

# **An Analysis of the Mental Hygiene of the Employees of the Wüstenrot Building Savings Bank in Zlin, Czech Republic**

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## **ABSTRAKT**

Tématem mé bakalářské práce je Analýza duševní hygieny poradců firmy Wüstenrot stavební spořitelna, a.s. ve zlínském kraji. Teoretická část obsahuje nejdůležitější poznatky z oblasti duševní hygieny a je rozčleněna na jednotlivé okruhy se zaměřením na pracovní prostředí, životosprávu, stres a time management. Součástí praktické části je stručné přestavení firmy, poté následuje analýza současného stavu duševní hygieny zaměstnanců pomocí dotazníkového šetření a Holmes-Rahovi stupnice. Na základě zjištěných informací byla společnosti navržena doporučení pro zlepšení duševní hygieny svých zaměstnanců.

Klíčová slova:

duševní hygiena, stres, pracovní prostředí, sport, relaxace, spánek, time management, zdravý životní styl

## **ABSTRACT**

The topic of the bachelor's thesis is the analysis of mental hygiene of the Wüstenrot stavební spořitelna, a.s. (savings bank) company's consultants operating in Zlin region. The theoretical part of the thesis contains the most important findings from the area of mental hygiene and is divided into individual sections focusing on working environment, healthy lifestyle and stress and time management. The practical part includes a brief introduction of the company followed by the analysis of the current state of mental hygiene on the part of the employees using a questionnaire-based survey and the Holmes-Rahe stress scale. On the basis of the discovered findings, the company was recommended some improvements concerning mental hygiene of its employees.

Keywords:

mental hygiene, stress, working environment, sport, relaxation, sleep, time management, healthy lifestyle

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## INTRODUCTION

The work deals with mental hygiene of employees in the Wüstenrot stavební spořitelna, a.s. (savings bank) in Zlín region. I have chosen this topic because the today's world is focused on and promotes the cult of the body and beauty and forgets about mental hygiene. I wished to learn more about the issue and to help not only myself but the others as well.

I processed the analyses carried out in the Wüstenrot stavební spořitelna, a.s. (savings bank). The reason why I opted for this company was that in my opinion it was not a leader on the market such as KB, Česká Spořitelna or ČSOB. Later on, I found out that Wüstenrot was awarded the Savings Bank of the Year 2011. And the second reason was that the company's employees are in everyday contact with people. After discussions held with the director and the employees concerned, I found out that many of them had no idea of the concept of mental hygiene and before they were to fill in the questionnaire, I had to explain them the goal of my project - to analyse the status of mental hygiene in the company, to find out what the employees should avoid and to offer solutions.

The work is divided into 2 parts.

The theoretical part maps mental hygiene from its history, through the impact of working environment on human psyche, through lifestyle, stress, time management up to the mental hygiene techniques such as breathing, meditation, relaxation and others. This part is supplemented with charts which illustrate the data concerned.

The knowledge gathered in the theoretical part was applied in the practical part. The purpose of this approach was to use a questionnaire and the Holmes-Rahe stress scales to find out the current status of mental hygiene of the employees. The questionnaire was divided into 4 sections (general questions, working environment, healthy lifestyle and stress). Each section had its own introduction and summary. I recorded the results into charts and graphs.

Finally, I present the acquired information from different points of view. In detail, I deal with positive as well as negative results and offer advice and recommendations.

I tried to offer solutions which would be acceptable both for the employees and for the company and which could be beneficial for everybody involved.

All the work has a common line which aims to emphasize the importance of mental hygiene in the life of people.

# **I. THEORY**

## 1 MENTAL HYGIENE

The WHO's (World Health Organization) definition of health is: "A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease". People who take care of mental hygiene cope easily with stress, their productivity is higher and their work is fruitful. Mental health is an integral part of health, indeed there is no health without mental health". (World Health Organization 2012)

In today's fast-moving times, mental hygiene is caught at the periphery, nevertheless its significance is growing constantly and its usage can be found in everyday life. It mingles with all kinds of professions but primarily it is determined for jobs whose focal point is a human being. Working with people is very demanding but at the same time it is extremely enriching and its professional exercise is needed to keep fit not only our body but in particular our mind and soul. Mental hygiene is intended both for the Healthy in the form of prevention, and for the Ill as a help for speeding up the treatment. (Míček 1984, 9-15)

### 1.1 History

Rules for mental hygiene, which were formulated in the ancient China and India already, are based on religion and are part of Buddhism and Taoism. The foundations of the European culture were laid in ancient times, when individual philosophers dealt with relations between psyche and mental health, between an individual and the society, and between nature and man to be in harmony as well. Among significant representatives there were Hippocrates, Epicurus and Democritus who recommended temperance and concluded that physical and mental health are connected and interact mutually. (Doležal 1961, 14-9)

W. Beerse, who at the age of 24 years got a mental illness and on the basis of his own experience observed the relation between psyche and physical health and its impact on the outbreak of insanity, contributed to the shift in the view of mental hygiene in a significant manner. He defined states of the patient's improvement and worsening. He was convinced that a proper diet may prevent disease. (Doležal 1961, 22-4)

Experts all over the world contributed in the area of mental hygiene, namely: Russia – I. P. Pavlov, Virchov; in Poland, a university of mental hygiene was opened; K. Dabrowski is regarded as a founder of one of the first counselling service for children;

in Czechoslovakia we have names like: C. Haškovec, M. Brandejs, D. Bartka and many others. It is necessary to recognize them all as they contributed extensively to our better and healthier life nowadays. (Doležal 1961, 25-37)

Taking care of mental hygiene is possible at every turn. It is a suggestible factor but doing it is essential to discover causes, to investigate how to prevent them and to handle relaxation techniques.

