their private time impacts their detachment from work. Even if the workers would not pick up the phone in the evening or when being on holiday, it still triggered a thought process and the person would be subconsciously occupied with work for a while. A possible solution could be the implementation of a private surface on the business mobile phone, which turns off the business-related entities and allows only for private matters to be conducted.

"At our company, it is usually the case that every colleague, or almost every colleague, has a mobile phone. This leads to the fact - we have also had this study - that 50 % of the people do not have a second mobile phone, which at the same time means that I can always be reached. [...] There are even agreements that say it may be used privately. So we have an instruction that says "you now get a work phone, but it may also be used privately". These are already structural things that naturally flow into it, because the colleagues actually see it as an advantage to have a work phone, because they save costs. The question is whether I don't have the 20 € a month myself in order to have much more free time and quality of life." (C3 - 23-3, 24-2)

Well-Being

As described above, in terms of well-being, several downsides were opposing the additional flexibility in the study, such as a loss of structure and work rhythm, longer and more intense work hours, a decrease of social interaction, a way too strict self-management and a lack of mental detachment in non-work time due to the extended availability. Moreover, according to the interview material, a healthy arrangement of work and private life in the context of flexible work was also depending on the individual requirements and preferences of a person. The demands for mental, physical and social activities to achieve personal well-being varied for every individual. While some interviewees preferred to strictly separate work from their private life, others were able to achieve a greater compatibility of work and non-work when they had some freedom of managing their own work time and location. It also became clear that it was much easier for the interviewees to deal with the boundaries between work and private life when they were enjoying their work.

"Yes, basically, for me the parameter for health is quite classically the good old WHO definition, i.e. mental, physical and social well-being must be guaranteed. For this, it is necessary that there is enough space for social obligations and social pleasures, for physical and mental regeneration. This may also vary in life phases, who needs how much

of it, but the healthy balance is always the goal, where this has sufficient space depending on life phases and needs." (C1 - 25-2)

Another big issue regarding well-being is the self-management, as the employees from the researched group tended to put a lot of pressure and strain on themselves. This indicates that employees have to learn to know their limits and to develop a long-term view on the consumption of their own resources, for allowing them to find a healthy balance. When people have more self-determination and are authorised to make more decisions on their own working routine, the study indicated that this also implies that they have more responsibility on taking better care of themselves and on voicing their needs.

"This short-sighted self-management, where I now just get what I can, is not even efficient now, but certainly not in the long run. If such a medium-term perspective were common sense, then employees would not be satisfied with partially horrible ergonomics at home. By that I don't mean that companies have to equip everyone with top-of-the-range office chairs ... no, you also have to set yourself up, look, does the height fit? How do I sit there? How often do I actually change my sitting position? How often do I really take a break from the screen? If these little things become as self-regulating as the bigger questions, how often do I need a holiday? [...] How often do I need a break? How much private life do I need to keep my health, my social and psychological balance intact? That would simply be my great wish, the medium-term perspective of employees and leadership in the management of very individual resources." (C1 - 36-2)

4.2 Influencing Factors

The interviews further showed that several of the categories had an impact on this relation between autonomy and well-being described above. It was found in the study that various categories had an influence on the boundary management preferences and the well-being. The following section is looking into these circumstances and the influence of the individual categories on the autonomy and the well-being of the employees.

4.2.1 Personal & Workplace Situation

The personal surroundings of an employee played a key role in the boundary management, the mental detachment from work and the overall well-being. The people from the researched group were facing different challenges at home, with varying influence factors such as family members, pets or noisy neighbours. The situation was especially difficult for the interviewees who have young children or dependent elderly people at their homes.

Many interviewees also reported that their workplace and their infrastructure at home were not ideal. Often, the space was tight and the quality of the office furniture at home was insufficient. While many companies already provided a lot of high quality equipment for home work, some employees expressed a wish for better support with the equipment. Concerning tight space, there often was additional organisational effort required, when sharing one home work space with family members.

"So home work itself, I appreciate the advantages very much, but you really have to look at it in a differentiated way. Especially now, as it was in the lockdown, I mean, there is a difference between sitting alone in a room at home and having an adequately furnished workplace where I can sit down, a nice office chair, and have a stable WLAN and can work unhindered. Or do I sit at home with my husband and children, the children use the infrastructure, and then I have to sit at the kitchen table, in the kitchen chair [...]" (C2 - 46-2)

It turned out that it was useful for the detachment process not having to use the private laptop, but rather being provided with an extra laptop for work, as the individuals reported to be better able to switch between work and private life. Moreover, the material from the interviews revealed the need of incorporating the personal situation and requirements of an employee into organisational decisions concerning work style, location and time. Also, a good infrastructure had a positive impact on the well-being.

Attitude

With attitude towards flexible work and home work influencing the personal autonomy as well as potentially the autonomy of subordinates, this category is another interesting factor in this context. In regards to an individual's attitude towards flexible work and home work, there was quite a variety of opinions. While many interviewees desired the possibility of flexible work and found their work tasks very suitable for working from home, there was still a great amount of scepticism especially among the older and long-time employees. The pandemic has shown many possibilities and advantages of flexible work and home work, like increased flexibility concerning location and time, better compatibility of work with private matters such as childcare duties, time savings due to the decreased commute, and reduced peer pressure concerning work time.

However, the study indicated that it is important to trigger a fundamental change in perspective among the sceptical employees to create a better understanding of flexible work. The reduction of the boundaries between work and non-work requires further sensitisation, not at least because of the increased demands regarding self-management. Also, the meaningful use of flexible work was dependent on the framework conditions, the department, the superior and the specific work tasks of an individual.

"Yes, you can see that we have very long-established colleagues here on site, and some of them - and this hurts me a little bit inside - think that "if you're on site, you perform", and that's not true. I often work more from home than here on site, and I would like our company to change this view in one or two years. You can see that it's already better now." (C2 - 50-2)

4.2.2 Communication

An additional stressor in the context of flexible work and home work, and an influencing factor of the autonomy-well-being relation was communication. Here, the interview material indicated that the extent of flexible work was essential: If there was too much

flexible work and home work, the communication, discussion, and social interaction between the employees was affected negatively, which further led to reduced well-being of the employees through the lack of information and the uncertainties. In general, an increased amount of communication and a higher degree of transparency was necessary when employees were working from home, as the interviewees reported communication and planning to be much more time-consuming in that setting.

"As I said, I get 30 % across on the phone. Makes three times the time I need to make the same exchange [...] Time, time, time. Time to manage the increased time that the same quality of communication requires." (C1- 17-2)

Good communication was also important for evaluating the performance and well-being of employees. However, interviewees reported that in online-meetings, the feedback from the colleagues in meetings was often missing, making it harder for the people to understand and to be understood correctly. The interviews pointed out the desire for regular face-to-face meetings and joint days of office attendance despite flexible work, to enable better communication and improve the social interaction within the departments and teams.

"[...] what is missing on both sides is just the resonance. For me as a manager who senses that "maybe he/she needs something" or "no, she is not quite on board yet". Speaking of online lectures, [...] I immediately notice "who is not yet on board". The response is lacking, and conversely, I also experienced afterwards that my staff sometimes lacked orientation. And that was not due to a lack of content-related communication [...]" (C1 - 18-3)

On the organisational perspective, the potentially decreased communication and social interaction caused by flexible working arrangements also led to a lack of innovation and solutions for complex problems within the researched group, as there were less discussions and interchange of ideas. Again, the introduction of joint days of office attendance and time-slots deliberately intended for social interaction could provide a solution for that.

4.2.3 Organisational Support Measures

The companies from the interview material had already implemented several measures and strategies that helped the employees with the detachment from work in non-work time or supported their well-being in another way. The interview material provided a range of measures in this context which directly or indirectly had an influence on the autonomy and the well-being of the employees. In this section, these measures will be described and analysed from both the organisational and the worker perspective.

Policies

In the analysis process, it became apparent, that the organisations used a variety of different support measures. First, there was the legal framework that was set by the government, as described in section [2.5.1](#) which was then implemented and partially

refined by the individual companies. With the new rise of the home work setting caused by the pandemic, work agreements have been signed in many companies, defining, regulating, and communicating the amount of home work and other specifications in the context of flexible work and home work, and allowing for an improved predictability and better planning capabilities from both perspectives.

In the home work setting, an even higher level of transparency and clarity was required by the employees from the study. This could also be achieved by introducing such works agreements. Still, in some companies there were no official regulations or the arrangements had to be individually discussed with the superior. It has become evident that a lack of such clear regulations created insecurity among the employees and had a negative impact on the employees' well-being and ability of detachment.

"But this surprising and demanding thing is something that really drains me and takes me away. So I would like to have regulations, and I would like to have something in my hand that I can say 'not like this, but in another way'." (C4 - 30-2)

Although many interviewees considered it their own responsibility to take proper care of their personal well-being when working from home, the research indicated that the companies also have a certain accountability for the employee welfare. Therefore, they should provide a good infrastructural framework in which the employees then have to refine to their own needs and requirements. Still, it is necessary that the employees communicate their needs properly. *"But I say here - and I don't only mean this because I am a works council member, but also within the framework of the duty of care - the company has a great responsibility. And at the end of the day, if the company fulfils its responsibility properly, you can say "now, of course, you also have it as an employee in the company". But for me, the company has the highest responsibility here, namely also for the consequences, health effects, and, and, and. I believe that companies need a lot of sensitisation to the fact that it does something to colleagues when they are constantly confronted with work in their free time." (C3 - 22-2)*

Training and Other Support

Moreover, in most companies from the research there were training programs for employees, as well as programs specially tailored for people in leadership positions to create awareness and improve their soft skills in areas such as communication or employee management. The interview material indicated, that it is important especially for leadership positions to gain a certain degree of sensitisation in terms of flexible working and the removing of boundaries between work and non-work. The leaders can then pass on their knowledge to their subordinates.

