

VINCIT

GREAT PLACE TO WORK 2016 CULTURE AUDIT

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OPEN QUESTIONS:

1. Background information

Please describe the activities of your organization including the industry, products/services and the most significant competitors of the company.

Answer:

Vincit Oy is a software company that employs 210 professionals. The company's major business activity is custom software development. In addition, Vincit offers consulting and coaching concerning agile software development and management. The core competence of the company is internet and mobile applications.

The story of Vincit began in the year 2007. At the time, our founders worked at a multinational corporation that concentrated more on numbers instead of people in their management model. Mikko and Pekka however strongly believed in the significance of a good workplace - satisfied employees lead to satisfied customers and long term success. With this base idea they decided to establish Vincit. The name comes from Latin and is present in two phrases meaningful for us: Amor Vincit omnia (Love conquers all) and Labor omnia Vincit (Work conquers all). Vincit's philosophy is condensed in these two sentences. Success stems from working hard for the right things, and the things you enjoy.

Primarily, Vincit was established to be a good place to work, keeping in mind that the company operates in a very competitive industry and therefore the effectiveness of labor has to be top-quality. The vision of Vincit, written on a coaster at the time of foundation goes: you should be happy to go to work even on Mondays.

The dream of creating a great workplace is still strongly present in Vincit's working culture. The company is continuously being developed in collaboration with employees, respecting their opinions.

People at Vincit work in small, usually under 10 people project teams, where every person has their own experience and expertise profile. The result is a tight and efficient work community where people support each other. The projects are done by using agile development methods.

What sets Vincit apart from its competitors is, among other things, is very high level of expertise. 100% of our clients would recommend us to others. We have done many decisions differently than our competitors - developed the company based on our employees' ideas and experimented boldly with the ideas that we believe in. For example, we are the only IT-company in Finland that offers its customers 100% satisfaction guarantee. If the customer feels our work hasn't brought enough additional value, we will not charge a dime. This is a courageous promise in an industry where 67% of projects fail (Standish Group 2012.) but it enables trust between us and the customers in an hourly billing system and at the same time it's a signal of respect for our employees.

Vincit's significant customers are e.g. General Electric, Metso, Khronos, Teleste, MTV3, TeliaSonera, Insta, 3Step IT, Oxford Instruments, Otavamedia and Hesburger.

Vincit has continued its growth and development with a fast pace. In 2016, Vincit is planning to list for public trading in the First North -market place. Our goal is to grow even bigger in the Finnish IT-industry. Our other, just as significant, goal is to show that we don't have to let go of our openness and our great work culture even though we are transforming into a public company.

2. Hiring and orientating employees

2a. What kind of qualities are you looking for from a potential employee in addition to skill requirements? How does your selection process (recruiting, interviewing etc.) ensure that the applicant fits to the organization's working culture?

Answer:

2a.1 We are looking for genuine "Vincitizens"

At Vincit, recruiting new employees is one of the most important decisions we have to make in order to maintain our working culture and ensuring customer satisfaction and that's why we invest a lot of effort in it. **We are looking for people who are genuine Vincitizens**, ie. they fit to our working culture and enjoy working in an environment that Vincit offers. We believe it's very important that a person is **genuinely interested in software development** because that contributes to work satisfaction and prevents from many traditional job wellness challenges. We don't want anyone to be just "doing their job here" and that's why we are looking for people who understand the meaningfulness of their job.

All in all we are looking for **responsible, enthusiastic and relaxed** employees, who **actively and willingly take part in the development of the company**. The willingness to **share knowledge and learn together** as well as to do **customer service** are important, because after all this is a customer service profession.

We have included our whole personnel into the recruiting process by asking them what kind of attributes they like and don't like in a possible applicant. Based on these comments we mirror the adequacy of the applicant during the interviews.

In our job postings we try to describe what working at Vincit is like as truly as possible - so in our recruiting ads, **our own employees are looking for a co-worker** and the job descriptions are in a story format, which has received positive feedback. Questions about the job description can be asked straight from the team and the applicant can get information from employees who are doing the same job he/she is applying for.

Recruiting advertisement is done where the experts are. We advertise our open positions for example in Pingstate, LinkedIn, Facebook and Google as well as in the recruiting websites of universities. Our recruiting advertisement is active and it's done in various channels.

New job openings are always **posted internally at first**, and employees are also encouraged to inform their own networks. Over half of our new employees in 2015 came because of the recommendations of our own employees. Internal recruiting also happens naturally - when our employees are pursuing their dream positions, new roles are created inside the company. This way we don't need to find experts externally because new job opportunities are born and created continuously - for example testing expert and agile coach.

Internal "recruiting" was utilized also in a situation where experts who meet our standards couldn't be found soon enough to our Helsinki office, but our Tampere office had employees with the required know-how. Our solution was to buy a **Tesla electric car** for the employees who volunteered to commute to Helsinki daily for a couple months. Work time arrangements and all the other practises were planned together with the team, and the project was a success for both the employees and Vincit.



Our employees strongly take part in the planning and developing our recruiting process. Everyone interested in recruiting can get a **username and password to a recruiting tool** and join a **recruiting channel** in instant messaging application **Slack**, where people are **actively discussing good recruiting processes and sharing tips for interviewing processes**. From an initiative of our employee last year we began to **develop our technical interview process**.

All in all, we have invested a lot of time in our recruiting process, and its development. We have also been **asked to give lectures about recruiting** to students and to seminars for unemployed people.

2a.2 Addressing the applications

Sending the job application has been made as easy as possible for the applicant. To manage our recruiting process we use an agile system called Recruiterbox, where every employee who is interested in recruitment has a chance to go and examine the applications we receive. Vincit is constantly recruiting so we receive multiple applications every day. Once the applicant sends the application he/she receives an automated email that includes links to our blog and social media pages. With this procedure we are encouraging the applicant to take a deeper look into the culture of our company.

We have launched a recruiting warranty which means that every application is answered within a day. Especially during times when laying off people is common in the IT-industry, quick responses to applications are well appreciated by the applicants. The recruiting process, from when the applicant sends in the applications to the possible job offer, takes us two weeks at most, and we continue to get good feedback about the quickness of our recruiting process.

The applications are saved automatically to Recruiterbox and during the same day they are given to software developers with the same area of expertise. After this the applicant is either invited to an interview or sent a personal thank you letter and explanation for why he/she didn't get chosen.

In the first interview invitation the applicant is told about how the recruiting process proceeds. In addition, the interview questions are sent in advance for the applicant to familiarize. The interview questions are designed to deeply survey the applicant's wishes, strengths and adequacy to the working culture of Vincit.

Revealing the questions before the interview increases the equality of the interview and decreases the applicant's nervousness. Our goal is that the interview would be an equal discussion between the applicant and the employer, where also the applicant has the power to evaluate if Vincit's culture fits for him/her.

The applicant receives questions for the first interview that are based on future scenarios. This way we are able to hear about the applicant's future wishes and plans. In addition, we request the applicant to think of two critical questions about Vincit as an employer. This way we can discuss about topics that the applicant probably wouldn't dare to take up. The request is also a part of our orientation - Vincit encourages all employees to openly discuss and daringly question anything that burdens their minds.

2a.3 The interviews

Every person who seems like a potential Vincitizen gets invited to an interview, regardless if there's an open project or not. Therefore we don't hire people based on our project needs, but based on if they fit in our organization. We strongly believe that if a person is a good fit for Vincit, he/she will find a good career path inside our company.

First interview

The first phase in our interview process is an interview with our HR expert, who tries to map out if the applicant is a good fit to Vincit's working culture. The purpose of the HR interview is to paint a clear and honest picture of the nature of the job. This way we're trying to ensure that the applicant's understanding of the job description, working culture and working procedures are realistic. In a working environment like Vincit, it is important for an employee to be able to work without strict instructions or guidelines. This type of environment isn't suitable for everyone, and that's why it's important that we inform about it from the start, so that the applicant can compare his/her own values and desires and make a decision if Vincit is a suitable workplace for him/her or not.

The first interview can be done via skype as well, so that a person who lives far away from our office doesn't have to travel long distances multiple times.

During the first interview the applicant is asked about his/her wishes for salary, and at the same time we inform the applicant about our compensation model. This way the salary question can be openly discussed from the start and the applicant doesn't have to speculate it throughout the whole process.

Second interview

The second is a broader technical interview, where the applicant and his/her future colleagues can meet each other. The purpose of the interview is from our employees' perspectives to examine what it would be like to work with the applicant - does it feel pleasant and would the applicant fit well to our teams. We try to inform the applicant about the everyday work life as well as we can, so that he/she could get a good grip about what the job entails. The second interview always includes an employee who works on similar projects as the applicant, so that he/she can get answers straight from an expert. During the interview we also go through different kinds of technical tasks, so that we can get to know the applicant's capabilities.

Third interview

If the technical interview goes well, the applicant is invited to an interview with our Managing Director. The purpose of the third interview is to make sure that the applicant fits to our company, but also to create a relaxed atmosphere and a good relationship between the applicant and the senior management right from the start.

Taking the dropouts into account

In order to further improve our praised recruiting process, we have introduced a satisfaction questionnaire. The questionnaire is sent to every applicant regardless if they got the job or not. The experiences have been positive and the average score is 4,7 (out of 5) despite the fact that most of the applicants never got the job offer. In the open comments section we have received special thanks the quickness of the process and also from pleasant interview situations.

Even though the number of applications we receive has been substantially growing within the last year, we have focused on paying attention to every applicant, especially in the 'no thanks' -messages. Every person gets an explanation why they didn't get the job. We also invite every rejected applicant to come to our office for our monthly open house -day to have a cup of coffee and get to know our professionals. All in all we strive to leave a good impression about Vincit to every applicant, no matter what the result was. For example, while planning our housewarming party, we randomly picked multiple rejected applicants and invited them to party with us.

In the event where we can't find a good job for a highly skilled applicant, we try to help them to find a fitting organization. For example one applicant's profile was a good match for one of our subsidiaries, so we right away sent the application to their recruiting manager. We have also tipped some of our clients about good applicants, who we at the time couldn't find a fitting job.

2a.4 The job offer

After the third interview we send the potential employees a job offer within a day. The offer describes our salary model, the salary we offer and all our benefits.

When offer include a message where we invite the potential employee to come and have a cup of coffee at our office within a couple days. This way the applicant has a chance to get to know his/her future co-workers and see

our working culture in a natural setting. Through the recruiting process alone, it is impossible to describe our working culture fully, so by visiting our office the applicant get a true experience of Vincit's everyday life.