This thesis covers working environment, diet, stress and relaxation techniques.

## 2 WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Working environment's influence on mental hygiene is considerable. The same care we take of our body should be provided also to the working environment, which protects our soul and psyche and which creates the company's image as well. If the environment causes nervousness, tiredness, depression, stress and if the man does not feel good, all the aforementioned aspects will be reflected in the man's job performance.

This section focuses on interior, in which most time is spent, and which affects our psyche subconsciously without being realized. Specifically, it is noise, illumination, colours, smell, temperature, humidity and air circulation.

### 2.1 Noise

Noise is qualified as any sound which is regarded as an unpleasant and disturbing element. Noise is perceived both subjectively (the way how it affects psyche) and objectively (it is measurable in units called decibels). It is interesting that not only intensity but also time, during which a man is exposed to noise, cause harm to the organism. It is true that if time of exposure to noise is extended and noise intensity reduced, the result is the same as in case of reduced time of exposure to increased noise intensity. Noise in the workplace may result from printers, telephones, loud conversation of co-workers and busy traffic in immediate proximity of the office, etc. (Jokl 2002, 187-208)

Noise should be eliminated in each case as it is a very disturbing factor during work. It reduces efficiency, causes concentration decrease, insomnia, high blood pressure, and prolonged exposure impairs hearing in an irreversible manner. If the exposure rate exceeds 30 dB, the influence on psyche is rather unfavourable. Exposure rate exceeding 65 dB is harmful to the nervous and the vascular systems. Above 85 dB, there is a risk of damage to hearing and stress. On the other hand, noise intensity equal 0 dB is equally destructive. The optimal office environment's noise ranges from 25 to 35 dB. The value of 95 dB is the threshold of hearing impairment. (Jokl 2002, 187-208)

As an illustration see the table 1 comparing human activity noises with nature noises.

Table 1. Comparison of human activity noises with nature noises

Sounds produced by a man	Intensity [dB]	Natural sounds
Computer noise	10	buzzing flies
Watch ticking	20	rustling leaves
Whisper	30	breeze
Residential area (night)	30-35	quiet garden
Residential area (day)	40-45	twittering birds
Normal conversation	60	frog croaking
Noisy office, ordinary restaurant	70	heavy rain
Loud music, busy street	80	brakes
Subway	90	storm
Lawnmower, walkman	90-100	gale
Rock concert, disco, circular saw, car running at high speed	100-110	hurricane
Pneumatic drill 1 m away	120	waterfall
Jet plane at a distance of 30 meters	120-130	eruption of a volcano

Source: Data from Jokl 2002, 194.

The Czech Statistical Office states that 5.1 % of employees (251,400 persons), of which 7.0 % men (196,800) and 2.6 % women (54,600), are exposed to vibrations/noise. (Český statistický úřad 2008, 18)

## 2.2 Lightening

Illumination seems to be necessity and a natural thing for us but to achieve a harmonic result, which reflects in our psyche, it takes time to think about its placement and colour. Day light is the most pleasant illumination for human eye as it contains luminous spectrum which is the most favourable for human organism and which affects inner balance of organism, e.g. it postpones fatigue, mitigates depression, supplies energy, etc. The colour range of artificial illumination is limited and above all, it differs from sunshine, e.g. a light bulb contains mostly yellow and red light which cause constant tension and initiate stress. Work room should be illuminated at least by two sources, one of them should be a general source of light illuminating the whole space and the other one should be a local light source at the working table. Other lights can be used to create the atmosphere and a pleasant environment, which is essential for high labour performance. Each space has its own demands for illumination and therefore the selection of the right and healthy sources of light lies on individuals. (Jokl 2002, 211-251)

Direct glare and shadowing do not belong to the workplace at all. Eye strain can lead to dry eye syndrome, headache and general fatigue. If the illumination is not of high-quality, work performance may fall down by up to 30 %. (Jokl 2002, 211-251)

The offer of sources of light is unlimited. In addition, it is necessary to understand that a certain type of light source changes the colour shade of the interior. Warm colours are more intensive and underlined if a light bulb is used. On the other hand, cold colours lose their brilliance, get grey and look sad. Fluorescent lamps provide warm colours with more subdued shade and cold colours are rich and deep. Minor changes of colour tone and colour saturation are associated with halogen lamps. (Jokl 2002, 211-251)

Each profession has different demands on illumination. In the Table 2, you will find different activities and their illumination code. The more demanding the work for eyes is the higher illumination (lux) it requires.

Table 2. Illumination demands

Activity	Lux
Documents filling, copying	300 lx
Writing, typewriting, reading, data processing	500 lx
Dealing in conference room	500 lx
Quality control	1000 lx
Operative field	5000 lx

Source: Data adapted from Český Normalizační Institut, Česká Technická Norma: Světlo a osvětlení – Osvětlení pracovních prostorů 2004, 7.

### 2.3 Colours

Illumination and colours go hand in hand and their solution should be implemented in parallel because, as it was already mentioned, colours change with different types of illumination. Colours help induce pleasant atmosphere, mood, create comfort, however, improper usage thereof may produce stress and anxiety. There are three basic colours, i.e. red, blue and yellow from which the others shades can be mixed. Each colour is typical by its colour hue, lightness and saturation. (Cullen and Warrender 2001, 15-22)



Colours are divided into:

- a) Warm ones – warm colours are preferred by extroverts and women. They are used in colder rooms and they cause that large spaces look smaller. The effect of these colours on persons and their concentration will be extremely noticeable and dynamic, but only for a short time. (Jokl 2002, 211-243)

Picture 1. Warm colours



Source: Data from Malířství Palamar, Naše služby 2003-2012.