While some companies from the study already provided training regarding the physical and mental balance, there seemed to be room for improvement in many organisations. On the other hand, it has also been mentioned that the organisations cannot force their employees to make use of the training possibilities when they are not willing to by themselves.

"You can't force people to do this, but of course it is accepted, especially and hopefully by those who are particularly affected by it. As I said, moving breaks, back training, etc., there are also seminars for mental training - with us, every employee also has the possibility of taking up to six coaching hours if mental difficulties arise." (C6 - 17-2)

Apart from training programs, several other organisational support possibilities emerged in the interviews, such as providing access to occupational psychologists and physicians. Another important asset in a company's toolbox is a works council, as organisations can get anonymous and therefore most honest feedback from the employees, which allows for a better understanding of their needs. Furthermore, the study showed that it was also helpful for the employees' detachment from work, when the organisations were providing the computer hardware, as well as the resources for redirecting telephone calls when being on leave.

A good organisational understanding of the importance of breaks and working time arrangements has also been mentioned as being helpful for the employees. Moreover, a respectful communication and awareness of the detachment topic can improve the chances of employees speaking up for themselves and their needs.

Control Mechanisms

With the relocation of work away from the office site and to the home environment, the performance of the employees cannot be controlled by observing their attendance anymore and another way of control has to be found. While some superiors from the study relied on a thorough basis of trust between them and their employees, other superiors felt the need of a stricter method of control and therefore did not want their subordinates to work from home or they imposed an extensive documentation of the conducted work tasks on them. However, the research showed that this needs to change due to several reasons: From the employee perspective, a lack of trust from their leaders had a negative impact on their well-being and their performance, as mutual trust was mentioned to be a prerequisite for a well-functioning home work arrangement.

"Exactly, that is really a basis of trust and I think that is also the most important prerequisite for a system like home work to work." (W2 - 19-2)

From the organisational perspective, extensive documentation impaired the work outcome and took up a lot of time and resources which could be used better elsewhere.

"It goes so far that you say, now you not only record the time, but you even write down what you have done. But I honestly believe that this is excessive, because we do so much documentation that no one reads anymore, and that would not justify the effort, because you put so much effort into it, you put 10 % effort into it to uncover 2 % misconduct, and then it is no longer economical." (C5 - 45-2)

Therefore, the attendance-based view on performance, which is still very prominent in Austria, should rather change to a profit orientation, according to the interview material, together with a thorough foundation of trust. The study indicates that this

could diminish the negative impacts of monitoring and also strengthen the perceived autonomy of the employees. The interview material has shown that the trust in the employees had improved significantly and that it could be further enhanced by regular interaction between superiors and subordinates.

Support through Leaders

Moreover, it was found in the interviews that leaders could act as role models for the employees regarding the self-management in terms of working time, breaks and other habits. Therefore, sensitised leaders could support their employees on the one hand by practising a sustainable use of their own resources, and on the other hand by paying attention to the behaviour of their subordinates and intervening if necessary. In that way, a sustainable organisational culture could spiral down through the levels of hierarchy within a company.

"Making people aware that firstly you want them healthy at work, and secondly you want efficient work and that this is simply only possible if you manage yourself healthily." (C1 - 33-3)

"They know that I really mean it and they see that I get a lot of work done because I really take breaks and because I really switch off when I go out, and because I really just let it go when nothing works on a given day. So setting an example is something that you can teach some managers well, that it has much, much, much more effect than you think at first glance." (C1 - 35-2)

It turned out in the interviews, that it is important that leaders have a certain level of confidence in their employees and are open to try various ways, as the success of a method depended on the needs of the individual employees. A good way of finding out about these personal needs would be to incorporate the topics of mental detachment and general well-being into the annual performance reviews of the employees, as a personal conversation allows for a deeper perception of a person's situation.

Swoliba

Another focus of the research in this thesis is on the use of the mobile application "swoliba" for performing the mental detachment from work. Several interviewees reported to use some of the exercises proposed by the application and found them helpful for the detachment, so that they had included them already in their daily routine. One major advantage of the mobile application were the regular reminders on the exercises and also on making breaks from work. Especially people without much prior knowledge on the topic of mental disengagement from work and work-life-balance were provided with a good basic knowledge, giving them a low-threshold access to the exercises. People also mentioned that the exercises for mindfulness would help them to handle difficult or uncomfortable situations. Even when people would not conduct the proposed exercise in the end, there was still some kind of structure introduced to the daily routine.

"I have set it so that a message is actually sent to me at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., with "Take a break". And that's right, because otherwise I would forget about the breaks." (W2 - 12-2)

However, some people did not like this additional structure and rejected the application for this reason. They felt that the application was very time-consuming and they were a little frustrated with the regular reminders. Furthermore, some found an application inappropriate for the purpose of detachment from work, because they already spent a lot of time on their phone and would prefer another channel to have some variety. Therefore, it seems important not to make the use of a mobile application obligatory for supporting the work-life-balance, as the added value of such depends strongly on the character and the personal preferences of a person.

"I believe that this can be very useful for individuals who use it as private persons, because I really know enough people, I have met clients, who have difficulties with precisely this structuring, with remembering. But I think it is very important to make the access very, very free. In other words, not to force it in any way. I think for all those who think like I do, I already have a lot of structure and a lot of timing and I also build my little sources of strength into my daily work. I would rather create reactance effects, i.e. "No, please not another thing"." (C1 - 38-2)

4.3 Detachment Strategies

After analysing the categories "autonomy", "well-being" and their relation, as well as the influencing factors in this context, such as an individual's personal situation or the organisational support measures, several strategies for the mental detachment from work could be identified from the interview material. It could be noted that employees seemed to be more content with home work, when they could make use of physical separation, i.e. when they have an extra room or a dedicated space within their home for doing home work. Additionally, the detachment from work during holidays was experienced to be harder with a lack of physical distance to the workplace. Some employees were content about work blending in with their private life, while others expressed a desire for a better and more conscious detachment from work when working from home.

"But it is not much worse at home, because then I just close my study door and then I rarely go into the room for any other reason. So that's really my work room." (W7 - 12-2)

Moreover, the detachment from work depended on several factors, such as personality traits and self-expectations. The interviews also indicated that it may be harder for people to disengage from work, when their private activities tended to be similar to the type of work. Furthermore, it often was easier for younger people to detach from work, as the work-life-balance was of greater importance in the younger generations. It also turned out to be beneficial for the well-being when there was some kind of planability in the work routine.

Other strategies that had been mentioned for putting an end to the workday included doing sports or leaving the home for going for a walk or for walking the dog. The rituals

further included shutting down the computer and the phone and putting them away, or getting together with the partner to have a cup of coffee and not talk about work. Moreover, a change from the inner attitude was mentioned, meaning that the computer would be shut down and the workday would be stopped very consciously with a shift in the mindset.

"But I am consciously getting out of work. Well, you can do things consciously. So I transcend, and that's also a... I do that with passion. And that's also how you get into the hour, into this energy, it sounds so esoteric now, but it's not at all. And you also get out of it consciously. And you can also do that when I consciously pack everything up if I don't have my own office, or when I'm at home and say, OK, that's it, close the office door and consciously go out. I think that's more of an inner attitude, and that's when it happens." (W3 - 15-2)

For starting the workday, the interviewees reported to go to a certain room in the house, away from other family members, or to leave the house for some time to accompany the partner on their way to work and then return home for conducting their own work. During holidays, people would detach from work with implementing a diversion on their phone for work calls and work mails.

4.4 Summary of the Findings

All in all, several theses can be derived from those findings: First, the interviews indicated that there is still a great lack of awareness and a lot of sensitisation is required in the area of flexible work, boundary management and mental detachment from work in non-work time. This lack of awareness occurs on both the employee perspective, as well as on the organisational view. On the one hand, it would be beneficial in the long-term for all involved parties if the employees received some kind of sensitisation, in order to improve their often way too strict self-management. On the other hand, especially the organisations and the leaders, but also the employees need to be sensitised about the impacts of extensive availability of the employees, organisational control mechanisms, the influence of the personal situation of the employees, and the necessity of support in the boundary management and mental detachment process as described above. Furthermore, the material indicated that there needs to be more awareness concerning communication, because the analysis showed that people need a certain amount of information, in order to achieve a good level of well-being. The increased amount of communication is particularly important for people who are working from home, as they do not have physical contact to their colleagues and their superiors. The interviews showed a decrease in collaboration and a lack of innovation and complex problem solving when working from home over a longer period. There need to be taken countermeasures to prevent this from happening, and awareness for the necessity of good communication needs to be created.

Second, the material clearly confirmed what was already known from literature: Employees have very individual requirements regarding boundary management strategies and mental detachment preferences. Each person has different demands for obtaining a good work-

life-balance and well-being, and for achieving their own boundary management. It is important for the organisations to be aware of these individual differences of their employees' needs and to also support them individually.

And third, this necessity of sensitisation and support on a very individual level indicates the need for customised solutions, meaning that the creation of awareness and the support of the employees should be done very close to the employees, i.e. by the respective superiors of the employees. The leaders are an important asset for achieving a good level of well-being on both sides and a healthy work atmosphere.