We also offer our employees a new employee satisfaction guarantee (<http://www.epressi.com/tiedotteet/ohjelmistoteollisuus/vincit-palkkaa-20-uutta-asiantuntijaa-ja-palkitsee-irtisanoutuvan-tyontekijan.html>), which gives the employee an incentive to reasonably examine the job during the trial period. In practise this means that if an employee wants to resign during his/her trial period, we will give a resignation bonus. This gives the employee a better chance to switch jobs, if the employee feels like Vincit isn't the right place for him/her to work.

“Recruiting” our project leads

Recruiting for project leads is always internal. All of our project leads work as a software developer for at least one project so that they can gain experience on what it is like to be a developer. This way it is easier in future projects to lead other developers.

Every employee can express their interest in being a project lead. It's also possible to “resign” from a project lead position and focus solely on software development. Every project lead is annually asked if they want to continue in their position.

2a.5 Co-operation with students

Vincit invests a lot on student recruitment. On a steady basis, we organize different kinds of lectures, recreational events, and sports events. We also deliver Vincit-coffee and chili candies to the universities, and organize different kinds of events to introduce Vincit to the future Masters of Science.

In spring 2014 we organized a soccer tournament with the IT- students of both universities in Tampere. The employees of Vincit had also pieced together one team. The event had over 60 participants and after the tournament we all gathered together to eat, drink and distribute the prizes.

In fall 2014 we organized a student code sauna, where two best participants were rewarded with a two week internship at Vincit. The students themselves decided when they wanted to do the internship and they were able to work on real client projects under supervision. This way the students were able to see what it's like to work at Vincit, and if they enjoyed their time here, they could stay here for the summer. This year we will continue with the same concept when we organize our Vincit Hackfest - Hekuma Edition. After the IT-Hekuma fair, which is organized by Tampere University of Technology, the students can take part in our event, and the winners will get a paid internship and a chance to take part in the real Vincit Hackfest.

In November 2014, our student employees were informing people what it's like to work at Vincit at the student recruiting fair IT-Hekuma. They were also in recruiting commercials telling about their own work at Vincit. Our student employees will also have a big role in the 2015 IT-Hekuma.

Vincit has had over 30 visiting student groups within the past year. We have also given several presentations at the Tampere University of Technology, Tampere Adult Education Center, University of Tampere, Tampere University of Applied Sciences, Y-Campus, Haaga-Helia and Metropolia. With Demola we also organized a student project (<http://tampere.demola.net/projects/google-glass-traffic-warden>) and to the Tampere University of Technology we offered a subject for a development team.

Vincit is still in a tight cooperation with the innovation concept Demola, which brings together students, universities and employers. The projects that we participated in are e.g. the development of the mobile application Face game, mobile appointment reservation system, virtual reality rehabilitation and “mobile master key”. The smart glass based, register plate recognizing application for traffic wardens, which was developed with TUT and Demola, became a huge success: one member of the Demola team got a job from Vincit and is now expanding the sales of the product abroad. A six person project team is now working on the project at Vincit.

Co-operation with students is important for Vincit so that students know our working culture and what kind of people we are looking for. For the working students, in addition to our mentor team, we offer two mentors who are specialized in supporting your academic career. The mentors guide the students in combining work and education as well as finishing the master's theses. The theses are always about a client project, and the software development part can be done straight at work while getting paid. In addition we offer a two week paid leave to write the thesis.

Over 10% of Vincit's employees are students so there are many internships in a year. This also guarantees the diversity of our employees, because students bring new views and up to date information to the table, which helps everyone in their work.

Last year we once again had our Summer@Vincity campaign, where 5 students had the chance to work on client projects, under the supervision of mentors. Their goals and development were assessed regularly during team meetings. Four out of the five stayed at Vincit as part-time employees, and one is coming back next year after finishing his degree.

Vincit has a good reputation as an employer within students - Vincit took part in a Most Responsible Summer Job competition and received 3rd place. The survey was done by asking summer employees about their experiences in the application process and at work.

In previous years we have done a Vincity on the Road tour, which went around five university cities in Finland to showcase Vincit as an employer. In every city of the tour we organized a software development lecture and a recreational gathering, where we discussed about what a good job application is like and how to prepare for a job interview. We also pimped the Vincit van according to the theme.



We also offer internships for trade school students as well as elementary school's trainees. The elementary school trainees get to do coding practises and are introduced to our industry and employees.

2b. How are new employees taken accepted in your organization orientated to your organization's working culture?

2b.1 Before the start

Orientation at Vincit starts from the job interview and even before that, when the person explores our social media accounts and reads our employee stories from our recruiting website. The questions in the HR-interview focus on our culture and encourage the applicant to take up even the most troubling subjects right away. Signing the contract is also a big part of the orientation. When signing the contract, our employees are given credentials to an introduction board on Trello, where they can find everything concrete about our orientation. An IT-expert, project lead and HR member are also attached to the board so that everyone can follow the tasks. The employee can also see everyone else's tasks on the board and remind them if something hasn't advanced as planned. The tasks are colour coded so that everyone can easily see who's responsibility a given task is.

During the interview process we discuss the employee's professional goals and interests, and based on this information we pick the first project for him/her. A new employee can join a sales prioritization meeting before the start if he/she wishes. This way the employee can see how the allocations for different projects work and discuss different options with the sales team. Our HR team also represent new employees' hopes and wishes in the prioritization meetings, because from the interviews they know what the new employees' dream positions and -projects are.

When the contract meeting is finished, the new employee is given a "Discover Vincy" guide book. The purpose of the guide book is to introduce the employee especially to the working culture of Vincit. The employee also gets an information board, which describes what to do in different situations.

Every person who has signed a contract is invited to our parties and events even before the employment starts.

Every employee can choose their own title in their business cards, and appear in LinkedIn with whatever title they choose.



Before the first day at work, a project lead makes sure that everything is taken care of for the first workday.

2b.2 First week

On the first day every new employee receives a Vincit welcome package, which includes Vincit coffee and tea, Vincit duck, laptop case, Vincit-slippers, chili candies and other Vincit merchandise.

On the first day the new employee is introduced to our internal practices. The employee meets his/her project lead and the members of the project team, who introduce the new employee to the team's practices and procedures. After this the person is introduced to our office. During the first week the new employee will have a chat with our HR expert about general policies such as our satisfaction guarantee, wellness program, benefits and career path. The team will take the new employee for lunch so that everyone could get to know the person better. Every new employee should also send a greeting email to everyone and include a selfie, so that people at the office would recognize the new employee.

During the orientation we also discuss about how to advance towards the employee's goals and dreams. In addition to familiarizing with our career model, we try to come up with concrete steps, such as talking to a coach or starting a comp dev -project. The central idea in our HR orientation is not giving information about our company, but to encourage the employee to make career-advancing decisions, to influence his/her work and working environment, and to ask questions and share ideas. During the orientation we also make sure that the employee has found all the essential channels on Slack - general channel, the office channel, channels for interesting technologies etc. We also go through all the groups for recreational activities and Vincit Clubs, so that the new employee can join interesting channels and meet people with the same interests.

We intentionally orientate our new employees at the same time when they are working. In our environment this is the best way to support genuine learning - the person gets to see our operational models in their real environment and ask more about them if needed. Project lead's task is to support and guide the person in

everyday work and make sure that the person has all the support he/she needs. We receive a lot of positive feedback from our new employees about how they have been taken in as experts regardless of their past experience.

In order that the new employee would get to know the organization as well as possible, he/she will take part in a Welcome to Vincit! orientation day. The day consists of lectures from our Managing Director Mikko, Sales Director Jarkko, Project Director Juha and a representative from our design team Beautifuls.

A new employee's task within the first couple weeks is to invite every employee to the office Plaza for coffee and cake - or some other delicious snack the employee chooses.

2b.3 First months

Our HR Manager/ HR expert will have a chat with every new employee within a couple months from the start of employment and the discussion is focused on the employee's observations from the first couple weeks. This is important information for the company as well because new employees can observe our operations with a fresh, unbiased view, and they usually see things that older employees don't. During the discussion, the parties decide on what to bring to the sales team's attention when planning for future projects. During this discussion we also go through our employee satisfaction guarantee - how has the working culture felt like and is everything going well for the employee.

3. Inspiring

How do you create an inspiring work environment where the employees feel that their work is meaningful and they're not just working to get paid?

When answering the question, you can talk about the following subjects:

- Operation models that are designed to strengthen your company's values, mission, vision etc.
- Customs that signal the employees about their work's value for the customer and society
- Shared stories that strengthen the pride of the employees.

3.1 A shared dream

We operate in an industry where change is impossible to predict - everything changes constantly and more often than not, highly surprisingly. In this type of environment, making highly elaborate strategies doesn't work, but being able to adapt is important. For us, being able to adapt requires that every employee feels that their work, and the story of Vincit is meaningful. For this reason we have included our personnel in the planning of our visions and values from the start.

When it comes to predicting the changes in the industry, we believe that our management isn't any better at guessing than our employees. There are as many visions as there are employees, and listening to everyone is crucial when planning for the future.

In 2011 we organized an event called Vincit Vision to map out what our employees hoped from the future. Every team got assigned to describe in their own words, where they wanted to be in 2015. From the responses we gathered three most common themes: desire to be top professionals, desire to be bold and experiment on new

things, and a desire to be so good someday, that our clients would pursue us. From these responses we created our vision statement “Vincit is a top professional service company that is copied by competitors and desired by customers”. This statement is our organizational guideline - every decision is compared to it, and examined if it bring us closer to our dream.

In 2014 we wanted to find out if the same dream was still meaningful - after all our personnel had grown considerably and our environment had also changed. The teams were assigned to imagine that they lived in year 2020 and all of their professional goals had been met. From this situation the teams had to design one picture that would visually summarize their dreams. The pictures were designed with our partner who in the end pictured the persons in the middle of their dreams. When the pictures were ready, the teams presented them to each other during breakfast. From the pictures it was exciting and easy to describe your own dreams and the event turned out to be very successful. After the event we came to a conclusion that our big dream was still the same. We recognized four different aspects where we have to invest in order to make the dream come true. The dream pictures can be found at our office, and they're the first thing everyone see when they're visiting. It's important to keep our dreams visible - tangible picture create excitement and faith in fulfilling the dream.



Our shared dream is also monitored by our whole personnel - our “how’s it going?” questionnaire, which is sent every other week to all our employees, asks an opinion to a statement “we are close to reaching our shared dream”. The results can be viewed from a TV at our office plaza, and so far 95 % of our employees think that we are close.