- b) Cold ones – cold colours are preferred by introverts and men. They are convenient for rooms with higher temperature and they enlarge the space optically. In a room with cold colours, labour performance is well-balanced and concentration is constant. Jobs requiring mental effort should apply cold colours, mainly combinations of blue and green. The same combination is suitable for creative environments which have to be convincing. For insurance companies it is one of the most critical elements. (Jokl 2002, 211-243)

Picture 2. Cold colours



Source: Data from Malířství Palamar, Naše služby 2003-2012.

- c) Neutral ones – it is a scale of colours from white through brown and grey to black.

Picture 3. Neutral colours



Source: Data from Malířství Palamar, Naše služby 2003-2012.

Hippocrates's personality's typology assigns colours to individuals. A person has subconscious preferences and likes to be surrounded with their preferable colours. A person of the sanguine type likes red, the choleric types of persons like yellow, melancholic types feel good in the presence of blue colour and stoics are happy if they are surrounded by green shades. (Franče, Ografologii.blogspot, comment posted April 10, 2007)

The table below shows effect of colours on human psyche.

Table 3. Effect of colours on human psyche

	light-hearted and joyful, optimistic, stimulate memory
	calm, hope, friendly, balance, recovering
	devotion, credibility, wisdom, by overwork evokes calm, inspiration
	drive, activity, energy, aggression, encourage creativity, courage, stubbornness
	security and order, tradition, patience, humility
	uncertainty, radiate innocence and purity, punctuality
	sadness, fatigue, secret, negativism, cautious, uncertainty
	colour of evil secret, nothingness, death, sadness, higher sensitivity

Source: Data adapted from Pauknerová Daniela, *Psychologie pro ekonomu a manažery* (Praha: Grada, 2006), 122-123.

## 2.4 Smell

Smells influence man's feelings and belong to the most perceptive and the strongest sense which stay in our memory for a long time because olfactory senses are an integral part of memory. When known smell is sensed, long forgotten memories are recalled. What one person considers as agreeable smell does not have to be acceptable for others. This fact is utilized by the application of subliminal scents operating in human brain. The effect is not much obvious but scents influence customers' reactions as far as the areas of interests, communication and their willingness to come back are concerned. For each environment, expert consultation is needed. Experts can recommend and mingle scent custom-made. The smell can contain a scent of money, forest, flowers - the offered possibilities are unlimited. This topic is dealt with by scent marketing the attention of which stands on the edge although it covers huge potential. Choosing the right scent can be a key to success. The 75 % of all emotions we generate are derived from what we smell. (Bennett 2010, 72), (Air Creative 2012)

## 2.5 Temperature, humidity and air circulation

To feel comfortable and to give maximum performance, the temperature should move around 21 °C, +/- 1 °C in the office depending on season. Air humidity should be around 50 %. If it falls below this limit, our feeling may be disagreeable, oppressive and disturbing. Similar feelings are evoked by draft and air condition as well. Cold, headache, fatigue and lack of energy are stated as negative impacts of the aforementioned. Everyday ventilation in the room depending on weather and season is necessary. In summer, ventilation longer than 30 minutes causes room overheating, in winter, too long ventilation may cause cooling and energy losses. The ISO 7730 standard recommends air flow of approximately 0.25 m/s. (Jokl 2002, 15-38)

Table 4. Agitated air effects on a man

Beaufort scale	Wind speed [m/s]	Effect	
		dynamic	mental
Light Air	0-1.5	light air direction of wind	comfort
Light Breeze	1.6-3.3	wind felt on face and exposed skin	mild pleasure
Gentle Breeze	3.4-5.4	tousled hair, flying clothing	discomfort
Moderate Breeze	5.5-7.9	dust and loose paper raised, extensive tousled hair	great discomfort
Fresh Breeze	8.0-10.7	air pressure felt on body, acceptable flow limit	great discomfort
Strong Breeze (blizzard)	10.8-13.8	umbrellas used with difficulty	great discomfort

Source: Date adapted from Jokl Miloslav, *Zdravé obytné a pracovní prostředí* (Praha: Academia, 2002), 220.

### 3 DIET

In mental hygiene healthy diet, the crucial pillars of which are sleep, exercises/sport and food, plays an important role. Favourable effects on our overall state of health can be attributed to correct diet.

#### 3.1 Sleep

According to Abraham Maslow, a psychologist and a founder of humanistic field, sleep is classified among the essential needs of human beings.

Everybody is aware of the importance of sleep but at the same time everybody is willing to give it up in case of time pressure which may lead to disruption of the organism balance and mental disorders.