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Discussion

The increase of flexible work in the past years poses new challenges to employees and companies. The change in work style is further driven by the Covid-19 pandemic, leading to a huge rise in the amount of people working from home (Bachmayer & Klotz, 2021). However, literature shows that this development is not only positive for the employees. With the higher levels of autonomy, employees tend to have a very strict self-management, including the often falsely perceived necessity of being available for work in non-work hours (Mazmanian et al., 2013). The research for this thesis showed similar findings. People reported to work more intense and longer hours when working from home. They often also reported the feeling of having to be available for work in non-work hours.

One consequence of this development is a decrease of the boundaries between work and non-work (Park et al., 2011; Allen et al., 2021). However, there is still a great need of recovery and mental detachment from work for ensuring the employees' well-being in the long-term (Sonnetag & Fritz, 2007). Regarding the first part of the research question: *Which measures can the worker take to establish and maintain the boundaries between work and non-work?*, there have been found several different strategies and tactics. Overall, the different types of strategies proposed by Kreiner and described in section 2 could be found in the material as well. Physical separation was often used by employees in the researched group, for creating and maintaining the boundary between work and non-work, e.g. by having a dedicated office space at home. Moreover, the detachment strategies differed, depending on the age, the personality traits and the self-expectations of the employees. While some interviewees reported to use temporal tactics, such as starting and ending the work day at a specific time, others used communicative tactics by discussing the preferred work hours with their colleagues. Common measures for detachment also included sport activities, completely shutting down the work-related technology devices, or performing social activities with family and friends. All in all, employees can choose from a wide range of detachment strategies, provided that they are aware of their individual requirements and necessities in this context.

As described in chapter 4, a major finding of this thesis is the great necessity of the creation of awareness among employees as well as organisations for individual mental detachment, recovery, and that boundaries between work and non-work need to be actively managed. It has been found that the personal situation and the situation at the workplace have a significant impact on a person's way of dealing with the work-non-work boundary and the detachment from work. The impact of influence factors at home such as family members is known from literature, covered by the term "work-family interference" or "family-work conflict".

Solis (2017) described the family-work conflict to be higher for people with more family responsibilities. This could also be observed to apply to the participants from the qualitative research, with employees having more difficulties when having children, elderly relatives or other people in their homes. The findings from this thesis also point out that sensitisation programs for increasing awareness and knowledge about these topics would be beneficial for both sides, by supporting the worker and their individual measures on the one hand, and by facilitating the organisational support on the other hand.

The research further showed a negative impact of the often non-ideal work equipment at people's homes on the well-being and health of the employees working from home. Similar observations have already been made by Aborg et al. (2002), pointing out in a study that the physical working conditions, such as lighting and ergonomics were imperfect when performing home work and the work equipment at employees' homes was insufficient. Moreover, the employees from the study of Aborg et al. worked longer hours and made less breaks when working from home. A re-evaluation after a period of two years showed that the amount of breaks had decreased further over time, also indicating a wrong approach of self-management among the employees when working from home. As suggested by the researchers, it might be beneficial for the employees to be provided with support by professionals when designing and setting up the home work space (Aborg et al., 2002). Companies could offer consultation regarding ergonomics and working conditions at home to increase awareness and improve the well-being of their employees. A special focus should be on the self-management of the employees for reducing the unnecessary and self-imposed pressure.

Regarding the extensive autonomy, the findings from the qualitative research also reflect the existing knowledge from the literature. The autonomy paradox (Mazmanian et al., 2013) as described in section 2.2 could be found in the interview material, with people reporting to voluntarily stay connected to their work instead of detaching from work in non-work time, in order to improve their well-being in the short-term. In this context, employees and organisations need sensitisation to learn about the impact of extended availability on workers too. Moreover, Kowalski and Swanson (2005) describe the positive impact of trust on teleworkers in general, which can be enhanced by giving more autonomy to the workers. Therefore, a focus in this context should be on building trust between employees and organisations.

Another important aspect in this context is communication. It has been found in the researched group that a lack of information causes insecurity and reduces the well-being

of the employees. On the other hand, good communication improves the situation for employees as well as leaders. Similar findings have been made by Kowalski and Swanson (2005), who declared communication as a critical success factor for teleworking programs. Furthermore, they describe a relation of positive reinforcement between communication and trust, meaning that better communication leads to enhanced trust and vice versa. According to the researchers, the introduction of formal policies is also important to improve the situation. Moreover, it is part of the manager's duties to achieve communication among employees and between leaders and employees in both directions, on the social as well as on the work level (Kowalski & Swanson 2005). Furthermore, the researchers pointed out the necessity of training for employees and organisations to be able to deal with the new way of working.

Additionally, the research clearly confirmed that mental detachment from work is very subjective and a good boundary management is individually different for everyone. This has already been described by several other researchers, pointing out the importance of the boundary management strategies to fit the employees individual preferences in order to be effective (Kreiner et al. 2009 Bogaerts et al. 2018 Allen et al. 2021). This further highlights the necessity of adjusting the personal work environment and support measures individually to the employees' requirements, in order to achieve a good well-being, meaning that managerial support needs to be adjusted to the individual needs.

For the second part of the research question: *Which measures can the organisations set to support the employees with the detachment process and the boundary management?*, this means that the foundation for a good support is the creation of awareness and the sensitisation of the organisations and their representatives. In the qualitative research of this thesis, there has been found a positive impact of managerial support on the detachment process of the employees, meaning that leaders and superiors have a powerful position in this context.

Therefore, the organisational support should happen through the leaders and superiors. The qualitative research showed that it is the people closest to the employees who can achieve the biggest contribution to their well-being. Again, Kowalski and Swanson (2005) point out the positive influence that managers can have on their subordinates. As described earlier, trust between superiors and subordinates is an important factor in this context as well. All in all, this means that a proper foundation of trust, a good communication, and sensitised employees and organisational representatives are critical success factors for providing a good and individual support in mental detachment and boundary management.

5.1 Implications

The research and the literature indicate, that there is an ongoing development towards a stronger empowerment and increased autonomy among the employees. This leads to a higher responsibility of the employees regarding their self-management. Hence, employees

need to be made aware of all the impacts that this development has on their personal work-life-balance and their well-being in the long-term. They need to be sensitised to be able to make healthy decisions about their work style and their boundary management. The employees themselves need to find and choose a suitable strategy for their individual detachment from work in non-work time.

The organisations on the other hand, also need to be made aware of the impacts of home work and extended autonomy on their employees. They need to know about downsides and how to overcome them. Furthermore, it is important, that the employees are encouraged to communicate their personal needs concerning boundary management, meaning that trust is an important asset. Awareness on all levels is the key in this context and the organisational representatives, such as leaders and superiors, play a special role in the implementation and realisation of the flexible and home work style.

5.2 Limitations & Future Research

The researched group in this study consisted of users of the mobile application "swoliba", meaning that there might be a slight bias within this group, as all of the interview participants have already had some contact with the topic of a healthy work-life-balance and mental detachment and were interested in this field of research. Moreover, the researched group consisted of eight employees and eight company representatives, which is a relatively small sample. Therefore, the investigation of this thesis should be repeated in a different and bigger setting for reevaluating the outcome and for verifying the results.

Although there is not much literature on the positive impact of leaders acting as role models, this influence appeared in the researched group and should also be looked at in more detail in future research.

The qualitative research for this thesis was conducted right after the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, implying that most of the employees and companies were new to remote work and especially home work. It might be interesting to find out more about detachment and boundary management strategies once the people got used to this new way of work and have implemented a certain routine in the handling of the boundaries.

5.3 Conclusion

The findings from this thesis indicated that there is a lack of awareness regarding detachment from work in non-work time and boundary management. Apparently, employees often did not know about the negative impacts of their behaviour and their strict self-management on their own long-term well-being. Furthermore, organisations were not aware of the positive and negative influences of extended availability, trust and communication practices on their employees well-being and ability to detach from work in non-work time.

This lack of awareness needs to be conquered in order to improve the personal well-being of the employees in the long-term. According to the findings, a suitable way of supporting the employees with the detachment process and the boundary management is by sensitising the leaders and superiors, who have the ability of providing individually adjusted support for their employees. They are able to learn about their employees' needs and to implement equivalent support measures.

Therefore, sensitisation programs are required to create and improve awareness about the aforementioned issues. These programs could be integrated in the daily working life by companies through offering specialised training programs and information events for employees and leaders.



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Appendix

Interview-Guide for the Worker Perspective

Momentane Situation:

- In welcher Position sind Sie tätig und welche Tätigkeiten führen Sie dabei durch?
- Erzählen Sie mir bitte von einem typischen Arbeitstag in den letzten Monaten.
 - Arbeiten Sie im Homeoffice? Wie geht es Ihnen dabei? (wird HO/digitale Kommunikation als Stressfaktor wahrgenommen, oder erleichtert es gewisse Abläufe?)
 - Wie geeignet empfinden Sie das HO für Ihre Tätigkeiten?
 - Wie flexibel ist Ihre Arbeit hinsichtlich der Arbeitszeit und des Ortes?
- Haben Sie vor Corona bereits im Homeoffice gearbeitet?
Wollen bzw. sollen Sie auch in Zukunft so arbeiten?
- Wie sieht Ihr Arbeitsplatz im Büro oder zu Hause aus?
Einflussfaktoren, Störfaktoren, ...
- Wie geht es Ihnen mit der Grenzziehung zwischen Arbeit und Nicht-Arbeit? (-> Präferenzen Integrierer/Separierer)
 - Wie teilen Sie sich die Arbeitszeit ein – auch hinsichtlich der Pausen? Gibt es dazu Vorgaben der Führungskraft?
 - Wie zeichnen Sie Ihre Arbeitszeit auf?
 - Wie fließt die Arbeit ins Privatleben? (z.B.: E-Mails lesen am Weg zur Arbeit)
 - Wie fließt das Privatleben in die Arbeit? (z.B.: Private Nachrichten während Arbeit)
 - Wenn die Grenzen verschwimmen: Wie geht es Ihnen damit? (wie wird das Verschwimmen der Grenzen empfunden?)
 - Wenn die Grenzen zu viel verschwimmen: Was haben Sie bereits versucht um die Grenzen zu verstärken?
 - Welche Strategien wenden Sie an, um im Homeoffice in die Arbeits-Rolle zu wechseln und umgekehrt? Verwenden Sie dafür bestimmte Symbole/...?
 - Wie bewerten Sie die Situation? Wie soll es in Zukunft sein?
- Welche Regeln gibt es zum Arbeiten im Homeoffice? Wie werden diese kommuniziert? (klare Regeln, offene Kommunikation, wie vorhersehbar/verständlich sind die Regeln)
 - Was (glauben Sie) wird von Ihnen erwartet? Was ist üblich? Was wird gemacht?