3.2 A career model based on personal desires

Inspiring, and the meaningfulness of the job is also supported by our career model which, just like our vision, is based on individual desires (see part 7, developing). Every employee has thought about their own goals and how they would be possible to reach at Vincit. After that, in the one to one and mentoring conversations we have talked about what kind of steps should be taken in order to reach the goals, and how the company could help in these steps. This practice points out to our employees that we genuinely appreciate their individuality and that we want to help them reach their personal goals. All hopes and wishes are discussed with the project team before the start of a project. The wishes also guide the work of our sales team, so they have a real effect on what kind of projects Vincit takes and who is resourced in each project.

Openly discussing about our employees' hopes and dreams have inspired them to bring out more, which has led to further progress in their work satisfaction.

We encourage our employees to bring out their wishes, because we want that their everyday work supports them as well as possible. This increases motivation and work satisfaction. When resourcing for a project, we try to keep our employees' wishes in mind and find people who are interested in that specific project. Our Vincit resumes have a separate part for wishes, which are actively followed by the resourcing team. Everyone has access to everyone's resumes, and this way they can also see each other's wishes. In addition the members of each project team shares their short term wishes with each other before the start of the project, and the project is designed to support these wishes.

We have also considered role descriptions in our career model. We have wanted to describe only the absolute best performance an employee can give. This way we don't have to frame our role descriptions for any specific know-how, personality or experience - everyone can reach these top performances by relying on their strengths. From the company perspective, only the actual performances matter, not what's written on the paper. The top performance for every role is specified by our employees, and they are mainly views on how to reach our shared Vincit dream.

A developer's role description has been worked on for example by playing a simulation game with a group, where the events of the game consisted of typical events in a developer's work day. After every case, we considered what kind of performance would be the most efficient for the company, client and the employee. The material we gathered from the game has been used in the making our role descriptions. Everyone doesn't have to reach a top performance, but it works as a guideline for creating personal goals - people have felt that it is important to consider what things bring the most value for our organisation. In addition, the role descriptions have been worked on in a group discussion online.

3.3 Visible values and culture

Because we rely on having top professional employees, we think it's important that everyone has the power to make their own decisions based on their perceptions. We have a slogan that goes "do it as you would" and a "No Policy-policy", which means that different kinds of strict rules are only created when there's really good rationale for that.

These customs highlight our values and signal our employees that we trust in their decision making. We also have a Monthly Gavel, which emphasizes our appreciation for our employees' decision making.

Everyone also has the power to affect their own work and working environment. Our employees can freely acquire things that increase their job wellness, for example a "coffee isle" that was acquired by one of our project teams.

Every willing employee gets a company credit card for their use - this way we're trying to further ease decision making and purchasing things.

At Vincit we experiment on new things eagerly, and even the wildest ideas aren't declined right away - this way we try to maintain an enthusiastic culture of experimentation. One good example of this is the story of our hippie-van. One of our employees had stumbled upon a red hippie-van in an online auction and half jokingly suggested that our company should get it. People started joking around about the idea remembered a comment that our Managing Director once made in an interview "this isn't a hippie camp". The next day one of our designers had made draft of the hippie-van with a picture of our Managing Director's face and a speech bubble about the hippie camp. The majority of our employees probably thought that the joking would have ended there, but after a couple weeks a Vincit-kleinbus drove to our office parking lot, with the picture of course, and we're still proud of it.

We emphasize our customers' value by giving them a 100% satisfaction guarantee. If a client in any part of the project feels like our work hasn't brought any additional value to them, they don't have to pay anything for our work so far. This drives our employees to truly understand the client's vision and to try to find the best solution for the client.

We also encourage our own experts to take part in different seminars and to give their own presentations in different events. We pay for the tickets and travel expenses for weekend events and other events that are out of work time, if the event is related to Vincit's operations. We have our own, twice a year occurring, Vincit Teatime seminar, where our experts are able to give presentations for larger audiences. This is a great way for our employees to share their knowledge and raise awareness of their expertise outside our organization. (see <http://vincitteatime.fi/>)

Our employees are proud of their colleagues know-how. For example in our Vincit blog, top professionals write publications that are read by professionals of the field and raise interest globally. (eg. <https://www.vincit.fi/blog/introducing-moron-js-a-new-orm-for-node-js/>). Our employees also take part in seminars around the world and this way increase our conspicuousness and attractiveness as an employer.

Our team spirit is strengthened every year with our Team Building Seminar, and other shared events - at Vincit we have a party every time there is even the slightest reason for it (and sometimes just for the sake of a party).

One of our most important values at Vincit is satisfied employees and encouraging them to affect the things they feel are important. Our decision making is guided by a very simple phrase: Satisfied employees create satisfied customers. Every decision we make is mirrored to our shared dream and these two goals, and they are the only things that we measure at Vincit.

3.4 Client projects and stories

The value of our employees for our clients and the society are emphasized actively. Right from the start of the project our developers are invited to client meetings, so that their expertise would be highlighted. The whole team meets up with the client every two weeks and everyone can share their own suggestions and ideas. The team members also have a big influence on how the project is executed in practice - they are allowed to choose their operating methods and the technologies they use.

A retrospective, where we evaluate the advancement of the project and possible challenges, is held regularly with our clients. A third part is always the host of the retro. This emphasizes the significance of the team to our client - the team can give feedback and development suggestions also to the client so that the project could be as successful as possible. The notes from the retrospectives are usually shared with our whole organization so that everyone can learn about them and be aware about the projects inside the company.

In the starting point of the project, a project lead sends a description of the project to all of our employees, which supports our openness and excitement, because we know about all the cool stuff going on in our company. The sales team also informs everyone about a new client with an email, and successful projects are shared at our Afternoon Tea. Vincit also regularly organizes Open Space events, where our employees present their projects to others.

So that the projects would match with our employees' wishes, the sales team listens to developers carefully when choosing a client. The sales team tries to find projects based on developers' ideas and so that the technologies they use are top notch and modern - for example smart glasses Google Glass and Oculus Rift had a lot of interest within our developers, so we ordered them to our office and asked our employees what they could create from them. Now our employees have designed a traffic warden concept in cooperation with a Demola-team, which developed into a successful product. For Oculus Rift we are developing several applications that can revolutionize different industries in the future, for example the construction industry.

A significant addition to our client projects has been our Vincit Client Path. In a six month project we interviewed several of our clients and took part in different kinds of client encounters throughout the project.

The success of the project is also supported by project flow - a project tool that we go through with every new employee. Even though every project is different, a clear visual picture signals the most important steps of every project. <https://www.vincit.fi/blog/standardizing-agile-project-delivery/>

3.5 The importance of our work more extensively

The importance of our employees for the society was strongly emphasized in our Summer@Vincity campaign, where our employees implemented an open source outdoor activity service. This way our employees got to do work with a societal meaning and received a lot of good feedback from it.

We also support our employees in their own development projects, that are usually focused on open source development. This way our employees can affect the development of the whole industry. Examples of these development projects are various recreational software projects and personal blogs.

A societally important project is also the Vincit Public Laboratory - the revolution of public administration's digital development. It makes it possible for a public administration organization to make digital ideas true in only a couple months. The people interested in utilizing the idea invest in the idea and get to be the first to develop the idea to a service, and enjoy the benefits.

Pride for one's work is also enforced by Code from Finland -symbol launched by Vincit (<http://www.codefromfinland.com>). We are proud that our work is top quality, done by top professionals, and that we pay taxes to Finland.

Vincit is part of the national Code School project, where companies can participate in teaching kids about coding. This year Vincit has organized three code schools that are open for everyone and an additional code school for the children of our employees. Our employees have also done a code guide book for children.

4. Communicating

How does the top management of your organization share information with employees and strengthen the transparency of activities?

Answer:

Communicating with the management is a natural part of a workday, and talking to management should be done the same relaxed way as talking to colleagues. The Managing Director's and the Human Operations Director's workstations are located in the middle of the break room, where our employees spend time daily, and the sales team's room is right next to them. The doors are always kept open and anyone can come and talk with us while walking by. The management has a coffee break with other employees daily and having lunch with a group isn't uncommon.

4.1 Everyone has access to business information

All the information about our business activities is open for every employee:

- Formerly the management's weekly agenda was open for everyone to see in Trello, and questions about it were answered by the management. This practice has been put down because it slowed down decision making and the openness of communication. Now the managers make decision quickly about their areas of responsibility communicating directly with people who have knowledge of the subject. When a member of the management comes up with an idea, he/she shares it right away with the whole company - for example our Managing Director Mikko's idea about going public (described more later in this section).

- Every manager gives a short presentation about their area of responsibility at our monthly Afternoon Tea event. The presentation highlights the key points of different operations, for example the human operations presentation has information from the number of job applications to the results of our Happy or Not questionnaire.
- Our resourcing-/prioritization chart has also been opened for the whole personnel and from there, everyone can see all of our projects (including prospects) and our resourcing situation. This way our employees can inform the sales team if they see something that interests them, or ask questions if their name pops up in a project that they need more information about.
- The sales team's weekly meeting is where the most decisions concerning our employees are made (resourcing, client cases etc.). To increase the openness of the meeting, we have opened an online stream for every interested employee to watch.
- The backlog of marketing is also open for everyone and the posts can be seen in the #marketing channel of Slack.
- Our salary model is also open for every employee, even the CEO's salary is open for everyone to see.
- The management's calendars are also open for everyone, and our employees can see what our managers do during the day and with what clients they are in meeting with.
- Our sales director gives a presentation about the state of sales every month at our Afternoon Tea (potential leads, offers sent, won and lost projects with explanations).
- Formerly, when the sales team won a new deal they rang a bell at the office plaza as a sign of success. In addition everyone received an email about a closed deal. Nowadays new deals are closed with a much faster pace, so the bell ringing and the emails aren't practical anymore. We have moved to a real time sharing of business information straight from the sales team's CRM system (Pipedrive). The new Slack tool has also made sharing business information easier. The chat is integrated with pipedrive and #deal_flow channel shows every new lead and won and lost deals.
- The sales director also sends everyone a report about our financial situation once a month - it includes information from billing ratio predictions to profit situation. This way everyone can follow if the sales team reaches their goals and what the company's financial situation looks like.
- Vincit uses self made ERP system, where every employee has access to our business information such as project resourcing, contracts, team utilization and billing information. A lot of information about the projects are also shared internally.
- Vincit has a sales channel in Slack, where all current discussion is done. The members of the channel are the sales team, every team leader, and other people who are interested in sales.
- Every press release is shared internally before the release so that everyone can comment and affect what we share to the public. The press releases are also designed together in the marketing channel of Slack.