A man sleeps one third of his life. It is said, that a man should sleep approximately 8 hours. The length of sleep is individual. Somebody needs 9 hours to recover and regain vigour, for another only 6 hour is sufficient. In any case, it is very important that the sleep is refreshing and sufficient as its lack causes lower concentration, deterioration of memory and disturbance of regeneration in terms of physical and mental health. (Howard 2006, 108-112)

Although it may seem irrelevant, the time or the cycle, in which people wake up is very essential. The cycle lasts approximately 90 minutes. Awakening in the first half of the cycle (very light till moderately deep sleep), brings us energy, inner satisfaction and preparation for everyday load. On the contrary, with awakening in the second half of the cycle (in deep and very deep sleep) our body will be tired and sleepy. The metabolism will not be ready to accept impulses from external surroundings. Therefore it is extremely important to count the awakening time. Our body is programmed to wake up after 7.5 or 8.5 hours but never after 7 or 8 hours. Our internal biological clock is set in this way and respecting this fact can bring deserved rest. (Howard 2006, 113-122)

Sleep begins with falling asleep followed by REM (rapid eyes movement) and non-REM phases which are altering four times or five times during the night and sleep finishes with awakening. The REM as well as the non-REM phases is necessary for the organism. Dreams occur in the REM phase. While dreaming, issues from the previous day are solved, our imagination is working and above all, it helps regenerate mental area, while during the non-REM phase, the depth of sleep is not so much distinctive as during REM, but our

body is released and relaxed. Brain is still on alert during sleep. (National Institutes of Health 2012)

The hypnogram records the depth of sleep and the altering of non-REM and REM phases as well. (National Institutes of Health 2012)

The figure 1 represents the relationship between age and need of sleep.

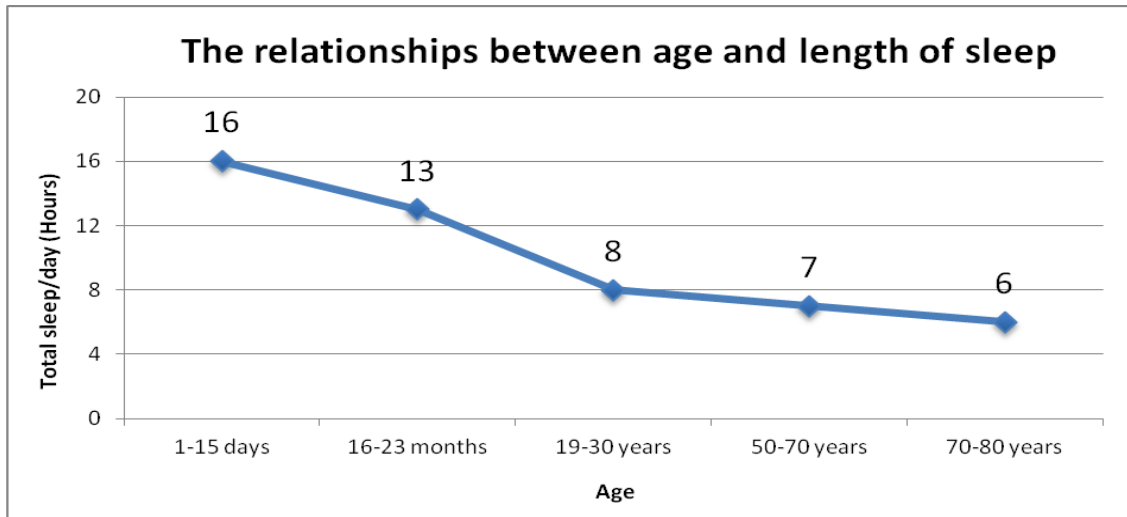


Figure 1. The relationship between age and length of sleep

Source: Data adapted from National Institutes of Health 2012, figure 6.

As with increasing age the length of sleep is changing, REM phase is decreasing and sleep disorders appear much more often. It may be caused by both the age, worsening of health, mental restlessness and medicaments and by melatonin. Melatonin is a hormone, antioxidant, which drains away in the course of life, it depends on alternation of light and darkness and its production increases in darkness during sleep. It is being considered as one of the reasons of insomnia at a higher age. (Borzová 2009, 17-68)

Insomnia and psyche interrelate significantly. Events experienced during the day are mirrored in the night on the quality of our sleep. If the events are stressful and are difficult for us to handle with, than our inner unease can have an impact on the quality of sleep. Long-term sleeplessness leads to aggregate tiredness, decline of performance, headache and depression. (Borzová 2009, 17-68). Higher age accumulate also sleep disorders.