- Welche Voraussetzungen und Erwartungen gibt es zur Verfügbarkeit außerhalb der Arbeitszeit?
- Wie ist Ihre Wahrnehmung zu KollegInnen? Wie gehen die damit um?
- Wie geht Ihre Führungskraft damit um? (-> "Vorbildwirkung")

Unterstützungsmaßnahmen

- Welche Unterstützung brauchen Sie vom Unternehmen für die Abgrenzung? Was wünschen Sie sich vom Unternehmen? (welche Ressourcen?)
 - Wo sehen Sie die Verantwortung für Ihr Wohlbefinden im Homeoffice? ("Wer ist dafür verantwortlich, dass es mir gut geht?" ich selbst, Kollegen, Führungskraft, Unternehmen, rechtlicher Rahmen?)
 - Welche Kontrollmechanismen gibt es im Homeoffice?
- Welche Unterstützung und welche Angebote vom Unternehmen gibt es bereits zur Abgrenzung von der Arbeit im Homeoffice? (z.B.: betriebliche Gesundheitsförderung) Wie hilfreich waren diese?
- Wie wurde die App "swoliba" als Unterstützung empfunden?

Abschließend: Was ist dazu in dem Bereich sonst noch relevant?

Interview-Guide for the Organisational Perspective

1. Teil: Momentane Situation:

- Wie ist die aktuelle Situation im Unternehmen? Gibt es Homeoffice? Welches Ausmaß?
- Gibt es spezielle Regeln zu Homeoffice im Betrieb/im Team? Warum wurde diese Regeln Ihrer Meinung nach überhaupt notwendig?
- Gibt es Betriebsvereinbarungen oder andere rechtliche Vereinbarungen zu Homeoffice/mobiles Arbeiten (rechtlicher Rahmen)?
- Welche (technische und ev. gesundheitsfördernde) Infrastruktur wird MitarbeiterInnen zur Verfügung gestellt?
- Wie war die Situation mit Homeoffice vor der Covid-19-Pandemie? (langer Prozess oder ad hoc Umsetzung)
- Bei der Planung und Implementierung von Homeoffice im Betrieb: Was war positiv, was eher negativ/schwierig? Was hätte rückblickend anders verlaufen müssen, um diese negativen Punkte, die Sie gerade genannt haben, zu minimieren? Welchen persönlichen Eindruck hatten sie dabei?
- Wie haben die MitarbeiterInnen auf die Möglichkeit von Homeoffice im Betrieb reagiert? Waren Sie in den Prozess miteingebunden? (Feedback von MA, Kolleg*innen etc.)

2. Teil: Herausforderungen:

- Sie sagten vorhin, es kam zu Probleme: Was war dabei besonders herausfordernd? Wie sind Sie/die Organisation diesen Herausforderungen begegnet? Welches Feedback haben sie von MitarbeiterInnen erhalten?
- Welche Rolle spielen Vertrauen und Kontrolle im HO?
- Inwieweit hat sich die Kommunikation verändert?
- Erreichbarkeit – wie wird es gehandhabt? Was ist bei Ihnen üblich? Wie handhabt das die Führungskraft?
- Wie viele Personen sind zurzeit im Homeoffice? Wo finden die sozialen Prozesse statt? Gibt es Raum für informelle Kommunikation trotz HO?

3. Teil: Gesundheit und Wohlbefinden:

- Wie definieren Sie „gesunde Vereinbarkeit von Arbeit und Privatleben“ für das Unternehmen/die Abteilung/sich selbst?
- Wo sehen Sie die Verantwortung für einen gesunde Vereinbarkeit von Arbeit und Privatleben der MitarbeiterInnen?
- Welche Angebote gibt es vom Unternehmen (Training, Sensibilisierung, Vorträge...) zum Arbeiten im Homeoffice/zur Abgrenzung von der Arbeit/...? Wie wird das von den MitarbeiterInnen angenommen?

Abschlussfragen:

- Gibt es etwas, dass Sie in Bezug auf das Thema HO besonders wichtig finden, und über das wir noch nicht gesprochen haben? (Wenn ja, kurz ausführen lassen)
- Wenn Sie 2 Jahre in die Zukunft blicken, wie sehen Sie die Situation in Bezug auf HO? -> Idealbild

Category Scheme

C1 Main Category 1: Worker's Boundary Management				
Category	Inductive Sub-Category	Definition of the Category	Anchor Example	Coding Rules
C1.1	Personal Situation	C1.1.1 Personal Environment	Personal workspace at home, "What I noticed, or my personal perception was, that infrastructure, work the people who were, or still are, predominantly environment, and influencing working from home, is to note how they are factors.	
C1.1	Personal Situation	C1.1.2 Attitude towards Flexible Work	The person's comprehension "But if I want to recruit someone new for my company, or if I recruit a... most people ask what flexible work, or on the other hand work and flexible work, as well goodies, what does the company offer, and it has the opposite. as potential difficulties with the already become clear that you are not really attractive home work setting. Personal if you cannot offer flexitime, especially in the salaried background in context of home sector." (C2 - 11) work and flexible work.	If the text passage states the reason for the personal scepticism towards home office as the loss of control over the employees, then this should rather be assigned to "2.2.1 Behaviour Control".
C1.1	Personal Situation	C1.1.3 Detachment Strategies and Rites	Rites, symbols, strategies that the worker uses, in order to immediately after work, which can be a walk for half an hour or strength training, and that helps me to transition between work and non-work. Perceived necessity of detaching from work	Concrete strategies and approaches for detaching from work. The general detachment topic.
C1.2	Autonomy	C1.2.1 Availability	Necessity or perceived necessity of being available for work in non-work time, from especially with regard to and/or colleagues. This breaks". (C1 - 32) category is looking into the autonomy-paradox, covering the workers' autonomy regarding self-management and (perceived) expectations.	"And the second thing is that on an individual level we observe a very high level of self-expectation, such as at the weekends, or on holiday. That is, no General expectations towards the worker.
C1.2	Autonomy	C1.2.2 Flexibility	Flexibility in terms of work time and place, self-management of themselves have rigid working hours. First of all, this is work time from the worker due to shift work, which half of the workforce has. The organisational flexibility; does means that we tend to be very conservative. In the worker work remotely, ...? contrast to many other companies. Our main Also in this category: lack of headquarters in Vienna has been living flexibility and therefore lack of autonomy; limitations of flexibility	"In general, it is the case with us that the factories General statements regarding the possibilities of organising and non-work. The managing work and non-work. Concrete formulations of works agreements or other regulations and what is permitted; what is the concrete content of the works agreement)

C1.3	Well-Being	C1.3.2 Work-Life-Balance	<p>Work-Life-Balance and general "I think it's really hard to find a regular rhythm. I only If the passage is about flexibility, but handling of the Work-Non-work see it as dangerous when it's holiday time, that is, the focus is rather on how the Boundary from the worker when colleagues are on holiday, and then maybe you person feels about it and how they regarding its influence on the don't have the rhythm and pick up the phone and do are handling this work and life well-being of the worker. one or the other task. (C3 - 4)</p> <p>Personal preferences of integration/separation of work and non-work, blurring boundaries.</p>	<p>If the passage contains impacts of the work-nonwork-boundary management on the well-being, then it should be categorised as "1.3.2 Work-Life-Balance". Other work-nonwork boundary management topics belong to category "1.1.3 Detachment Strategies and Rites".</p>
C1.3	Well-Being	C1.3.3 Responsibility for Well-Being	<p>Responsibility for the workers' "But for me, the company has the highest well-being when the worker is responsibility here, namely also for the consequential working from home. effects, health effects, and, and, and." (C3 - 22)</p>	