4.2 Information channels

Vincit uses various information channels. In our daily communications we use the chat tool Slack, which we took in use after our employee suggested it with a post-it note in our idea board. Slack is in active use and it has increased our openness, information sharing, and personal conversations. We have a couple hundred of different Slack channels from general discussions to channels for specific offices and from humor channels to project team communication channels.

Slack also allow you to write anonymously to any channel so that for example an employee can ask certain questions from the management anonymously. In addition every official information is also shared via email. People are allowed to share even the most critical opinions and no one moderates any channels. The management also usually takes part into conversations to share their views about a given subject.

Once a month we organize our Vincit Afternoon Tea, which is an event where every employee gathers to hear our current news (new employees, happy life events such as marriages, graduations etc. new projects or changes in projects, financial situation, state of sales etc). Typically when we start developing or changing something, we introduce it to everyone in the idea phase and listen to our employees' comments about the idea. At the Afternoon Tea we have considered for example changing our bonus- and salary model and our career model. Also the conversation about going public as started at our Afternoon Tea, when Mikko told everyone about his idea. The conversation has been continued every month, keeping everyone on the loop and taking every opinion into account.

After the Afternoon Tea we always have a company party, where we continue the conversation in a more relaxed atmosphere. The management also takes part in the party. A lot of feedback and development ideas are gathered from these events because enable a fair and relaxed conversation about current events and issues.

The project leads (15 people) meet once a week on a project lead coffee break. In the meeting they share their news and get peer support for their daily work. In the meeting it is easy to point out problem situations and ask for assistance right away.

Working out with the Managing Director has been done at our Tampere office for a long time, and the same practice has been continued at our Helsinki office. Working out together enables you to get more personal with the management and to share more sensitive things.

Corporate events are also important for sharing information. For example our annual Team Building Seminar where we go abroad with the whole company for a couple days is an important event to spend time with each other and discuss about the company's current events. At Hackfest our management cooks food for the whole company and socializes with the employees in a relaxed atmosphere.

Because there is a lot going on all the time at Vincit, someone had the idea of following our data material in a visual format. We created Vincit Dashboard, which is at our office plaza for everyone to see. A big flat screen TV shows in real time the number of our employees, client satisfaction rate, new social media posts, and how close we are of reaching our dream.



Vincit has a couple of pivotal processes, which our most important goals lean on. A successful project creates a satisfied customer, and that's visualized with our project flow and our client path. The dreams of our employees are described with our career model. From the communications perspective it is important that these processes are described concretely - this way we get clarity and openness to an self-imposed organization and we can give freedom to our teams because they have clear frames to lean on.

Project flow: Project flow is a process which we go through with every new employee. Even though every project is different than the other, a clear visual picture informs about every client project's most important steps.

Client experience: the Client Path informs about the same steps of the project, but from the client's point of view. It is essential for our employees to understand this side of the project too, and that's why the Client Path is pictured in a large poster at our office Plaza.

Career model: The career model is picture of a path that informs about different alternatives in pursuing one's dreams. The career model is also pictured in a large poster at our office Plaza.

4.3 Management's openness and encouraging to challenge

At Vincit, the management encourages everyone to communicate. We value courage. For this reason we have developed a habit of using a figure of a grumpy man with a fur hat to signal when our conversations create strong emotions and opinions. One of our key phrases in marketing and management is that nothing will ever change if no one gets pissed off, and to express this, our marketing director used to use this image of a grumpy man. Our employees thought it was funny, and made an emoji about it in Slack. Often when we are discussing about a sensitive matter we add in a grumpy man -emoji, and the dashboard at our office plaza keeps count on how many days since someone got pissed off. The goal is that the figure would always be zero, since it would mean that we have had critical conversations.



At Vincit, every decision concerning the company is brought to mutual discussion.

Example: One of the most significant decision processes in the company history is about the planning of our listing for public trading. Everything started with a calendar invitation, where our Managing Director Mikko invited everyone to the auditorium. The invitation said that based on a preliminary idea, we are starting a mutual discussion about how Vincit could take a bigger role in the global digitalization field. From the start we opened an #IPO-channel in Slack and the conversation was lively. We encouraged everyone to point out faults so that every perspective could be taken into account in the preparations.

The management doesn't hesitate to talk about even the most challenging subjects, but we tell about things as they are. This increases our employees' trust on that the management will act fairly and responsibly even in the most challenging situations.

5. Listening

5a. What are the ways for employees to ask questions, give feedback or communicate with the company's top management and especially with the managers?

5a.1 Diverse channels to influence

The first chance to ask questions comes in the preparations for the job interview - In the preparations we encourage the applicant to think of questions for the management. The interviews and especially the interview with our Managing Director are primarily conversations where both parties can freely ask questions. The applicant is asked many times about what he/she would like to know about Vincit - what aspects are important to him/her when choosing an employer.

A new employee has a chance to attend the sales team's prioritization meeting before the start of employment, and this way the sales team can hear the project wishes directly from the person. If the new employee can't make it to the meeting, he/she can call directly to our Sales Director, or an HR expert can forward the message for the sales team.

Also during the Welcome to Vincit orientation day new employees think of demanding questions for the management. The purpose is to signal that the management really wants to hear everyone's thoughts and opinions.

In Vincit's culture it is important that everyone can be honest and tell if something is bothering. Employees can ask questions from the whole management through Slack, email or face to face. We also used to have an anonymous feedback channel, where everyone could send feedback anonymously and it went straight to our Managing Director, who responded to everyone the next day. The anonymous feedback channel has been replaced by the anonymous mode on Slack, where you can write anonymously to any channel. This way every employee sees the feedback and the response right away. We receive anonymous questions a couple times a month, but the majority of questions are asked with people's real names, which is definitely a better alternative for the sake of openness.

Our toilet walls are covered with blank white boards, where people can write essentially about anything that comes to their minds anonymously.

In 2014 the sales team met up with every single Vincit employee face to face. This way everyone had their chance to give input regarding the business activities, and get straight feedback for whatever was on their minds for example projects. The dialogue between the sales team and developers is crucial so that both can understand each other's perspectives. It is also usually the best way for a developer to bring up their projects wishes and influence the development of business activities. The sales team still meets up with developers on a regular basis because they are involved in the everyday work life of every client project. A member of the sales team tries to attend retrospectives with the developers and the client, so that they could keep up with the project as well as they can.

The openness of the sales prioritization meeting has been increased by our Sales Director and other members of the sales team meeting with people at our office Plaza before the meetings. As an attraction to go and talk to the sales team they serve delicious coconut balls. The people at our Helsinki office are encouraged to pick up a phone and call. Nowadays it's even possible to follow the prioritization meeting on an online stream.

So that we keep track about everyone's wishes, we have made a title in our intra named "How to influence your projects". We send a questionnaire every week to our employees, and the answers about the wishes of upcoming projects go straight to our sales team's prioritization tool to see. People can also write about their wishes in their Vincit resumes. The management can also see people's wishes from the "How's it going" questionnaires.

Every other week we send out a "How's it going" questionnaire to every employee via email. The answers are seen only by our HR team, so the bar for telling sensitive details is low. If an answer to a question is lower than the average level, or many answers are on the average level, we contact the person personally. After this

together we try to figure out how to make things better. Our employees have felt that the questionnaire is very helpful and because of the questionnaire we have moved many things forward. The HR team regularly goes through who hasn't answered the questionnaire and checks their work satisfaction by meeting up with them. People's well being, project situation, satisfaction and wishes are asked regularly through natural interactions - from coffee breaks to Slack conversations.

Good place for listening is also the project launch, where we go through everyone's personal wishes and goals with the HR team.

Because we don't have bosses in our organization anymore, we have underlined our project leads that even though they're not superiors, it is important to stay informed about the team members' feelings and interested about their wishes. This means that they have to take the wishes forward to the sales team and the HR team. The only "managerial job" a project lead has to do is to be interested about the team members.

We measure our employees' weekly satisfaction with HappyOrNot emoji indicator. The feedback is sent to everyone once in a month and it is discussed together at our Afternoon Tea.

5a.2 The management makes announcement actively

For every change concerning our business activities we organize a separate info- and conversation event.

The management makes announcement actively and getting information is a requirement for being able to affect the company's direction. Every employee controls their everyday work life by themselves but they also take part in shaping the company's future.

The members of the management actively take part in recreational events and try to have conversations with employees outside the office in a more relaxed environment. This type of association lowers the bars of communication substantially and the conversations become more or less peer to peer conversations, where feedback is given more boldly.



5b. What ways does an employee have to make suggestions / decisions about subjects that affect their own work, working environment or the whole company?

5b.1 Influencing the direction of the company

The management presents their own ideas and development proposals always to the whole company before execution and asks for comments and feedback. This way the management's proposals are usually on the same line with the employees' ideas - if they're poor or unfair, they're not approved.

Our employees take part in very concrete decision processes that determine our company's future. Especially the use of Slack has added the amount of conversation and influencing. A lot of conversations also happen in person in private meeting or with everyone at our Afternoon Tea.

5b.2 Influencing one's own work

Every project is started with a project launch, where the everyday work practices and the team's goals are established. An HR expert is always involved in the launch to make sure that everyone's personal goals and wishes are taken into account. The progress is monitored regularly through Slack.

In addition to the retros between the client and the project team, the team organizes internal retrospectives where they focus on possible changes in practices so that the project would be even more successful. The retro is usually hosted by a third party.

The retrospective practices have been developed further during the past year at Vincit. The teams can ask for possible hosts on a #facilitating-channel in Slack, and everyone has access to a folder that has material for hosting a retro. We have also taken a card game that is meant for facilitating in order to enliven the conversation.

With the new career model, our employees have started to further develop their subjects of interest and this way created totally new roles in the company.

Last year we developed our career- and salary model, both in cooperation with our employees.

We continuously strive to create even more functional frames for independent decision making. It is crucial for our competitiveness that our employees actively take part in the development of the company, and we're trying to support it as much as possible.

5b.3 Influencing the work environment

The project teams have the power to affect the comfort of their work environment by decorating their workstation without any specific budget. The same applies to recreational events: teams can decide what to do without any specific budget or acceptance. The project teams are small and they act very autonomously - they can determine their own work procedures within the company guidelines. Many teams generate different kinds of experimental ideas in order to improve their job wellness, and they can do it independently without restrictions. The management supports these kinds of improvements if they request, but lets the teams act independently if they wish.

The project teams also have the right to decide what technologies they use in a project. This way they have the ability to pick the technologies that best support every member's know how, and the project is likely to be more successful.

We also have an order form for different kinds of work tools and books, and every employee can freely list the utensils they need. Our IT-team makes an order monthly based on the list, and no one has to get anything separately approved.

