

Does everyone need to see meaning in the work they engage in? How does meaningful work relate to work engagement? The aim of the project is to show that work engagement depends on whether we search for meaning in our work and whether we find it and it also depends on how much we need to do things that, to us, subjectively, make sense. We want to test several issues in the proposed project. First of all, we are interested in checking, in a longitudinal study, whether people who have a high need to engage in meaningful activities are more prone to search for meaning in their work and then to find it, and whether as a consequence they become more engaged in their work.

We are also interested in how perceived meaningfulness of an activity is associated with situational work engagement. We want to test whether an individual high in need for sense-making will be more engaged and perform a task more eagerly when placed in a more meaningful situation, e.g., performing a task that is perceived as useful. We want to additionally check whether it is important for situational work engagement and performance to have searched for meaning in the activity and to have found it.

Finally, we are also interested in testing, in the last research task, whether introducing interventions involving the implementation of new, additional meaningful activities at the workplace will be associated with increased work engagement. We want to check whether this will be especially true for people with a high need for sense-making and whether searching for and finding meaning at work will again play an important role for work engagement.

To be able to answer the research questions, we plan to conduct five studies. We will rely on experimental studies, a longitudinal study (two-year long study, where we will perform measurements every 6 months) and a daily diary study. The studies will include both employees of various organizations and students.

We think that the results of our studies will not only be of significance for basic research in work psychology and social psychology, but also lay the groundwork for future applied research on the fit between the workplace and the employee, given her/his level of the need for sense-making, the job characteristics and the way an employee perceives it. The results of the presented studies offer the possibility to further focus on research on job crafting with the inclusion of individual differences in the need for sense-making.