C2 Main Category 2: Organisational Support in Boundary Management				
Category	Inductive Sub-Category	Definition of the Category	Anchor Example	Coding Rules
C2.1	Organisational Measures	C2.1.1 Work Environment and Infrastructure	<p>Workspace and work environment at the organisation, as well as the physical and virtual infrastructure for work that is provided by the organisation. Furthermore, the staff situation and the corporate culture are covered by this category.</p> <p>"But I also have a very quiet environment in the office, we have an office where a maximum of four of us sit inside at the same time. Now in Corona times alone or a maximum of two when we were in the office." (W7 - 11)</p>	<p>Infrastructure and facilities provided by the employer. Workplace at the employer's.</p> <p>But also: HOW is the work done, e.g. are meetings held online or in presence, ...</p>
C2.1	Organisational Measures	C2.1.2 Policies	<p>Policies, guidelines, frameworks, agreements, mobile work/home work and everyone within a certain activity and experience being, collaboration, and detachment.</p> <p>"Clear frameworks means a level playing field for (how are regulations/policies/... group. So to speak, activity group and seniority. I have communication is assigned to the category "2.3.1 Work-related Communication".</p> <p>"We have flexitime, no more core time, that was also a wish of the colleagues that we implemented a few years ago." (C3 - 4)</p>	<p>Communication regarding policies (how are regulations/policies/... Other communication is assigned to the category "2.3.1 Work-related Communication".</p> <p>Concrete content of works agreements/regulations/policies regarding flexibility belongs to the category "1.2.2 Flexibility"</p>
C2.1	Organisational Measures	C2.1.3 Support through Leaders	<p>Behaviour of leaders and head of the company regarding the support of workers with self-management and work-life- to take no break at all, really no break at all, and just balance, or the implementation sit in front of the computer for 10 hours, with just of policies. Role-model effects going to the toilet under high pressure and back and impacts on the workers. again? No! Where do you draw the line. You don't Communication in terms of allow everything as a leader, but where is the line? work and workstyle. Also: lack Where does it make sense to draw the line, and so on of support.</p> <p>"How far do I have to go? Would you allow someone to take no break at all, really no break at all, and just sit in front of the computer for 10 hours, with just of policies. Role-model effects going to the toilet under high pressure and back and impacts on the workers. again? No! Where do you draw the line. You don't Communication in terms of allow everything as a leader, but where is the line? Where does it make sense to draw the line, and so on and so forth." (C1 - 35)</p>	
C2.1	Organisational Measures	C2.1.4 Trainings	<p>Training possibilities covering topics such as self-management, work-life- "We have made various offers available. On the one balance, boundary hand, as mentioned before, there was this seminar management. This category series in November 2020, where an external trainer looks at general awareness in presented strategies to enable the individual to this context, existing trainings separate private and professional life." (C2 - 40) as well as any programs planned for the future.</p>	<p>Trainings and awareness creating measures</p>

C2.1	Organisational Measures	C2.1.5 Other Organisational Support	Other support measures that are not covered by the aforementioned categories, such as further support through the works council or occupational physicians.	"We were and still are in close contact with the occupational health physician, and of course, if it was seen that there were really problems with one or the other, we also made other offers available, such as therapy options, or simply the possibility that they could take a longer time off, leave or whatever." (C2 - 40)	Support measures for detachment, work-life balance, ... that are not covered by the aforementioned organisational measures, belong to this category. But: Support measures for the workstyle, e.g. communication of information regarding "HOW is the work done" belong to category "2.3.1 Work-related Communication".
C2.2	Organisational Control	C2.2.1 Behaviour Control	Organisational control through monitoring a worker's behaviour and time management.	"When I'm working from home, I open my laptop, I log in, there are various app solutions or programmes where you can register or log in and out again. We deliberately don't do that." (C2 - 33)	Monitoring, supervising, watching a worker's behaviour; keeping track of work time
C2.2	Organisational Control	C2.2.2 Output Control	Organisational control through measuring a worker's output	"I think that this is already expected, and as I said, that the work you have to do is done. That emails are looked at and answered, and deadlines are met, and yes, if you have an online training or something, that you simply have a certificate and can prove 'I did that', or as I said, I typed up the protocol and put them in the drive, then the boss can look at it and proofread it again, and then she can also see that I did something. And of course you don't write down five hours if you only needed three hours or so. But I think it's actually very much based on trust, so I don't think I'd be someone who would write down two or three hours more every day. Well, then there would be problems anyway if I did that, so I don't even have to try. (W5 - 19)	Measuring output e.g. the number of reports, emails, ... Performance of the worker
C2.2	Organisational Control	C2.2.3 Input/Social Control	Organisational control through an informal social system; mutual trust from workers, leaders and other company representatives	"[...] trust already has a high value in these work processes? Yes, yes it does. Definitely. And as an employer you also have to show that there is trust in the employee, that he fulfils his work duties exactly as if he were here on site." (C2 - 29)	
C2.3	Communication	C2.3.1 Work-related Communication	Communication in terms of work-related content, workstyle, methods and procedures, as well as organisational topics. The question is: How do workers communicate and collaborate?	"On the one hand, weekly team meetings, and on the other hand, mutual access to all Outlook calendars. So I can open the Outlook calendar of every colleague immediately, then I can see which appointments, and so I know approximately the working hours where she usually works. (C1 - 21)	Support measures for the workstyle, e.g. communication of information regarding "HOW is the work done". But: Passages containing communication regarding policies/regulations/... (e.g. how are the policies communicated) belong to the category "2.1.2 Policies".
C2.3	Communication	C2.3.2 Social Interaction	Social processes in the daily work-life and the way that workers are interacting on a social level in the home setting. Interpersonal communication with workers and leaders	"And I think it's so to speak... of course you use teams, we mainly use teams or Zoom, but it's a different kind of communication, and I think the nuances get lost a bit, and that's why it's important to organise days when everyone is there, and that you can also promote the interpersonal aspects again, so to speak. (C7 - 7)	
C2.4	Mobile App Swoliba	C2.4 Mobile App Swoliba	Statements regarding the mobile application 'swoliba', impacts and experiences with the use of the application.	"What I've used with the app and what I've slowly but surely got into the habit of doing over the months that I've had it is, on the one hand, that in the morning, that defined start of work. Which of course works, with the symbolic making of the bed, that's what I do in the morning, where I say that's the point, that's not exactly where I start working, but there I pretend to go away when I go with my partner and then when I get home I go straight to the computer and work, that's one thing." (W4 - 41)	

Citations from the Interviews and Translations

"But this surprising and demanding thing is something that really drains me and takes me away. So I would like to have regulations, and I would like to have something in my hand that I can say 'not like this, but in another way'." (C4 - 30-2)

"Aber dieses überraschende und dieses fordernde ist für mich schon etwas, das mich sehr auslaugt und mich sehr mitnimmt. Also da hätte ich dann schon gerne Regelungen, und schon gerne was in der Hand, dass ich sagen kann 'so nicht, aber anders schon'." (C4 - 30-2)

"But I say here - and I don't only mean this because I am a works council member, but also within the framework of the duty of care - the company has a great responsibility. And at the end of the day, if the company fulfils its responsibility properly, you can say "now, of course, you also have it as an employee in the company". But for me, the company has the highest responsibility here, namely also for the consequences, health effects, and, and, and. I believe that companies need a lot of sensitisation to the fact that it does something to colleagues when they are constantly confronted with work in their free time." (C3 - 22-2)

"Aber ich sage hier – und das meine ich nicht nur weil ich Betriebsrat bin, sondern das ist auch im Rahmen der Fürsorgepflicht – hat das Unternehmen eine hohe Verantwortung. Und letztendlich, wenn das Unternehmen die Verantwortung ordentlich wahrnimmt, kann man sagen „jetzt hast es natürlich auch du als Mitarbeiter oder als Mitarbeiterin im Unternehmen“. Aber die höchste Verantwortung hat für mich hier das Unternehmen, nämlich auch für die Folgewirkungen, gesundheitliche Auswirkungen, und, und, und. Ich glaube, da brauchen auch die Konzerne oder Firmen noch sehr viel Sensibilisierung, dass das mit den Kolleginnen und Kollegen etwas tut, wenn man ständig mit der Arbeit in der Freizeit konfrontiert ist." (C3 - 22-2)

"You can't force people to do this, but of course it is accepted, especially and hopefully by those who are particularly affected by it. As I said, moving breaks, back training, etc., there are also seminars for mental training - with us, every employee also has the possibility of taking up to six coaching hours if mental difficulties arise." (C6 - 17-2)

"Man kann die Leute nicht zwingen, das zu machen, aber natürlich wird das auch angenommen, also gerade und hoffentlich von denen, die besonders betroffen sind davon. Wie gesagt, bewegte Pausen, Rückenschule etc., es gibt auch Seminare für Mentaltraining – bei uns hat jeder Mitarbeiter auch die Möglichkeit, bis zu sechs Coaching-Stunden in Anspruch zu nehmen, wenn es zu psychischen Schwierigkeiten kommt." (C6 - 17-2)

"Making people aware that firstly you want them healthy at work, and secondly you want efficient work and that this is simply only possible if you manage yourself healthily." (C1 - 33-3)

"Menschen bewusst machen, dass man erstens sie gesund am Arbeitsplatz haben will, und dass man zweitens effiziente Arbeit haben will und dass das einfach nur möglich ist, wenn man sich selbst gesund führt." (C1 - 33-3)

"They know that I really mean it and they see that I get a lot of work done because I really take breaks and because I really switch off when I go out, and because I really just let it go when nothing works on a given day. So setting an example is something that you can teach some managers well, that it has much, much, much more effect than you think at first glance." (C1 - 35-2)

"Die wissen, ich meine das wirklich so und die sehen nicht zuletzt, dass ich ganz viel Arbeit gebacken kriege, weil ich wirklich Pausen mache und weil ich wirklich abschalte, wenn ich rausgehe, und weil ich es wirklich einfach mal gut sein lasse, wenn an einem Tag nichts geht. Also Vorbildwirkung ist etwas, was man manchen Führungskräften gut beibringen kann, dass das viel, viel, viel mehr wirkt, als man am ersten Blick glaubt." (C1 - 35-2)

"So the question is, what is it that people really like about working from home? [...] I think it's more the autonomy to decide when I start working than the actual 'working at home'. Of course, that's also pleasant, because you can quickly make yourself something to eat. But I don't think that's the only reason why people like to work from home, but rather this ability to start, or take a break, continue working in the evening, simply organise the day differently, autonomously." (W6 - 7-2)