We have also introduced a Monthly Gavel custom at Vincit. Every month one employee can make a decision that is automatically approved by knocking a gavel. No budget, no restrictions, no rules. The only guideline is that the decision should make Vincit even better place to work. The gavel gets to the next employee every month at our Afternoon Tea. This encourages people to make decisions and influence their work life. The Monthly Gavel custom has also developed during the past year. One gavel decision was to double the amount of gavels so that our Helsinki office could get one too. One of our employees made a gavel decision to start an "Open Gavel" custom, where anyone who has a good idea can knock the gavel and the idea is approved. At our last month's Afternoon Tea one of our employees made a decision to get a shuffle board to our office.

Our employees have the right to organize any recreational activities they wish at our office. A good example is our annual table tennis tournament that we play at our office during coffee breaks.

Our employees are also really active to take action in order to improve their work environment. One of our employees got fed up with our lunch- and recreational benefits and started to do research on changing the vendor. He conducted surveys from our employees and has kept up a conversation about the change in Slack and has even contacted some new potential vendors.

One of last year's most significant acquisitions at Vincit was our O2H (Office to Human) -project. From the feedback we got from our employees and from the GPTW survey we realized that our office space should be renewed to support today's challenging, teamwork oriented, thoughtful work. The renovation plans for our old office had already started, but in February 2015, Managing Director Mikko invited everyone for a meeting and told that during the summer we would be moving to a new office that we all would design from start to finish.

Everyone has been really satisfied with the result and continued to improve the workplace - just as it was planned. In August we organized a Pimp My Office! night, where we ate, drank, and decorated the office together.

Our Helsinki office got a little crowded as well, and with a tight schedule they moved to new premises in October 2015. We partnered with the same design company that was already familiar with our culture. The purpose wasn't to copy our Tampere office, but to create whatever the employees wanted - for example their work procedures were a little different so they wanted an open office without any screens. The project was very communal and the employees organized a painting work party for example.

One important aspect in affecting one's work environment is the designing of the project spaces. Part 8a.4 describes our Vincit Seatmap, which helps our employees to find their colleagues from the office, see where there is free space, and think of good space for their projects.

5c. How can the employees bring up unpleasant situations in the work community and solve conflict situations with managers?

Answer:

5c.1 Conflicts and bringing up problems

Our culture highlights the appreciation of employees, and the importance of openness and influencing are brought to everyone's attention right from the start. Everyone can choose their mentor with whom they can talk about problematic subjects. We also have our external career coaches, who are an even more neutral party to help a person in a conflict situation. A person can be in touch with a mentor or a career coach directly, because their information can be found from our intra, or alternatively a person can ask someone from our HR team about who would be the best person to talk to in a given situation. All the conversations are fully confidential, and Vincit's management doesn't get any information, if the person doesn't want.

Our employees also have right to change projects if they wish. All of our practical procedures are written on an "info board", which also informs about how to act in a conflict situation.

Problems are also continuously highlighted in our common Slack channels and we encourage this type of open discussion. Everyone also has the possibility to write anonymously, but the most important factor is a project lead's ability to notice conflicts within the project team. A project lead's only managerial job is to be interested in the wellness of the project members.

6. Giving thanks

In what ways do you acknowledge good work and extra effort or other achievements in your organization? If these practices include a prize (money, gifts, vacation etc.) inform us more.

Answer:

6.1 Monetary reimbursements

The traditional way of acknowledging your employees' good work is to give monetary reimbursements. At Vincit, other ways of giving thanks are more important and we will tell more about it after describing our monetary bonus system.

All of our employees are included in our bonus system where a monthly bonus is consists of the company's monthly profit, and the amount of the bonus is the same from a summer intern to our CEO. This way every employee benefits from our company's success directly. In 2014 we gave 45 raises - 37 of them were given without the person requesting it. The justifications have usually been the improvement of professionalism and good work. This way we show appreciation for people's personal development, and it shows in the salary. In 2015 we gave 77 raises, 51 of them without the person requesting it. The justifications for a raise were shared for everyone during our Afternoon Tea.

We also reward people for developing their professionalism during their spare time with our Competence Development -bonus. Developing one's know how can be anything that a person sees is important for his/her profession.

At Vincit you can also request a raise for your colleague.

6.2 Other ways of rewarding

Giving feedback is vivid at Vincit. Nowadays our most popular channel for awarding people is our #notbad channel in Slack.

The #notbad channel also has all the good feedback we receive from our customers.

We also have established rewarding shelf after an employee's gavel decision, from where people can take something small and reward a colleague for good work. The rewarding shelf contains eg. movie tickets, candy, Kinder-eggs, Donald Duck comics.

If we receive good feedback from a customer, the team is usually awarded during our Afternoon Tea. Satisfied customers have sometimes been invited to our Afternoon tea to present the award themselves. Sometimes clients want to reward some of our employees with their own ways.

The teams are allowed to organize team days, as a reward for good work, and go and do something fun - all the way from a restaurant dinner to go karts and minigolf.

One of our employees once brought up that every time when something is celebrated there should be cake. He signed up as a volunteer to make sure that in the future there would always be cake, and now the Cake King brings cake to the office almost weekly.

Graduations are always celebrated. For writing a master's thesis we give a two week paid vacation. In addition the subject of the thesis is chosen from a client project so that the coding for the thesis can be done during working hours (the majority of the work for an IT thesis consists of coding). A person's salary is also reconsidered after graduating - this way we award the person for finishing his/her studies.

We also give thanks to our employees' families: for example during women's day we sent every employees' wives, girlfriends, moms and sisters a box of chocolates. Families of our employees also have free entrance to our wellness trainings. Many of our benefits pertain the families of our employees. We also invite spouses to our parties and organize family days regularly.

7. Developing

How does your organization help its employees to find and develop talent, challenge themselves professionally, advance in their careers and strengthen their personal growth?

Answer:

7.1 Starting from goals and wishes

Our career model starts from the wishes of our employees. It aims to deepen one's expertise and to help our employees to find their strengths and to take more responsibility in their work and wellness. One other principal function of our career model is to encourage people to make meaningful decisions that they feel are important to them. It will not offer the same frame for everyone, but gives different opportunities to utilize based on a person's motivation and life situation. People who are genuinely interested in their work are enthusiastic to learn and discover more. They are able to work better and to share their enthusiasm to others.

In addition to describing one's goals, one important aspect of our career model is to recognize one's strengths.

A couple times a person's goals have been unrelated to Vincit's activities. For example one of our employees hoped that one day he could start up his own company around a product he had made in his freetime. We wanted to support this, and made a deal that allowed him to work for Vincit part time and set up his business at the same time. Other person in turn hoped that one day he could work with robotics. This kind of experimental work was launched in the University of Tampere, and we encouraged the person to apply for the project while giving him a leave for the time being. He returned to Vincit in the beginning of November. One employee dreamed of a researcher exchange project abroad - it became possible in last January when he moved to the USA for a three month exchange program.

One other example is answering to international career plans: Some of our employees have stated their desires about international projects and working abroad. At the time we are offering project opportunities in Europe and the USA.

7.2 Mentoring and coaching conversations and night school

Every employee can freely choose their own mentor. Everyone is reminded about mentoring conversations twice a year, but people can have as many conversations as they feel are necessary. People book a conversation with a mentor by themselves and every mentor with a slightly different area of expertise are introduced in our Intra. Every mentor's goal is to support our employees in the planning of their careers. People can change their mentors whenever they want so that they have the power to pick the best mentor for every situation. Every person also chooses the agenda of the conversation. People's life situations are so different that we can't assume everyone shares the same career goals. For example if a person feels that evaluating his/her career goals is irrelevant at the time, he/she can move on to discussing more relevant subjects. What's essential is that everyone can freely choose what topics are relevant to discuss about and this way the keys for personal development are in the hands of the person, not the mentor.

People sign up as a mentors every now and then. For example an employee with a lot of work experience from abroad wanted to mentor people with international plans, a couple people mentor employees who are working on their master's thesis and our CEO mentor's people who are interested in our business activities and the IT-industry as a whole.

There is no criteria in becoming a mentor (experience, title, etc.), but an essential part of being a mentor is to give peer support - sharing one's own experiences and visions, and above all listening to the person. The mentors also receive support - we have organized a mentoring clinic, with our coach Nenne, to help our mentors with questions concerning mentoring. Based on the discussions, Nenne delivered some material to support the mentoring discussions.

We also offer external help for our employees in considering their goals and careers. The idea behind it is that sometimes it can be easier for a person to talk about personal goals and life situations with a more neutral party. Career coaches can also offer better quality services, because they are professionals in the field and possess better know-how than our mentors. Everyone decides their own coaching topics and the management doesn't have to be informed - we trust that our employees go to coaching meetings in order to solve problems that will help them in their work, no matter what the subject is. We have received a lot of good feedback about the coaching meeting from our employees. Every coach is introduced in our Intra, and once a month they visit our office in order for us to meet with them without appointment.

Our employees can freely choose their mentors and coaches, and contact them directly. We also encourage people to contact HR if they are in need of mentoring or coaching - this way we can consider a best fitting coach or mentor together and contact them for the employee. For new employees we pick a mentor together right after the start of employment. We actively encourage people to book mentoring or coaching sessions for example in our How's it going? questionnaires.

We also organize a night school 3-4 times a year, and the theme is always voted by our employees. The subjects are usually related to different meta-skills that people wouldn't normally study. In September the subject was brain wellness, in November it was time management skills. Everyone can also bring a guest, a spouse for example.

7.3 Abandoning traditional managerial work

In 2014 we abandoned the traditional managerial hierarchy system and started to consider ways that would best help our employees to succeed in their work and increase employee wellness and satisfaction. We realized that all the work here happens in project teams and what influences our employees' work satisfaction is the team, the project and the project lead. Our managers had little to do with people's everyday work (they were usually leads in another project) and supporting our employee's careers and wellness was hard for them. Based on the wishes of our employees we abandoned the managerial roles of our managers and started to consider ways to directly support the project and its team, and this way enable the advancement of people's goals. The model has received good feedback from our employees for its practicality. More about connecting work and personal goals in the next chapter.

7.4 Connecting work and personal goals

Every project begins with a project start. Every team member answers one question before the project: I will enjoy the project if... Everyone also thinks in advance how these hopes and goals could be met, with concrete steps during the project. The theme isn't strictly framed, but people bring up anything they feel are important for the project.

The responses are gone through together in the project start. Our human operations director takes part in every project start. Everyone shares their hopes and goals and the team thinks of best ways to fulfill everyone's desires to remove barriers. The team plans the distribution of responsibilities, schedule and other practical aspects of the project to best support everyone's wishes. This way we ensure that rush of the project doesn't overshadow people's goals.