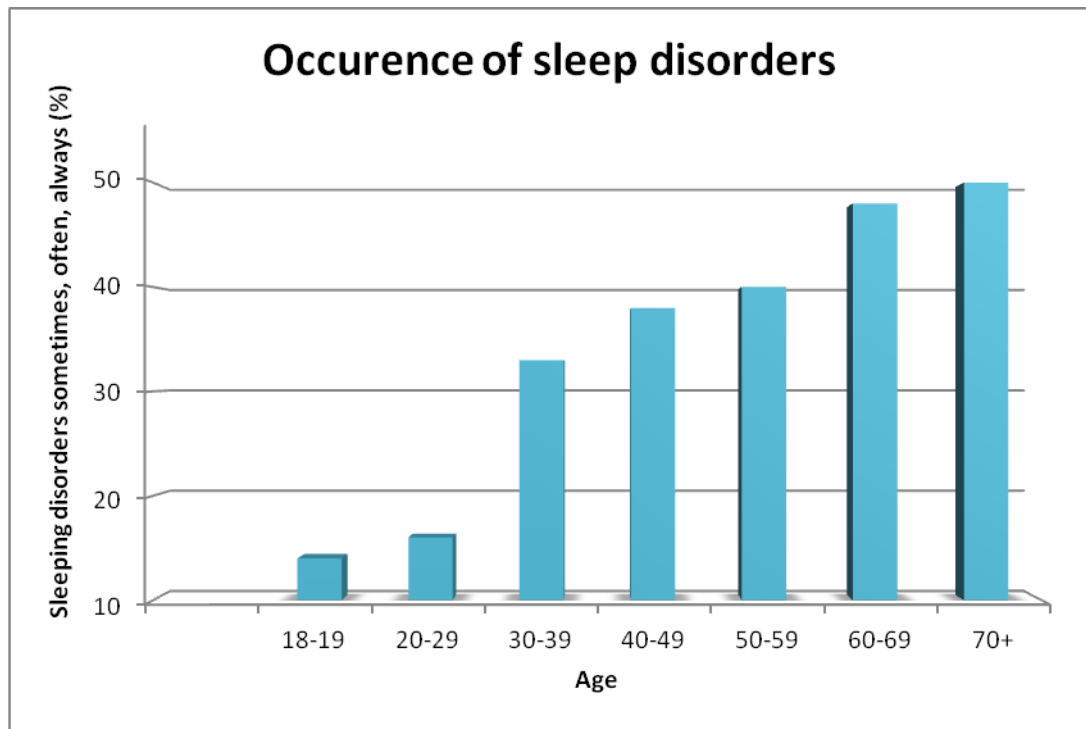


Figure 2. Occurrence of sleep disorders

Source: Data adapted from Borzová Claudia, *Nespavost a jiné poruchy spánku: Pro nelékařské zdravotnické obory* (Praha: Grada, 2009), 15.

Tips for better sleep: before going to sleep follow the following advice, e.g. avoid rich food, not to drink alcohol, not to solve difficult and logical tasks, do not sport, listen to music, meditate and many others. If the problem with sleep is really serious, it is recommended to visit a sleep laboratory where several tests and examination are done to find out the causes of the sleep disorders. (Borzová 2009, 11-69)

### 3.2 Exercises/sport

Our bodily construction is a copy of our mental case and both of them work as a team. In case of failure of one of them, the balance of the other is impaired.

Therefore to make our body feel healthy from mental point of view, it is essential to include exercises in our everyday life. The exercise in practice can be divided in short term and long term one.

During the night as well as during the day our body is programmed in cycles, about 90 minutes long, during which maximum concentration can be reached. When this time is over, a short relaxation, lasting from 5 to 10 minutes, in the form of stretching and exercises to regenerate must follow. (Zandl 2006, 41-67)

During working time, short-time exercises should not be missed mainly by employees who have sedentary or stereotypical job. The importance of regular breaks is not negligible, in particular for persons having mental jobs which are accompanied by stress, it is essential to exercise muscles. (Mikuláščík 2007, 31-6)

Among the long term-exercises, we can mention aerobic exercise which should last for 30 minutes it should involve the lower part of the body and during this type of exercise, it is important to set a load which will be pleasant for us to be able to exercise without any break. Everybody should choose a sport according to our own wishes. The choice is very individual and the offered options are unlimited, some can ride a bicycle, for another swimming, dancing, skiing, walking or running can be convenient.

Sport influences positively both mental and physical aspects of a man. During a short-time activity (squats, push-ups), stressors are actively burnt, whereas during a long-term activity there is a bonus in the form of releasing endorphins. From the mental point of view, it eliminates mental pressure, releases endorphins which create contentment and improve mood, eliminate stress, the brain gets oxygenated and increases a number of neurons which strengthen it. (Mikuláščík 2007, 36-106)

From the physiological perspective, it declines fat in the body, cholesterol, blood pressure and works as a prevention of cardiovascular diseases and lifestyle-induced diseases. The organism is getting into the condition needed for managing everyday stressful situations. In general, exercise helps get rid of tension, feel happier, sleep better, release and gain energy. (Richards 2009, 13-113)

### **3.3 Food**

Healthy eating habits pay off because our behaviour is based on what we eat. Many of us eat unhealthily, either too little or too much and especially food producing short-term energy, such as caffeine, sugar, salt. These food products give us a lot of energy but only for a very limited period of time and after that it followed by fatigue, irritation, hunger which is induced by stress hormones and by stimulation of the nervous system and result in too excessive organism's stressing. And instead of the coveted rest, it spoils our mood and our behaviour is inadequate to situations. Eating healthy food is the only chance how to avoid these unpleasant symptoms. This is the right place to stress the importance of raw vegetables and fruit, oatmeal and non-fat meat. Chicken meat and fish have not been

mentioned deliberately because they contain tryptophan, an amino acid which, if consumed excessively, causes sleepiness. The same component is found in bananas or milk and pasta as well. If the mental load is higher, there is less time for food and therefore food products which quickly fill up our stomachs and whose consuming time is shorter are the most preferred ones. (Howard 2006, 82-96), (Kirsta 1986, 91-6)

Many people tend to eat healthier but they do not have an idea how to replace the unhealthy food and not only to satisfy taste cells but also to provide required long-term energy. Therefore, table 5 shows a list of healthy substitutes. (Kirsta 1986, 91-6)

Table 5. Healthy substitutes of some traditional food

Set of food	Food products	Substitutes
Sweet food	cookies, cakes, chocolate, sweet drinks	muesli, jam without sugar, raisins, dried fruit
Saturated/animals fats	fat red meat, bacon, sausages, lard, cream, processed cheese	lean chicken meat, fish, venison, homemade cheese, goat cheese
Salt	French fries, chips, salted nuts	unsalted nuts, sunflower seeds, raw vegetable
Caffeine	coffee, Coca-Cola drinks	juice from fresh vegetable and fruit, water, herb tea

Source: Data from Kirsta Alix, *The book of stress survival: Identifying and reducing the stress in your life* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986), 95.