"Also die Frage ist, was ist es wirklich, was den Leuten am Homeoffice so gefällt? [...] Ich glaube, es ist eher die Autonomie, zu entscheiden, wann ich mit der Arbeit beginne, als das tatsächliche 'Daheim Arbeiten'. Das ist natürlich auch angenehm, weil man dann halt schnell was sich zum Essen macht. Aber ich glaube gar nicht, dass das der einzige Grund ist, wieso man gern Homeoffice hat, sondern eher dieses Anfangen können, oder Pause machen, am Abend weiterarbeiten, einfach sich den Tag anders einteilen, autonom." (W6 - 7-2)

"Yes, the company has a flexitime system and [the weekend work] is included in this flexitime system and I have no problem with that. In return, I spend half a day in the garden or doing something else on a Tuesday or Wednesday. Or I leave early on Friday for the weekend, so I see that more as an advantage. I don't see this flexible working time [...] as a disadvantage, but rather as an advantage. There may be people who have a very fixed rhythm of life, who are expected to be flexible, who don't want that. I can see their problem, but for me it's an advantage." (W4 - 5-3)

"Ja, also das Unternehmen hat ja so eine Gleitzeit-Regelung und das geht in diese Gleitzeit-Regelung hinein und damit habe ich kein Problem. Dafür bin ich halt dann einmal an einem Dienstag oder Mittwoch einen halben Tag im Garten oder mache sonst irgendwas. Oder bin am Freitag einmal früher weg fürs Wochenende, also an sich sehe ich das eher als Vorteil. Ich sehe diese flexible Arbeitszeit [...] nicht als Nachteil, sondern eher als Vorteil. Es mag Leute geben, die halt einen sehr fixen Lebensrhythmus haben, von denen Flexibilität eingefordert wird, die das nicht wollen. Deren Problem sehe ich schon auch ein, aber für mich ist das ein Vorteil." (W4 - 5-3)

"I think it's also important that people have a rest. At the same time, I wouldn't understand it if a manager said, 'I won't pick up the phone on Saturday and Sunday.'" (C7 - 43-2)

"Also ich finde, es ist auch wichtig, dass sich die Leute erholen. Gleichzeitig würde ich es auch nicht verstehen bei einer Führungskraft, wenn die sagt, 'Samstag und Sonntag heb ich nicht ab.'" (C7 - 43-2)

"At our company, it is usually the case that every colleague, or almost every colleague, has a mobile phone. This leads to the fact - we have also had this study - that 50 % of the people do not have a second mobile phone, which at the same time means that I can always be reached. [...] There are even agreements that say it may be used privately. So we have an instruction that says "you now get a work phone, but it may also be used privately". These are already structural things that naturally flow into it, because the colleagues actually see it as an advantage to have a work phone, because they save costs. The question is whether I don't have the 20 € a month myself in order to have much more free time and quality of life." (C3 - 23-3, 24-2)

"Bei uns im Unternehmen ist es üblicherweise so, dass jeder oder fast jede Kollegin und jeder Kollege ein Dienst-Handy hat. Das führt dazu - auch diese Studie haben wir gehabt - dass 50 % der Leute kein zweites Mobiltelefon besitzen, was gleichzeitig heißt, ich bin immer erreichbar. [...] Es gibt sogar Vereinbarungen, wo drinsteht, das darf privat genutzt werden. Also wir haben dazu eine Anweisung „ihr bekommt jetzt ein Dienst-Telefon, darf aber auch privat genutzt werden“. Das sind schon strukturelle Dinge, die da natürlich mit einfließen, weil die Kollegen/Kolleginnen sehen das ja eigentlich als Vorteil, ein Dienst-Telefon zu haben, weil sie sich Kosten ersparen. Die Frage ist, ob ich nicht die 20 € im Monat doch selber habe, um viel mehr Freizeit und Lebensqualität zu haben." (C3 - 23-3, 24-2)

"Exactly, that is really a basis of trust and I think that is also the most important prerequisite for a system like home work to work." (W2 - 19-2)

"Genau, das ist wirklich Vertrauensbasis und das ist glaube ich auch die wichtigste Voraussetzung dafür, dass ein System wie Homeoffice auch funktionieren kann." (W2 - 19-2)

"It goes so far that you say, now you not only record the time, but you even write down what you have done. But I honestly believe that this is excessive, because we do so much documentation that no one reads anymore, and that would not justify the effort, because you put so much effort into it, you put 10 % effort into it to uncover 2 % misconduct, and then it is no longer economical." (C5 - 45-2)

"Das geht ja so weit, dass du sagst, jetzt erfasst du nicht nur die Zeit, sondern schreibst sogar noch auf, was du gemacht hast. Aber ich bin ganz ehrlich der Meinung, dass das überbordend ist, weil wir tun so viel dokumentieren, was niemand mehr liest, und das täte den Einsatz nicht rechtfertigen, weil du steckst so viel Aufwand hinein, du steckst 10 % Aufwand hinein um 2 % Fehlverhalten aufzudecken, und dann ist es nicht mehr wirtschaftlich." (C5 - 45-2)

"So home work itself, I appreciate the advantages very much, but you really have to look at it in a differentiated way. Especially now, as it was in the lockdown, I mean, there is a difference between sitting alone in a room at home and having an adequately furnished workplace where I can sit down, a nice office chair, and have a stable WLAN and can work unhindered. Or do I sit at home with my husband and children, the children use the infrastructure, and then I have to sit at the kitchen table, in the kitchen chair [...]" (C2 - 46-2)

"Also Homeoffice selber, die Vorteile weiß ich sehr zu schätzen, aber man muss es halt wirklich differenziert betrachten. Vor allem jetzt gerade, wie es in dem Lockdown war, ich meine, es ist ein Unterschied, sitze ich für mich alleine im Homeoffice und habe einen adäquat eingerichteten Arbeitsplatz, wo ich mich hinsetzen kann, einen schönen Bürosessel, und hab ein stabiles WLAN und kann ungehindert arbeiten. Oder sitze ich mit Mann, Kind, Kegel daheim, die Kinder nutzen die Infrastruktur, ich muss dann nachher am Küchentisch sitzen, am Küchensessel [...]" (C2 - 46-2)

"Yes, you can see that we have very long-established colleagues here on site, and some of them - and this hurts me a little bit inside - think that "if you're on site, you perform", and that's not true. I often work more from home than here on site, and I would like our company to change this view in one or two years. You can see that it's already better now." (C2 - 50-2)

"Ja, man merkt, wir haben wie gesagt sehr alteingesessene Kollegen hier vor Ort, und bei manchen ist - das tut mir auch innerlich ein bisschen weh - dieses Denken „wer vor Ort ist, der leistet“, und das stimmt aber nicht. Von zu Hause arbeite ich oft mehr als hier vor Ort, und diese Sichtweise wünsche ich mir von unserem Unternehmen, dass sich das in ein bis zwei Jahren ausmärzt. Man merkt, dass es jetzt schon besser ist." (C2 - 50-2)

"As I said, I get 30 % across on the phone. Makes three times the time I need to make the same exchange [...] Time, time, time. Time to manage the increased time that the same quality of communication requires." (C1- 17-2)

"Wie gesagt, ich bekomme 30 % rüber am Telefon und zurück. Macht dreimal die Zeit die ich brauche, um denselben Austausch herzustellen [...] Zeit, Zeit, Zeit. Zeit, um den erhöhten Zeitaufwand, den dieselbe Qualität an Kommunikation erfordert, zu bewerkstelligen." (C1- 17-2)

"[...] what is missing on both sides is just the resonance. For me as a manager who senses that "maybe he/she needs something" or "no, she is not quite on board yet". Speaking of online lectures, [...] I immediately notice "who is not yet on board". The response is lacking, and conversely, I also experienced afterwards that my staff sometimes lacked orientation. And that was not due to a lack of content-related communication [...]" (C1 - 18-3)

"[...] was beiderseits fehlt ist halt die Resonanz. Für mich als Führungskraft, die das spürt „der/die braucht da vielleicht etwas“, oder „nein, die ist noch nicht ganz an Board“. A propos Online-Vorträge, [...] da merke ich sofort „wer ist noch nicht dabei“. Die Resonanz fehlt, und umgekehrt habe ich nachher auch erfahren, dass meinen MitarbeiterInnen teilweise gefühlsmäßig die Orientierung gefehlt hat. Und das lag nicht an einem Mangel an inhaltlicher Kommunikation [...]" (C1 - 18-3)

"Yes, basically, for me the parameter for health is quite classically the good old WHO definition, i.e. mental, physical and social well-being must be guaranteed. For this, it is necessary that there is enough space for social obligations and social pleasures, for physical and mental regeneration. This may also vary in life phases, who needs how much of it, but the healthy balance is always the goal, where this has sufficient space depending on life phases and needs." (C1 - 25-2)

"Ja, grundsätzlich ist für mich der Parameter für Gesundheit ganz klassisch die gute alte WHO Definition, d.h. es muss das psychische, physische und soziale Wohlbefinden gewährleistet sein. Dafür ist es notwendig, dass ausreichend Raum für soziale Verpflichtungen und soziale Vergnügungen bleibt, zur physischen und psychischen Regeneration. Das mag in Lebensphasen auch unterschiedlich sein, wer wieviel davon braucht, aber die gesunde Balance ist immer das Ziel, wo das je nach Lebensphasen, Bedürfnissen, ausreichend Raum hat." (C1 - 25-2)