This year we have modified our project starts based on the feedback we have received. Now we have several options for the project start and the team can pick the best one for them.

The project starts have also many other benefits. When the members are aware of each other's wishes it helps them to see the project in a bigger picture. They readily share their tasks with others, as long as they know what the other members are interested in. Other members also give practical tips that a manager couldn't. Informing others about your goals is also a way to stand behind them and make them happen. The project lead's responsibility is to follow people's goals and make sure they are progressing even between the inspections.

It is important that people's goals are concrete enough to have a clear vision on how to fulfill them. Human Operations director's responsibility is to facilitate this and make sure that the steps are precise with schedules and other details.

Sometimes a project can't offer challenges that fully support one's goals, in which case the project start focuses on finding the best possible solution for one's goals. For example if a person's goal is to act as a project lead in the future, he/she can act as a vacation substitute for the lead. Or if a person wants to develop better communication skills, he/she can take more responsibility in communicating with the client. This way we can find meaningful tasks in a project that doesn't perfectly fit for a person.

In addition to the project starts, connecting work and personal goal happens actively in everyday work. For example in our How's it Going questionnaires we ask about our employees' desires for the future, and take the feedback forward.

7.5 Developing know-how

We have also described different paths for content knowledge development in our career model, from where people can pick the best ways for themselves.

Everyone decides by themselves what kind of trainings or seminars they attend - we don't have any restricting budgets. The important part is that the person has thought out justifications for the course/seminar. Our employees suggest seminars to their mentors with the justifications. We also have a training program calendar, where everyone can see upcoming trainings - this way everyone can see what kinds of training other employees are attending and get inspiration.

If an employee attends a seminar, we encourage that he/she will share the information with a blog post for example.

Twice a year we organize a Hackfest, where a team goes to some cabin in the countryside and codes interesting applications for 24 hours. The teams can choose their subject and after 24 hours we vote for a winner. This year we had over 60 participants. After the event, all the products are shared with our employees so that people could get fresh ideas from each other's projects.

During a project, a person's task is to regularly consider what he/she has learned during the projects and has the personal goals advanced. This way personal development can be made visible. After the project we have one more retrospective where we evaluate the projects and what we learned from it. Our Managing Director / someone from sales usually attends these meetings and develop our project model based on these conversations.

Project leads have also considered the development of their own job and done eg. pre mortem -training, where they imagine what would be the absolute worst performance as a project lead. This way we could think of key aspects that need attention even before the project.

The project leads have been assigned a mentor (they can have normal mentor discussions as well). The leads and the mentor have conversations in the beginning of the project and think of key aspects that need focus in order for the project to be the most successful.

One way to support the development of our employees' know-how and career is to allow the transition of jobs inside the company. We strive to take into account everyone's wishes and give our employees a chance to switch for example from a certain technology to another, even if the employee had little knowledge of the new technology. The wishes of employees drive the resourcing activities. Every employee receive an email weekly with a link to What's Next? questionnaire. If an employee replies to a Wishes for Next Project question, a new card will be automatically created to the Trello board of our resourcing team. This way the wishes of our employees are taken into account every week in a resourcing meeting.

The development that happens on leisure time is supported by a separate Competence Development bonus. People's own projects are presented to others in demo sessions and tech breakfasts. This way the knowledge gained from personal projects are shared with others, and development ideas are gathered. About one third of our employees have an ongoing leisure time project.

We also have an Open Space -event concept: a team invites other teams to visit and get to know their project.

We also find it important that if there's a longer gap between projects, doing internal development projects and developing coding skills is possible. No one has to wait and do nothing at the office because there's something interesting always going on for everyone.

For internal training we organize a monthly "dojo" where anyone can give a lecture to other employees during the workday. These events have been very popular and because the lecturer comes from inside the company, all the examples come straight from our environment, which help to understand and apply the subject.

Every employee's bio and area of expertise can be found in our intra so that whenever someone is facing a challenge, they can ask for direct help from an expert. A book order sheet can also be found from our intra, where people can add a publication they want and it will be ordered.

We have external experts coming in and giving lectures monthly.

We have a monthly This is Cool! -presentation where our employees can present new, innovative technologies to others. This way our employees can stay on the edge of the newest technologies while having a cup of coffee.

We also organize testing coffee breaks regularly, which are a practice established by our employees who are interested in testing. During a coffee break people can share ideas about best practices regarding the testing of projects and gain knowledge about testing.

8. Caring

8a. In what different ways does your organization help its employees to balance with work, family and other parts of life? describe your company's solutions for flexible work time, vacations, health and wellness, benefits etc.

Answer:

At Vincit we try to take everyone's individual life situation into account and construct everyone's work time accordingly. For example we have many students, whose hours are made suitable for studying. Some of the students, by their request, work only in the summers and continue their studying full time in September. In addition we have employees who work reduced hours because they have had a baby and want to give more time

to the family. During this year five employees have reduced their hours because of family reasons. We have a lot of individual work time solutions and with everyone we underline that the most important thing is to find the best fitting solution for each individual's life situation. Our managers have also taken some leave for family reasons and this way encouraged others to do so as well if need be.

8a.1 Work and family

When an employee gets a baby we discuss about time management and balancing work and family with the person. We encourage every male employee to have their father leave, and people have been very active to do so (in 2014 and 2015 every man who had a baby has decided to use all the possible leaves). All the benefits remain active during the leaves. In addition several fathers have stayed on nursing leave during this year.

If someone's child gets sick, the parents can stay home and take care of the child without any doctor's note. Telecommuting is also acceptable - one employee for example works from home every Wednesday because he has to take his daughter to ballet to a different city at 2 o'clock. Additionally we offer care taking for a sick child.

Every employee who gets a baby receives Vincit's "maternity/paternity package", which includes eg. Vincit diapers, a personal gift and necessities for the child and coffee for the long nights awake.

We encouraged everyone to have their parental leaves, and people were very active. A comment from Trust index last year describes this well:

"It has been nice to notice how my colleagues have taken my this year's family addition. You usually hear rumours about how parental leaves create problems in the workplace. With us the experience has been the opposite. Colleagues have given support and advice in family matters and helped organize work tasks for the leave"

Every now and then you see children running around at the office - Every family member is welcome to our office and because of tight schedules it is sometimes the smartest move to bring a child to the office for a while. For example our Managing Director's, Human Operations Director's and Sales Director's children visit the office regularly, and it signals our employees that bringing a child to work is completely ok.

For the smallest visitors we have a feeding chair, baby food, milk substitute and a diaper station. Slightly bigger children can spend their time by playing Playstation or table tennis for example.

We have also introduced a "baby necessity rental", which has necessities for babies and children for our employees to use - eg. travel bed and other things that people don't usually need daily. People have also brought for example clothes and toys for others to use. We also stocked our library with some children's books.

We also want to support the families of our employees and help them to network with each other. We regularly organize family events at our office and outside the office. During 2014 we had events such as circus school at Sori Circus and Duck Olympics at a sports track. We also had a code school for the children of our employees, where the children got to learn about programming with the guidance of our employees. We have continued the code school tradition, because our employees wished so.

Our family days at the office have been very popular. In the winter the open doors were at our old office, and the children could do activities such as duck throwing and fishing and the parents could hear from our managers and employees what it is like to work at Vincit. In the fall we had our family day as a housewarming party for our new office, and the children were entertained by a magician with his balloon animals.

At the end of the year 2014 we conducted a satisfaction survey for the families of our employees, where we asked how Vincit is like as an employer from the Wife's/husband's/rest of the family's point of view. Based on the answers we are trying to support our employees' families even better. The survey also asked what kind of benefits and events we could organize. Many of our events nowadays are based on the answers we received, such as family days, avec-Christmas parties etc. The benefits we introduced based on the survey are for example a nanny for the office during employee gym sessions, discounts to children's stores, caretaking service even when the child isn't sick but the work situation requires it, etc.

We also support our employees when the family situation takes them to another city. One employee's girlfriend moved to Helsinki, so we organized his projects so that he could work at our Helsinki office. Other employee's spouse on the other hand moved to Kuopio, and even though we don't have an office there, we organized the employee's projects so that he could work from home as much as possible.

We don't work overtime basically at all (couple of times a year) and for overtime you always have to ask for permission, and we evaluate if the problem could be solved by resourcing more people to the project.

8a.2 Balancing work and freetime

Everyone can always get unpaid leave if they wish, and have their annual leave whenever they want. Working hours are flexible, so everyone can come and go when they like, as long as they fulfill the monthly hours of their contract. Overtime is very rare and the project leads take action every time they feel like someone is working too many hours. Just like working hours, telecommuting can be arranged by negotiating with the project team and the client.

The project starts in the beginning of every project encourage everyone to discuss about their wishes, including wishes about working hours. If the person has a small child for example, working hours can be negotiated so that the person can always leave work at four. Or if someone is working on their master's thesis, it can be arranged that he/she can telecommute a couple days a week, and every meeting will be arranged on the days when the person is at the office.

For free time recovery we have offered different kinds of trainings, from which mindfulness-trainings have been the most popular. Last fall we organized a six week mindfulness-training for a group of 20 volunteers. The coach of the training was an ex snowboard professional Aleksi Litovaara. The goal was to find new ways to focus, handle emotions and relax. The course received a lot of good feedback and the group continued its actions after the course - they meet regularly for a morning yoga 3 times a week.

Because the mindfulness theme has gained interest within our employees and the training with Aleksi Litovaara was very popular, we organized a possibility to take part in his mindfulness online course, where small mindfulness practises are done daily. 30 employees took part in the course and the experiences were very positive.

Our management encourages everyone to take care of colleagues. For example at our Afternoon Tea in September our Managing Director reminded everyone to pay attention to one's own and colleagues feelings because the nights tend to get long and depressing in the fall here in Finland. If someone's mentality doesn't seem too good, we encourage people to talk to HR, Management or a project lead about the issue. We also added a question about team members' well being in our weekly How's it Going questionnaire.

So that the time off work wouldn't be spent in supermarkets, Vincit has a grocery bag service, where our employees can do their grocery shopping online, and our van picks them up from the store, and the person can pick the groceries from our office at the end of the day.

Many employees also work for reduced hours because of small children at home, and this arrangement has always been possible for everyone.

8a.3 Health

We offer our employees an extensive medical expense insurance as well as leisure time accident insurance that is also active abroad. This means that almost every medical bill is covered by us - only medical bills from licensed sports are excluded.