Care for the body from outside should be equal to care for the inner organism environment. Everybody is sufficiently educated, thanks to media, about what to eat, how much, how, and where, and it depends only on us and on our will whether we choose the right way. Less attention is devoted to toxins which substantially damage our organism and therefore I also concentrated on them. Good nutrition can improve our health up to 30 %, but toxins, which are received through food, drinks, air, antibiotics but also through skin, worsen our physical and mental state. If the number of toxins is built up in such an amount with which the body is not able to cope with, it is accompanied by healthy problems including fatigue, poor coping with stress, headaches and many others. Body is able to help itself partly, but 100 % purification of organism is never reached. MUDr Josef Jonáš (MUDr = M.D.) deals with holistic medicine and detoxification of organism. He says: “We eat and breathe poisons”. He is a supporter of both the Chinese and traditional medicine. To allow the body and the spirit work properly, it is essential to keep 6 organs in balance, i.e. heart, spleen, lungs, kidneys, liver and brain. Detoxification



means depriving the body of poisons and removal of infectious centres which are on these organs located. The process is life-long as toxins are received and affect us throughout the period of our lives. First results are achieved in the order of several months in case of serious and long-term diseases. As soon as the body is purified from toxins, the purification of mental part can start. It results in a stronger organism and energy influx. (Celostní medicína 2010), (Ždichynec 2011,7)

Food supplements, such as vitamins and minerals should be used mainly at the time when inappropriate demands are made on the organism. They serve as prevention and cell protection. But their lack leads to wrong physical and mental state and memory worsening. For stress prevention the group of B vitamins which are present in legumes, nuts and wholemeal bread can be considered. Vitamin B6 helps to cope with excessive levels of stress. Against fatigue iron and vitamin B12 can be used. During stressful situation, there is an excessive consumption of vitamins B, C and zinc and therefore, they should be added either in the form of pills or healthy food. Studies have shown that if the stress is longer than 15 minutes, resources of vitamins C are falling by 300-320 milligrams. One vitamin capsule contains 300 mg which represents 500 % RDD - Recommended Daily Dose (Packer, Lester, and Colman 1999, 77-92), (Kirsta 1986, 92-4)

Avoiding habit-forming substances such as alcohol, nicotine, caffeine is essential.

Caffeine has a stimulating effect but on the other hand, has negative impacts on our health. It decreases level of vitamins B and C in the body which protect our brain and the immune system. It causes insomnia and absence of appetite. (Howard 2006, 96-108), (Kirsta 1986, 92-4)

Users of nicotine state, a sense of calm, induced greater comfort but the components contained in it are devastating for the organism. They block blood vessels, which prevent oxygen supply to the brain, slow down thinking and influence human performance in a negative manner. (Howard 2006, 96-108)

Alcohol damages not only people themselves but also social and family relationships. Drinking alcohol leads to the short-term memory losing, releasing, slowing down brain activity and its reaction and gradually devastates individual organs in the body. (Howard 2006, 96-108)

There are three food products which can be marked as anti-stressful. Fruit which is very often neglected are apples which are excellent antioxidants rich in vitamin C. Nuts generally increase concentration, strengthen memory, release hormone of happiness

and contribute to well-being. And the last one is soya which, in our opinion, a lot of people avoid. Soya contains lecithin which is a rich source of many vitamins and minerals. Each body cell is built from 30-40 % from lecithin. Its advantage is that it strengthens nervous cells during stressful situations, slows down aging and increases concentration and brain capacity. (Huber, Bankhofer, and Hewson 2009, 38-50, 96-111), (Packer, Lester, and Colman 1999, 54-91)

Like calm approach at work is needed, equally important is calm approach to food intake without hurrying because stress is responsible for all illnesses.

## 4 STRESS

Our ancestors as early as in ancient times experienced stress when their organism was mobilized into the position of either to escape or to attack in case they were attacked by wild animals, natural elements or people from others tribes, the goal was to survive. Stress always disrupts mental balance. Nowadays the causes of stress are different but our body responds in the same way. As we cannot escape or attack in stressful situations, our organism keeps the stress in the body for a longer time, which causes healthy problems and stress resistance decreases. The solution can be found in the application of appropriate techniques. (Plamínek 2008, 121-173)

Note that getting rid of stress totally is for the organism just as harmful as its excessive quantity. Certain amount of stress is needed e.g. to keep the deadline or to fulfil the task on time. Here stress plays an irreplaceable role and is a driver of motivation. Every stress, through which a man goes, strengthens them and in a similar situation the man can cope with it better.

### 4.1 Division of stress

Stress can be divided into:

- Acute, which appears unexpectedly and in certain moment, e.g. death of a family member, row
- Chronic stress is a long-term status of load induced by problems accumulation, e.g. mobbing, financial difficulties
- Anticipatory is on call at the moment when our future does not proceed the direction which we wished
- Residual affects us at the moment when the past plays major role in our life and incapability to bridge over it
- Psychical is bound to feelings of patience, conscientiousness and productivity
- Physical is connected with injuries or illnesses

(Mikuláščík 2007, 72-3)

## 4.2 Stress symptoms

Can be divided into three categories:

- 1) Physiological, among which there are e.g. palpitation, absence of appetite, diarrhoea, muscle tension, migraine, rash on face, perspiration.
- 2) Emotional, includes mood changes, tiredness, restlessness, irritation, anxiety and fear.
- 3) Among the behavioural one, there is smoking, increased consumption of alcohol, sleeping pills, drugs, problems with falling asleep, faltering voice, making errors, aggression. (Plamínek 2008, 121-172)

Stress accompanies us nearly every day, to coping with and eliminating it helps either develop resistance to it or influence the stress itself. There is a direct proportion, the bigger load, the bigger stress. On the contrary, due to mobilization of all strengths and increase of resistance, effects of stress will be smaller. (Plamínek 2008, 121-172)

Stress can be also divided into a negative (distress) or a positive one (eustress). After eustress, pleasant feelings appear and productivity can rise five times. Experience eustress and enjoy it should be our goal as most people take it for granted and attach its attention to distress solution.