"This short-sighted self-management, where I now just get what I can, is not even efficient now, but certainly not in the long run. If such a medium-term perspective were common sense, then employees would not be satisfied with partially horrible ergonomics at home. By that I don't mean that companies have to equip everyone with top-of-the-range office chairs ... no, you also have to set yourself up, look, does the height fit? How do I sit there? How often do I actually change my sitting position? How often do I really take a break from the screen? If these little things become as self-regulating as the bigger questions, how often do I need a holiday? [...] How often do I need a break? How much private life do I need to keep my health, my social and psychological balance intact? That would simply be my great wish, the medium-term perspective of employees and leadership in the management of very individual resources." (C1 - 36-2)

"Dieses kurzsichtige Selbstmanagement, wo ich nur jetzt heraushole was nur geht, das ist nicht einmal jetzt effizient, aber schon gar nicht auf Dauer. Wenn eine solche Mittelfrist-Perspektive common sense wäre, dann würden sich Mitarbeitende auch nicht mit einer teilweise grauenhaften Ergonomie zu Hause zufriedengeben. Damit meine ich nicht, die Unternehmen müssen jetzt alle mit Top-Bürostühlen ... nein, man muss sich auch einmal einrichten, schauen, passt die Höhe? Schauen, wie sitze ich da? Wie oft wechsele ich tatsächlich meine Sitzposition? Wie oft mache ich wirklich Bildschirmpause? Wenn diese kleinen Dinge genauso selbstregulierend werden wie die größeren Fragen, wie oft brauche ich Urlaub? [...] Wie oft brauche ich Pause? Wieviel Privatleben brauche ich, damit meine Gesundheit, mein soziales und psychisches Gleichgewicht intakt bleibt? Das wäre einfach mein großer Wunsch, die Mittelfrist-Perspektive von Mitarbeitenden und Führung im Management der ganz individuellen Ressourcen." (C1 - 36-2)

"But it is not much worse at home, because then I just close my study door and then I rarely go into the room for any other reason. So that's really my work room." (W7 - 12-2)

"Daheim geht es mir aber auch nicht recht viel schlechter, weil dann mache ich einfach meine Arbeitszimmer-Türe zu und dann gehe ich in den Raum eigentlich auch selten aus irgendwelchen anderen Gründen rein. Also das ist dann wirklich mein Arbeits-Raum." (W7 - 12-2)

"But I am consciously getting out of work. Well, you can do things consciously. So I transcend, and that's also a... I do that with passion. And that's also how you get into the hour, into this energy, it sounds so esoteric now, but it's not at all. And you also get out of it consciously. And you can also do that when I consciously pack everything up if I don't have my own office, or when I'm at home and say, OK, that's it, close the office door and consciously go out. I think that's more of an inner attitude, and that's when it happens." (W3 - 15-2)

"Ich steige aber bewusst aus der Arbeit aus. Also man kann ja Dinge bewusst machen. Also ich transzendiere, und das ist auch so eine... das mache ich mit Leidenschaft. Und das ist auch so, man steigt in die Stunde ein, in diese Energie, das klingt jetzt so esoterisch, ist es aber gar nicht. Und man steigt da auch bewusst wieder raus. Und das kann man ja auch machen, wenn ich jetzt bewusst entweder alles zusammenpacke, wenn ich kein eigenes Büro benütze, oder halt so, wenn ich zu Hause bin, sage, oke, das ist es, mache die Bürotür zu und gehe bewusst heraus. Das ist glaube ich schon auch eher die innere Haltung auch, dann passiert das auch." (W3 - 15-2)

"I have set it so that a message is actually sent to me at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., with "Take a break". And that's right, because otherwise I would forget about the breaks." (W2 - 12-2)

"Ich habe das so eingestellt, dass mir um 11:00 Uhr und um 15:00 Uhr auch wirklich eine Nachricht gesendet wird, so mit „Mach mal eine Pause“. Und das ist auch richtig, weil sonst würde ich vergessen auf die Pausen." (W2 - 12-2)

"I believe that this can be very useful for individuals who use it as private persons, because I really know enough people, I have met clients, who have difficulties with precisely this structuring, with remembering. But I think it is very important to make the access very, very free. In other words, not to force it in any way. I think for all those who think like I do, I already have a lot of structure and a lot of timing and I also build my little sources of strength into my daily work. I would rather create reactance effects, i.e. "No, please not another thing". (C1 - 38-2)

"Ich glaube, dass das für einzelne, die es als Privatpersonen nutzen, ganz viel bringen kann, weil ich wirklich genügend Menschen auch kenne, KlientInnen kennengelernt habe, die genau mit dieser Strukturierung, sich dran zu erinnern, schwertun. Aber ich halte es für ganz entscheidend, den Zugang sehr, sehr freizustellen. Also keinesfalls in irgendeiner Weise zu forcieren. Ich glaube für alle, die ähnlich ticken wie ich, ich hab eh schon viel Struktur und viel Taktung und baue da auch meine kleinen Kraftquellen in den Arbeitsalltag ein. Ich würde da eher Reaktanz-Effekte erzeugen, also „Nein, bitte nicht noch etwas.“ (C1 - 38-2)

"What I noticed, or my personal perception was, that the people who were, or still are, predominantly working from home, is to note how they are embedded. There is of course a difference when the single part-time mother with two children who should actually be at school is suddenly working from home and has two children to look after, and then also has to do the cooking, and support the children with homeschooling, and then still has to take care of her own work." (C2 - 20)

"Was mir aufgefallen ist, oder auch meine persönliche Wahrnehmung war, dass die Leute, die überwiegend im Homeoffice waren, bzw. immer noch sind, ist zu beachten, wie sie eingebettet sind. Es ist natürlich ein Unterschied, wenn die alleinerziehende Teilzeit-Mutter mit zwei Kindern, die eigentlich in der Schule sein sollten, auf einmal im Homeoffice ist, und zwei betreuungspflichtige Kinder hat, und dann hier auch schauen muss, mit Kochen, und dass Homeschooling funktioniert, und dann noch schauen muss, dass ihre Arbeit nebenbei funktioniert." (C2 - 20)

"But if I want to recruit someone new for my company, or if I recruit a... most people ask what goodies, what does the company offer, and it has already become clear that you are not really attractive if you cannot offer flexitime, especially in the salaried sector." (C2 - 11)

"Wenn ich jetzt aber jemanden neu für mein Unternehmen gewinnen möchte, oder ich rekrutiere eine. . . die meisten fragen, welche Goodies, was bietet das Unternehmen, und da hat man schon gemerkt, dass man eigentlich jetzt nicht attraktiv auftritt, wenn man eine Gleitzeit nicht anbieten kann, vor allem im Angestelltenbereich." (C2 - 11)

"And the second thing I do is I always do sport immediately after work, which can be a walk for half an hour or strength training, and that helps me to distance myself from work." (W8 - 17)

"Und das zweite was ich mache ist, ich mache immer nach der Arbeit sofort Sport, das kann jetzt Spazieren gehen sein für eine halbe Stunde, oder eben Krafttraining, und das hilft mir selber von der Arbeit zu distanzieren." (W8 - 17)

"And the second thing is that on an individual level we observe a very high level of self-expectation, especially with regard to accessibility. That is, accessibility and a continuous work loop, i.e. no breaks". (C1 - 32)

"Und das zweite ist auf individueller Ebene, dass wir schon sehr stark beobachten, eine sehr hohe Eigenerwartung, insbesondere was Erreichbarkeit betrifft. Also Erreichbarkeit und Dauer-Arbeitsschleife, sprich keine Pausen." (C1 - 32)

"We can work wherever we want, so it's the same as it was before, whether it's at our company, where there are enough really nice rooms available, whether it's at home, or whether it's also at the client's place". (C1 - 1)

"Wir können arbeiten, wo immer wir wollen, also so wie es vorher auch schon war, sei es in der Firma, wo ausreichend wirklich schöne Räume zur Verfügung stehen, sei es zu Hause, oder sei es auch beim Kunden." (C1 - 1)

"In general, it is the case with us that the factories themselves have rigid working hours. First of all, this is due to shift work, which half of the workforce has. The other employees have fixed working hours, which means that we tend to be very conservative. In contrast to many other companies. Our main headquarters in Vienna has been living flexitime for years and has also included a home office day in this flexitime agreement." (C2 - 2)

"Generell ist es bei uns so, dass die Werke selbst starre Arbeitszeiten haben. Das ist erstens einmal einer Schichtarbeit geschuldet, die die Hälfte der Belegschaft hat. Die andere Belegschaft hat eine fixe Arbeitszeit, d.h. wir sind da eher sehr konservativ aufgestellt. Im Gegensatz zu vielen anderen Unternehmen. Unsere Hauptzentrale in Wien lebt seit Jahren Gleitzeit und hat auch in dieser Gleitzeit-Vereinbarung einen Homeoffice-Tag vorgesehen." (C2 - 2)

"I think it's really hard to find a regular rhythm. I only see it as dangerous when it's holiday time, that is, when colleagues are on holiday, and then maybe you don't have the rhythm and pick up the phone and do one or the other task. (C3 - 4)

"Also ich glaube, da einen regelmäßigen Rhythmus zu finden, das ist echt schwer. Gefährlich sehe ich das ja erst dann, wenn dann Urlaubszeit, also wenn die Kolleginnen und Kollegen im Urlaub sind, und dann hat man auch vielleicht den Rhythmus nicht und hebt vom Telefon ab und macht dann doch noch die ein oder andere Arbeit." (C3 - 4)

"But for me, the company has the highest responsibility here, namely also for the consequential effects, health effects, and, and, and." (C3 - 22)