In addition to insurances we offer very extensive medical services, and develop them all the time - our Human Operations director started to discuss with the CEO of our healthcare provider about how the threshold for contacting a doctor could be reduced (especially with our employees who are used to work on a computer). As a result of the conversations our health care provider has developed a service that allows our employees to book a doctor online and instead of going to the hospital, talk to the doctor via skype. This type of remote appointment is further developed at the time and one day it can be a thing in the whole nation.

We have constructed a wellness room in our office where everyone can go and relax during the work day. The calendar of the wellness room has general and private times. The room has a bed, fatboys, audio system, mindfulness CDs, electric massage table, kettlebells, yoga mattresses, a guitar, blood pressure indicator and folders that contain forms for evaluating your wellness etc. The bookshelf contains a lot of literature about managing one's feelings, stress and crisis situations, and self evaluation tests and guides for insomnia and nutrition. We have tried to make the room as interesting as possible for our employees so that they would go there and use it for their well being. Everyone can freely choose when to go- and what to do there.

For mindfulness practises our employees have developed a trainfulness station. At the station you can relax and watch a train go on its track with a camera that is inserted in the front of the train. The idea came from one of our employees and the video is on all the time at our office. The station has daily users.



We also organize corporate wellness days regularly. Last fall our wellness day had for example super food samples, body composition analysis, and blood pressure measurements, eyesight measurements, and our career coach Julius was answering people's questions about generally anything.

To promote physical activity we have set up pull up bars around the office. For shoulder health we have acquired a table tennis table, which is in active use all the time. It gives a nice break from programming and at the same time it works as physical activity.

With the help of our health care provider, we regularly organize ergonomics tests and if necessary, we provide special furniture based on the report. A physical therapist informs employees about the best posture to work and

gives tips about physical activities during breaks. We also have standing desks for people who want to work standing.

The most significant wellness supporting renovation in recent years has been our O2H-project, where our employees had the chance to design their own working environment. Everyone has an electronic desk. Everyone had the chance to choose and test sit their own work chair - in the work chair questionnaire we had almost 15 different options. The biggest wish in our office space was silence and peace, and we also focused on enhancing the quality of air. The work is mostly done here in small project team rooms, and larger rooms are divided with acoustic screens. Balance boards, pull up bars and hanging rings have been acquired more, and one team wanted wall bars in their own room. In addition to our wellness room, we also have a nap room where our employees can take a nap or meditate. We also have a chili garden that gives the feeling of nature and air purifying Naava Smart walls.

We have purchased four Polar Loop- and FitBit wellness bracelets, which can be borrowed for a 2 week period at a time.

In 2014 we organized a wellness habit challenge, where people chose wellness increasing habits, and executed them for six weeks. The people who continued with the habit are collected a money prize which was shared with everyone who lasted until the end.

In our occupational health every new employee does a fitness test and everyone already in the house can go and renew the test whenever they want. After 5 years in the house everyone gets an appointment to a voluntary physical. We also offer eye glasses for our employees if their eyesight requires them. We have supported quitting cigarettes with different campaigns, where for every day without smoking we donated money for charity. We also organized a cooper test in a nearby track and the person who improved his/her time the most received a free breakfast.

We offer exercise- and culture checks for our employees. We also have a free massage service in our office building and benefits for osteopath services. We have a gym in our office building where our employees have free entrance. We also have free dental care for our employees.

8a.4 Community

We encourage our employees to set up their own clubs around their interests. At the moment Vincit has over 20 clubs, most of them are related to sports. Clubs have assembled over 100 times in 2015.

Project teams are encouraged to organize events together and that way get to know each other better. This year alone the our project teams have gathered in over 50 activities, such as dinner, go karts, Room Escape etc.

The teams also have customs that increase communality such as weekly lunch - eg. team Beautifuls has a tradition that someone from the team cooks a Friday lunch for the rest of the team.

We often gather around to spend our free time with a common interest spontaneously - for example to watch the hockey and soccer World Cup or Apple's new releases. Self organized events also happen a lot, for example the table tennis tournament in the fall, which was started by one employee's idea and became a company wide, month long thriller.

Last year we developed a Face Game in collaboration with another company. The game shows pictures of our employees with questions (name, office etc). This way our employees can recognize their colleagues better. The technical features of the game weren't challenging enough so one of our employees started to develop a better game by himself and everyone interested could join in the coding. The game has gained a lot of interest in the company.

From the initiative of our employees and the effort of one employee, we now have Vincit Seatmap, which allows our employees to find the office space of a colleague in three different offices. The map also shows the contact

information of every employee and it's easy for everyone to change their location when they move around because of a different project.

At Vincit we use Slack for our daily conversations. Our general channel has all of our employees and people talk daily about current subjects. This helps every employee to stay aware about what's happening here no matter where they are.

At the new office's cozy Plaza more and more people gather around for our 2 o'clock coffee break, and people remind others actively to join the conversation.

Because of our new kitchen we can now have lunch together - most recently the cooks from street kitchen Leidi came to our office and cooked for over 60 employees and even a couple clients that had signed up for it.

Team spirit is also enforced by joining various events such as Jukola Relay, Team City Challenge and Tough Viking.



Community is supported by our employees' sense of humor. You can always hear laughter during coffee breaks and lunch and our Afternoon Tea always has part where our Managing Director tells jokes. Most of all humor can be found in Slack - the management tells jokes just like everyone else, and no one takes themselves too seriously.

Christmas lunch is celebrated in many companies, but at Vincit it supports our communitiy even more. People sign up for the lunch with people that they normally don't communicate with too often, and as ice breakers they can discuss about Christmas present wishes and goals for the next year.

8b. How does your organization support its employees in different life situations (personal crisis, sickness of family member, childbirth, marriage

etc.)? You can also tell about individual examples and stories in addition to your general practices.

Answer:

8b.1 Supporting in different life situations

It is important for us that people would find it easy to talk about problematic situations. For that reason we invest a lot in establishing different channels that lower the threshold. We have developed ie. How's it Going questionnaire and our HR team asks our employees directly about their feelings. Because of the questionnaire we have prevented burnouts and project crisis with early involvement of the management. Project leads' task is to be interested in the well being of the team and inform the management about problems. The How's it Going questionnaire has a "my team members are doing well" part where anyone can inform about the well being of colleagues.

Our goal is that it would be easy for our employees to come and talk to us about challenging life situations and get personal support for the situation. Below are a few examples about how we handle these situations.

Our career coaches are available to help with every challenging life situation and their services are free for our employees, even if the subject is not work related.

The most popular life events that occur to our employees are marriages, graduation and births of children. All these are celebrated by the company, and by the gifts of team members.

For writing a master's thesis we give two weeks of paid leave. In addition the subject of the thesis is chosen from a client project so that the coding for the thesis can be done during working hours (the majority of the work for an IT thesis consists of coding).

We have conducted a work satisfaction survey with the collaboration of our employees and with it we measure for example the balance of work and leisure, stress, and possibilities to affect one's own work. We follow the feelings of our employees within these themes and make improvements to our practices constantly. In addition we have used a HappyOrNot meter and our own Vincit F-curve to surveil monitor work satisfaction.

Moving can also be a big life event, and for that we have bought a van which can be borrowed by our employees. We have also helped with some people's moving expenses when they were moving from abroad.

At Vincit we think is important that people create diverse relationships at the office and get to know each other outside their own project team. When big life events and crisis occur, co workers' support is crucial. For this reason we knowingly support people's interaction with different office space solutions (we have a Playstation room, wellness room, table tennis etc. where people can gather around during their breaks) and with different types of events that are listed in the previous chapter.

With our health care we actively develop our early involvement plan and keep our provider up to date with our organizational changes. This way they are better aware of what happens in our company and that way talk to our employee more easily. We also have a psychologist available for our employees.

In the event of a longer sick leave we keep in touch with our employees and ask about their wellness regularly. We have not yet experienced any actual crisis situation with our employees, but we have a plan with our health care provider to support the person if a real crisis should ever happen.

9. Celebrating

In what ways does your organization try to make working fun and support individuality? How does your organization celebrate individual team's or/and the whole company's success?

Answer:

We have created our own Vincy culture, which is kept up actively. The heart of Vincy is our office plaza, where everyone gathers around to play Playstation and eat snacks. Our East and West wings also have similar cozy kitchen and break rooms.

Coffee is a very important thing for our employees. People who are interested in different types of coffee went a couple years ago to a roasting factory to smell and taste different coffee types and created our own Vincy Blend coffee, which is brewed at the office on a daily basis, and our employees can also order it to their homes. From one employee's gavel decision we now have our own Vincy black and green tea. These products also serve as a great gift to our clients and partners.

Our employees have a decent amount of different Vincy products, such as Vincy ducks, button downs, backpacks, hats, water bottles, thermos bottles, towels, chili candies, coffee, tea, reflectors, keychains, umbrellas, IPO-beer, portable duck shaped phone chargers, and Vincy slippers. All these strengthen the feeling of our unique culture. Especially our Vincy duck has a big role in our visual communications and it can be seen in almost all of our marketing material. The duck also has a real function in software programming: you can ask help from it in debugging ("rubberduck debugging" is a superstition that a duck on top of your display can find all the bugs in the code). And it also works as an indicator to others that you are working on a challenging task and don't want to be bothered.

Our project teams can freely organize events where they can have fun together. In the fall of 2015 our teams were eg. on a dinner, in a reserved sauna, bowling, and go karting. With this we're trying to help people get to know each other even when the company is growing fast.

The success of teams or individuals is celebrated by the whole company at our plaza, with for example cake or champagne. Indeed we have a lot to celebrate - every new employee invites the whole company to the plaza for the person's choice of treats, and during the past couple months we have enjoyed a lot of treats.

At our monthly Afternoon Tea, in addition to talking about the company's current events, we also celebrate graduations and marriages, or other cases for celebration.

After the Afternoon Tea the whole company goes to a sauna, where we have food, drinks and different kinds of organized programs. We have had for example a standup comedy show, a beer tasting, and a table tennis championship. The nomination for the best place to work in Finland has been celebrated by playing bubble soccer and going for a detective adventure. Every year we have our Team Building Seminar where we take the whole company abroad for a couple days.

Sometimes we also celebrate without any specific reason. Here is a compilation of our 2015 parties:

In February 2015 we celebrated our second consecutive Best Place to Work in Finland award. during the day we had cake and champagne at the office, and later in the evening we had a company wide soccer tournament and a reserved sauna for the night. On Valentine's day we had heart shaped donuts and wrote letters to employees and families (In Finland Valentine's day is more of a "friendship day" than a companion day). The welcome parties of our new employees has been almost a weekly thing in the past year and we have enjoyed a variety of different treats. On easter we had an Easter bunny that hid chocolate eggs at our office and on eve of May 1st (a national holiday in Finland) we had fried dough and mead for our employees.