## 4.3 Eustress

Can be divided into 3 categories:

- 1) Basic physiologic needs – among which there are sleep, movement, tasty food, sexual intercourse
- 2) Experiencing success – which means sufficient salary, respect of others people, awarding work, fame, victory, managing distress
- 3) Experiencing discovery - implementation of ideas, education, trainings, travelling, desire for creativity, discovering the beauty of nature and arts (Plamínek 2008, 121-170), (Mikuláščík 2007, 31-106, 267-286)

Eustress is also a form of stress and although it is pleasant it causes tension and our body requires a phase of relaxation and calm.

#### 4.4 Distress

Distress is harmful, productivity is decreasing and a long-term tension leads to damage to organism which can be caused by lack of exercises and sleep or by lifestyle. It should not be made in light of these: physical environment, job character whether the work is monotonous or shift work but also company rules and standards which make our life harder or easier. (Richards 2009, 20) Each of us is a personality and cope with stress differently but it is necessary to know that every individual tension is accumulated and can lead to damage to organism. By stress, in particular the following organs are affected: lungs, liver, the digestive system, muscles and the cardiovascular system. Long lasting stress disrupts not only our psyche but also is reflected in our physical health in back pain, migraines, flus, skin diseases, etc. (Pauknerová 2006, 115-149). We are still talking about excess of stress but its lack can be harmful in the same manner, e.g. with people doing monotonous work, or with the unemployed who experienced boredom and if the situation will not change in the long-term horizon, the same harmful symptoms occur as in people who are under great pressure. From the long-term point of view, this state undesirable and therefore it is needed to find the balance. (Kirsta 1986, 19-23).

Stressed people represent the highest number of death rate. The highest number of health complications are experienced by women aged 50-54 and it is about 11 % and by men of the same age, where the percentage is around 10 %. These groups of persons experience problems mostly affecting back, muscles, joints and heart. With women, diseases of the respiratory system, stress, depression and migraine prevail. Please see Figure 3. (Český Statistický Úřad 2008, 11)

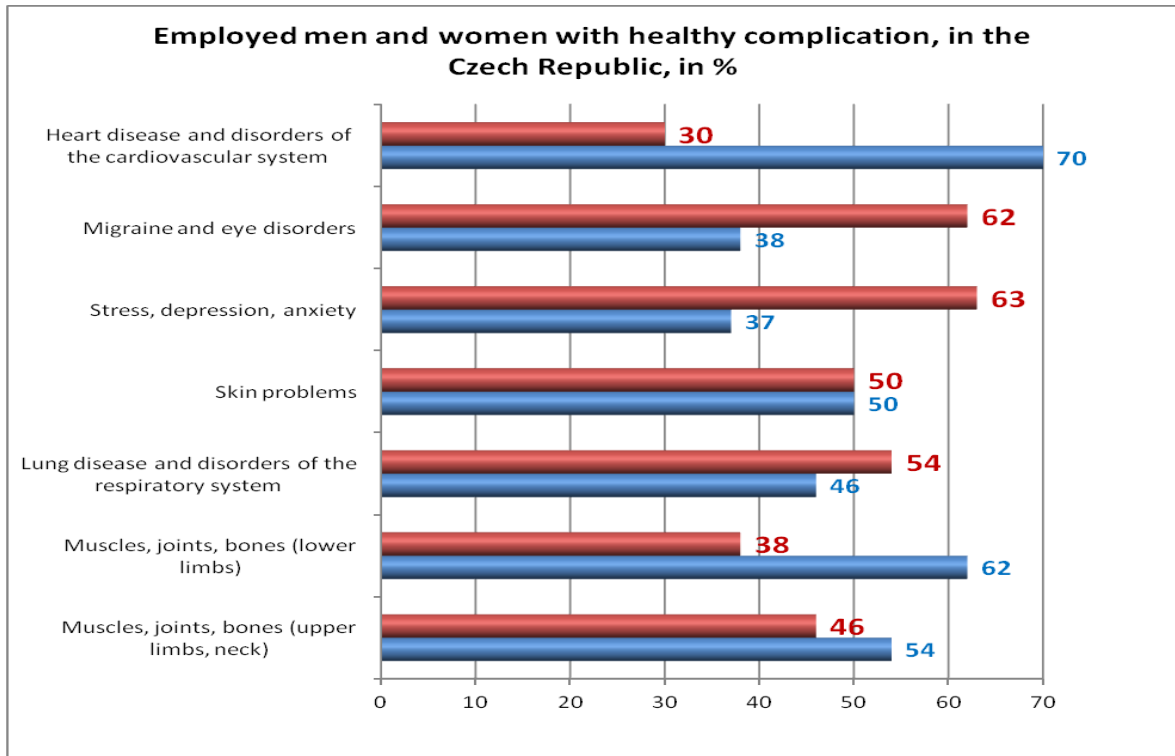


Figure 3. Employed men and women with health-related problems in the Czech Republic, in %

Source: Data from Český Statistický Úřad 2008, 17.