"Aber die höchste Verantwortung hat für mich hier das Unternehmen, nämlich auch für die Folgewirkungen, gesundheitliche Auswirkungen, und, und, und." (C3 - 22)

"But I also have a very quiet environment in the office, we have an office where a maximum of four of us sit inside at the same time. Now in Corona times alone or a maximum of two when we were in the office." (W7 - 11)

"Ich habe im Büro aber ebenfalls eine sehr ruhige Umgebung, wir haben ein Büro wo wir maximal zu 4. drinnen sitzen gleichzeitig. Jetzt in Corona-Zeiten alleine oder maximal zu zweit, wenn wir im Büro waren." (W7 - 11)

"Clear frameworks means a level playing field for everyone within a certain activity and experience group. So to speak, activity group and seniority. I have to design frameworks suitable for activity groups but also suitable for seniority." (C1 - 28)

"Klare Rahmen heißt, gleiche Rahmenbedingungen für alle innerhalb einer bestimmten Tätigkeit und Erfahrungsgruppe. Also sozusagen, Tätigkeitsgruppe und Seniorität. Ich muss Rahmenbedingungen passend für Tätigkeitsgruppen gestalten aber auch passend für Seniorität." (C1 - 28)

"We have flexitime, no more core time, that was also a wish of the colleagues that we implemented a few years ago." (C3 - 4)

"Wir haben Gleitzeit, keine Kernzeit mehr, das war auch ein Wunsch der Kolleginnen und Kollegen, den wir vor einigen Jahren umgesetzt haben." (C3 - 4)

"How far do I have to go? Would you allow someone to take no break at all, really no break at all, and just sit in front of the computer for 10 hours, with just going to the toilet under high pressure and back again? No! Where do you draw the line. You don't allow everything as a leader, but where is the line? Where does it make sense to draw the line, and so on and so forth." (C1 - 35)

"Wie weit muss ich gehen? Würdest du es zulassen, wenn jemand gar keine, wirklich gar keine Pause macht und 10 h nur vorm Computer sitzt, mit gerade mal unter Hochdruck auf die Toilette und wieder zurück? Nein! Wo ziehst du die Grenze. Du lässt nicht alles zu als Führungskraft, aber wo ist die Grenze? Wo ist es sinnvoll, die Grenze zu ziehen, und so weiter und so fort." (C1 - 35)

"We have made various offers available. On the one hand, as mentioned before, there was this seminar series in November 2020, where an external trainer presented strategies to enable the individual to separate private and professional life. " (C2 - 40)

"Wir haben verschiedene Angebote zur Verfügung gestellt. Auf der einen Seite war es, wie vorher schon angesprochen, diese Seminar-Reihe im November 2020, wo ein externer Trainer Strategien vorgestellt hat, die es dem Jeweiligen ermöglichen sollten, Privat und Beruf zu trennen. " (C2 - 40)

"We were and still are in close contact with the occupational health physician, and of course, if it was seen that there were really problems with one or the other, we also made other offers available, such as therapy options, or simply the possibility that they could take a longer time off, leave or whatever." (C2 - 40)

"Wir hatten und haben noch immer engen Kontakt mit der Arbeitsmedizinerin, und natürlich, wenn man gesehen hat, dass es bei dem Ein oder Anderen wirklich Probleme gibt, auch andere Angebote zur Verfügung gestellt, wie zum Beispiel Therapie-Möglichkeiten, oder einfach auch die Möglichkeit, dass er sich eine längere Auszeit nehmen kann, Urlaub oder wie auch immer." (C2 - 40)

"When I'm working from home, I open my laptop, I log in, there are various app solutions or programmes where you can register or log in and out again. We deliberately don't do that." (C2 - 33)

"Wenn ich im Homeoffice bin, ich mach meinen Laptop auf, ich logge mich ein, da gibt es ja verschiedene App-Lösungen oder Programme, wo man sich dann registriert, oder wieder ein- und auswählt. Wir machen das bewusst nicht." (C2 - 33)

"I think that this is already expected, and as I said, that the work you have to do is done. That emails are looked at and answered, and deadlines are met, and yes, if you have an online training or something, that you simply have a certificate and can prove 'I did that', or as I said, I typed up the protocol and put them in the drive, then the boss can look at it and proofread it again, and then she can also see that I did something. And of course you don't write down five hours if you only needed three hours or so. But I think it's actually very much based on trust, so I don't think I'd be someone who would write down two or three hours more every day. Well, then there would be problems anyway if I did that, so I don't even have to try. (W5 -19)

"Ich denke, dass das schon erwartet wird, und wie gesagt, dass eben die Arbeit gemacht wird, die man eben zu machen hat. Dass eben die E-Mails angeschaut und beantwortet werden, und Termine eingehalten werden, und ja, wenn man eben eine Online-Fortbildung oder so hat, dass man da einfach eine Bescheinigung hat und Belegen kann „Das habe ich gemacht“, oder wie gesagt, das Protokoll habe ich abgetippt, das habe ich ins Laufwerk gestellt, dann kann es eben die Chefin anschauen und nochmal geglesen, und dann sieht sie ja auch, ich habe was gemacht. Und dass man eben natürlich jetzt nicht fünf Stunden hinschreibt, wenn man nur drei Stunden gebraucht hat, oder so. Aber ich denke, das läuft eigentlich sehr auf Vertrauensbasis, da wär ich jetzt auch glaube ich niemand, der jetzt da jeden Tag zwei, drei Stunden mehr aufschreibt. Gut, dann würde es eh Probleme geben, wenn ich das machen würde, von da her brauche ich das nicht mal versuchen." (W5 -19)

"[...] trust already has a high value in these work processes? Yes, yes it does. Definitely. And as an employer you also have to show that there is trust in the employee, that he fulfils his work duties exactly as if he were here on site." (C2 - 29)

"[...] das Vertrauen hat schon einen hohen Stellenwert in diesen Arbeitsprozessen? Ja, ja schon. Auf jeden Fall. Und man muss als Arbeitgeber auch aufzeigen, dass das Vertrauen in den Arbeitnehmer vorhanden ist, dass er seine Arbeitspflicht genau so vollfüllt, als wäre er hier vor Ort." (C2 - 29)

"On the one hand, weekly team meetings, and on the other hand, mutual access to all Outlook calendars. So I can open the Outlook calendar of every colleague immediately, then I can see which appointments, which time in between, and so I know approximately the working hours where she usually works. (C1 - 21)

"Einerseits wöchentliche Teambesprechung, und andererseits wechselseitiger Zugriff auf alle Outlook-Kalender. Also ich kann von jeder KollegIn sofort den Outlook-Kalender aufmachen, dann sehe ich, welche Termine, welche Zeit dazwischen, und weiß so in etwa die Arbeitszeiten, wo sie üblicherweise arbeitet." (C1 - 21)

"And I think it's so to speak.... of course you use teams, we mainly use teams or Zoom, but it's a different kind of communication, and I think the nuances get lost a bit, and that's why it's important to organise days when everyone is there, and that you can also promote the interpersonal aspects again, so to speak. (C7 - 7)

"Und ich finde, es ist sozusagen... natürlich nutzt man Teams, also wir nutzen hauptsächlich Teams oder Zoom, aber das ist eine andere Art der Kommunikation, und ich glaube die Zwischentöne gehen halt ein bisschen verloren, und darum ist es auch wichtig, dass man organisiert, wann sind Tage, wo alle da sind, und dass man sozusagen auch das Zwischenmenschliche wieder fördern kann." (C7 - 7)

"What I've used with the app and what I've slowly but surely got into the habit of doing over the months that I've had it is, on the one hand, that in the morning, that defined start of work. Which of course works, with the symbolic making of the bed, that's what I do in the morning, where I say that's the point, that's not exactly where I start working, but there I pretend to go away when I go with my partner and then when I get home I go straight to the computer and work, that's one thing." (W4 - 41)

"Was ich bei der App benutzt habe und was ich mir langsam aber sicher angewöhnt habe durch die Monate wo ich das habe, das ist einerseits das in der Früh, diesen definierten Arbeitsbeginn. Was natürlich geht, das mit dem symbolischen Bett machen, das ist das was ich in der Früh mache, wo ich sage, das ist der Punkt, das ist nicht wo ich genau zum Arbeiten anfangen, aber da tu ich so als gehe ich weg, wenn ich mitgehe mit meiner Partnerin und dann, wenn ich nach Hause komme, gehe ich direkt zum Rechner und arbeite, das ist das Eine." (W4 - 41)

"It's very hard for me not to think about work, especially when I don't meet my own expectations. But I try to distract myself with hobbies. Sometimes it's better, sometimes less, but if you don't finish something on Friday that should be finished on Monday, then I feel that my weekends are not as relaxed as they usually are. [...] It feels frustrating because somehow you feel like you're doing unpaid work and you're solving a problem that you would solve in working time." (W8 - 23, 25)

"Es fällt mir sehr schwer oft, nicht an die Arbeit zu denken, vor allem wenn ich meine eigene Erwartungshaltung nicht erfülle. Aber da versuche ich mich eben mit Hobbies abzulenken. Manchmal geht's besser, manchmal weniger, aber wenn man freitags mit was nicht fertig wird, das am Montag fertig sein sollte, dann fühl ich, sind meine Wochenenden nicht so entspannt, wie sie sonst sind. [...] Es fühlt sich frustrierend an, weil man irgendwie das Gefühl hat, man macht gerade unbezahlte Arbeit und man löst gerade ein Problem, dass man in der Arbeitszeit lösen würde." (W8 - 23, 25)