On 5/8/2015 we celebrated our 8 year birthday and shared stories from the early years of Vincit. Our 2015 Team Building Seminar was in Iceland and on 6/5/2015 we celebrated our nomination for the third best place to work in Europe: ate cake once again and heard our Managing Director's speech from the party venue. Throughout the summer we had a lot of strawberries and ice cream at our office - especially on hot days. In August we had our new office's housewarming party with over 220 attendees - our clients and partners were also invited. In our housewarming party we launched our own "IPO" (Initial Public Offering) -beer. During the evening we had eg. a band playing and a raffle with the grand prize of getting to drive our company Tesla for a weekend. The families of our employees were also invited. Early in the spring we had our family day at our old office and in the fall at our new office. On women's day everyone received for themselves or their families/spouses a Vincit branded chocolate box, on men's day we had beef jerky. Our Helsinki office's first anniversary was celebrated with a funny duck cake. On Mikko's day we had ice cream for our 15 Mikkos and on Halloween we had a creepy cake. On the Afternoon Tea of October we published the winner of our Billion Dollar competition. In the Billion Dollar competition our employees could guess when and with what bill we reached our 10 million Euro revenue (i.e. one billion euro cents). Our annual Hackfest was spent at Iloranta with 90 people. Our pre-Christmas party was at the nightclub Ilona and on Thanksgiving we enjoyed our traditional turkey sandwiches from Subway. On our real Christmas party we had Christmas lunch with the whole company and served porridge and egg nog at the office. Of course Santa Claus delivered presents, for which he had asked for everyone's jacket size a month before. A Christmas tree appeared at our office in the beginning of December with our Christmas calendar raffle.

Our Helsinki office has also had various company parties. On the first anniversary of the office they went go karting and for a company dinner, and the afterparty was at the office. They also had a Fusion Fun night with our subsidiary Javerdel. The party was organized with Javerdel and its purpose was to get to know people from our subsidiary. The Helsinki office also moved to another location and the housewarming party had a James Bond theme, and everyone in the same office building was invited. About 20 neighbours showed up to the party and the evening was very successful all together. People from our Helsinki office also attended a Tough Viking competition, and spent the evening after the competition at a restaurant. For more work related parties we have our technology nights: as an example we had a React night where we got further introduced to React and discussed what functions the technology has, how it can help us with our projects and how it differs from other technologies. Our Tapas party was organized based on the wishes of our employees, so that they could get to cook food at the new office.



We also tend to keep up good atmosphere at our social media sites: eg. our programmers fitness video went viral, which we all were proud of:

<https://www.facebook.com/VincitOy/videos/vb.124598477609970/874455099290967/?type=2&theater>.

10. Sharing the success

10a. How does your company promote fair treatment of employees?
We are especially interested in:

- Ways of rewarding, that your personnel thinks of as unique or special (eg. profit bonus, employee shares and other bonus models)
- Principles and practices that promote the unbiased treatment of personnel and managers.

Answer:

10a.1 Salary model

It is impossible to create a fully objective salary model, because people's views about salary are based on their perception about experience and status. People evaluate the grounds of their salary with various ways. When we first started to work on our salary model we tried to create objective levels that would create common criteria for everyone. This turned out to be a very hard task because people value different things. When we asked our employees about their views about salaries, we got as many answers as we had employees - some think that the most just way would be to only concentrate on evaluating people's performance and other believe that past experience should definitely have an effect on salary.

From this we discovered that the fairest way is to create an open salary model and a value based salary conversation. Nowadays the conversations are based on two things: how have I helped our clients to succeed and how have I helped my colleagues to succeed (our principle on the background: today we'll have more satisfied customers and employees than yesterday). Based on these criteria we have discussion about everyone's salary, and if both parties agree that the employee's argument is valid, we will raise his/her salary. Every time a person wants a salary raise, we will spend time on the discussion and go thoroughly through the argument. The goal is to find a mutual agreement on why the salary is what it is.

We also publish all the arguments for a raise so that people will know why the salaries have been raised, and can evaluate their own salaries based on the information they get.

At Vincit you can also suggest a pay raise for your colleague - if someone thinks that a colleague deserves more salary, a person can message our HR manager and she will check the situation. In 2015 we gave 77 raises, from where 51 was given without the employee's own suggestion.

We also have a bonus model, where every employee receives a monthly bonus depending on the company's profit. A bonus is give every time the company has made profit in the previous month. The bonuses are same for everyone regardless of their title or experience.

We also have a bonus for getting new sales leads. If a person tips our sales team about a possible client, and it leads to a project, he/she will receive a bonus.

Vincit Hki Oy's salary model is based on ownership - everyone in the company owns shares of the company. (<https://www.vincit.fi/blog/vincit-helsinki-dreams-growth-stocks-and-co-op/>).

Breaking the 10 million euro revenue was monitored by sharing our financial information with our employees and with our One Billion Challenge - everyone guessed the invoice that would break the 10 million (one billion cents) revenue, and the winner was rewarded well.

When we list on the First North market we will give an emission of shares where all of our employees can get their shares with a lower market price.

Benefits

Our fringe benefits include for example:

- Comprehensive occupational health services and a health insurance
- Leisure time accident insurance, that covers everything except licenced sports, even abroad.
- Lunch vouchers
- Sports vouchers
- Massage therapist
- Vincit clubs that are supported by the company
- Free gym downstairs and group workouts
- Freely chosen work tools, also literature can be ordered freely
- Work phone and a subscription.
- Parking spots and a van for everyone to use.

- Child care service can be arranged when necessary.
- An annual Team Building seminar abroad.
- Fruits and snacks available at the office daily
- Decoration budget for your work space
- Dentist benefit
- Discount from car washes
- Other benefits eg. Tesla and a hippie van available for loan, premises for personal parties, credit cards for acquiring items that increase work wellness

10b. Describe your company's community service, environmental or other societal projects - Tell specifically about your employees' involvement in the projects and tell what kind of value it brings to your employees.

Answer:

10b.1 Charity

At Vincit, we are constantly involved in different kinds of voluntary charity events and campaigns. We have often raised money for eg. hospital clowns and donated our money from our chili sausage sales from MindTrek expo to charity. In February 2014 one employee's gavel decision was to raise money for a new children's hospital by counting physical exercises. In addition to donating money, we supported our employees' wellness. Because the challenge turned out to be very popular, we did it again in the fall. Our employees chose habits that enforce their wellness (exercise, nutrition, sleep..) and accumulated the jackpot by following the good habits. Everyone had an option to either receive the money they gathered as a gift card to a sporting store or give it to charity.

We encourage our employees to do charity. On the Nose Day (a charity for the unprivileged children in the world) our Managing Director told about a charity box at our office and encouraged everyone to donate money. Vincit also takes part in different campaigns where the theme is for example to stop bullying in schools, traffic security for children etc. We also take part in the annual Movember campaign every year and support unprivileged families on christmas. When a charity case ends, a new one is usually in the planning. Because the subject of the charity is usually voted on, everyone can express their opinion about where they would like to donate.

After moving to our new office and getting more space and more employees, we realized that taking care of the comfort of our office takes more work. From this need for routine tasks around the office we got an idea of hiring a person who would probably not be as likely to get employed in the job market. We contacted OmaPolku (<http://www.omapolku.fi/>), which supports handicapped youth, and found an employee who adapted to our culture well and has been a great help in taking care of routine tasks at the office.

Vincit also takes part in the national CodeSchool project (<http://www.koodikoulu.fi/story/>), where companies take part in introducing coding to children. This year we have organized three code schools for everyone interested and one codeschool for the children of our employees.

10b.2 The societal influence or our work

We follow our societal responsibility principles also in choosing our clients and prefer projects that have societal influence. We believe that with our successful projects we can give our contribution for the society. For example we did a rehab-mat project for the physical rehabilitation center of Pirkanmaa without profit.

With the help of the mat, severely injured people are treated with top notch technology. The expenses were kept at the minimum level and the whole project was done because of its societal influence. The rehab mat has shown positive results, which we have reported internally and highlighted the significance of our experts' work in the rehabilitation of people. We have also implemented an application for diagnosing children's asthma in

collaboration with Tampere University of Technology, which was very significant from the societal aspect. We have also implemented eg. a tracking system for locating a lost child.

We have a lot of startups as our clients and some of their business ideas have been so good that we have funded them. So that we could support startup companies even more, we made a subsidiary called Amor&Labor that focuses solely in investing in startup companies. This way Vincit can act not only as a software development company, but as a bigger part in the digitalization of Finland and the world.

10b.3 Supporting students

We do a lot of cooperation with students. Our employees give lectures regularly at the Tampere University of Technology and in our student nights our experts give support in students' studies. This way we help students to get employed in their own field and support them in developing to experts inside the company. We also actively take part in different thesis and research projects.

Supporting the youth is important at Vincit: we offer many internships, work familiarization, and summer jobs for youngsters annually.

10b.4 Environment

Environment has been a subject of discussion lately at our office and we have acquired eg. recycling products such as cardboard trolleys, paper recycling bins etc. We continue developing our recycling opportunities further.

10b.5 Influencing the Finnish work life

We actively act as speakers in different events to bring out examples about how companies could make changes in their management and that way improve the quality of Finnish work life. In 2015 we spoke in almost 200 events and visited many companies telling about our practices, usually for free. In addition we share the improvements in our organization publically in our blog. (not forgetting this document!) From this we hope that other companies become inspired in renewing their management and sharing their practices more openly.

We actively talk about our activities through media releases and social media. We have managed to raise national interest in our activities, even from the biggest medias in Finland, for example from our gender equality in the IT field and with our open salary model.

We have seen that our blog posts and open conversations have also additional value for our employees, because the discussions they raise help us to further develop our work culture.

Almost 50 companies have visited Vincit during the past year and familiarized themselves with our management model. Inspired by us, many companies have made changes to their models and made them more open and self-guided. We have also helped many public administration organizations (PSHP, TaiKe, VTT, City of Tampere) with their organizational models and this way helped even the stiffest organizations to renew their models. In addition we have had many politicians here as visitor to explore the modern day work culture, and they will take what they learnt further. We also got invited to the parliaments future committee to share our views about work in the future.

Also foreign companies are interested in our management models and we have had for example the managers of Danske Bank for a visit and authoritative people all the way from Japan. Our Human Operations Director Johanna also received an international Game Changer award from Workforce for promoting new management practices.