Due to the aforementioned, the number of hospitalized patients rises year by year. In 1994, 1,997,000 patients were hospitalized and in 2008, it was already 2,164,000. Please see Table 6.

Table 6. Number of hospitalized patients

Health condition Hospitalization	1994	2000	2005	2008
Total number of hospitalized patients in thousands	1 997	2 017	2 223	2 164
Average length of hospitalization in days	10.8	8.7	8	7.4
Diseases of the cardiovascular system/100,000 inhabitants	2 819	3 379	3 743	-----

Source: Data from Český Statistický Úřad 2008, 1.

According to M. Friedman and H. Rosenman, a part of population is predisposed to stress and the relating heart diseases, this group of persons is designated as follows:

Type A, typical of them are impatience, competition, aggression, he is dominating, critical, sovereign, intolerant, workaholic, eager, nervous in a queue, desires for success, always wants to win, his speech is loud, fast, hot-tempered, interruption, uses vulgar expressions.

Type B is patient, release, non-competitive, non-aggressive his speech is monotonous, does not interrupt the others, is not hurrying, has a soft voice, has hobbies, is able to find time for family, is assertive.

And finally, there is type X, in which all the above mentioned characteristics of both types are mixed. (Štikar 2003, 73-82), (Kohoutek 2000, 98-119)

“Stress is reflected not only in a man himself but it can also disrupt economic productivity, e.g. in Great Britain 55 million of pounds and in the USA about 75 billion of American dollars is paid in relation to treatment of illnesses caused by stress”. (Kirsta 1986, 10)

## **4.5 Stress prevention**

Relaxation has to be planned as well as work. Stress consumes energy which is needed somewhere else.

As basic aspects, the following can be considered: relaxation, correct breathing, meditation, exercises, 5 positive events per day, time management, laugh and the others.

Direct link between the length of life and laugh has not been proven but it has been confirmed that it is a shield against stress and that it eliminates inner tension. (Hubáčková 2003, 48-88)

There is also a huge range of additional healing techniques and exercises, namely: acupuncture, Alexander's technique, autogenic training, gravitational technique, neuropathy, osteopathy, hypnotherapy, outdoor activities. (Engel 2009, 13-9)

## **5 RELAXATION TECHNIQUES**

### **5.1 Relaxation**

Relaxation helps establish the state of balance, mind concentration, mental and physical calmness and above all, it extends life and increases its quality. For relaxation, 5 minutes is enough. Twenty minutes of relaxation represent 2 hours of sleep. Relaxation serves for stress removal, for regeneration, for calmness and facing stress is easier than in case when our organism is unable to “switch off” and lets stress control the body, mind and life. It is recommended to relax always at the same time. In the morning after awakening it functions as a protection shield and in the evening before falling asleep calm the mind and helps to falling asleep. Each of us has to choose a technique which suits to your needs perfectly, e.g. “Jacobson’s progressive relaxation, Schultz’s autogenic training, Šlepecky’s relaxation, Benson’s meditation relaxation and many others.” (Mikuláščík 2007, 41)

If I wish to distract attention from negative thoughts, it is good to repeat to myself or aloud a phrase, the content of which is positive, e.g.: I am calm, I am successful in everything what I do. (Engel 2009, 26-7)

### **5.2 Jacobson’s progressive relaxation**

It is used for muscles release, the exercise is made before falling asleep on the bed. Thanks to this method all parts of body like hands, legs, trunk, neck and the whole face are exercised. The basic is to create muscle tension which is followed by relaxation. The main thing is not to exercise all parts at once but one day place one exercise on hands, the second day exercise arm, elbow and each day gradually add the others. It could happen that person falls asleep, do not consider it as a bad reflection of bad exercises, on the contrary it helps learn to listen to your body and in this case it says that the body needs the sleep. Mental relaxation cannot be reached without relaxation of muscles. (Novák and Capponi 2003, 68-73)

### **5.3 Breathing**

Life begins with the first breath and it is a continuous circle of breathing in, pause and breathing out. Breathing is the only one physiological process which can be influenced



and which can be kept under control which enables to work with our inner energy and balance. Emotions influence our breath and breath can influence our emotions but we have to learn it.

“The primary way in which humans convert energy into physical form is through the breath”. (Sky 1990, 29). In calm moments the breathing is unawareness because it is considered as to be natural thing and is very often ignored. In unpleasant situation or by excitement, the first signal which is noticed is the way of breathing. By shallow breathing the interval between breath in and exhalation is very short and lungs are filled only from one quarter. Solution to this can be diaphragmatic breathing. In stress situation can be used dynamic way of breathing which releases tension. The exercise is made in standing position starts with deep breath in and during movement to the bent position deeply loud dynamic exhalation is done. Calming way of breathing helps by tiredness and overworking is recommended to apply it before falling asleep. It is made in a bed, when we breathe in deeply, keep breath for 5 seconds and exhale very slowly through mouth. The pause during breathing helps to release and eliminate unpleasant feelings. (Sky 1990, 21-65)

## **5.4 Meditation**

The beauty of meditation lies in its simplicity and in its efficiency. It is the link of body and mind. It helps to calm and strengthen our brain. In blood there is a chemical component, lactate, which segregates during stress. The bigger is the loading for organism, the more this component is released into our body and meditation helps get rid of it. For meditation, it is necessary to find a calm and quiet place and invest 20-30 minutes. Meditation techniques are different: either concentration only on breathing, or concentration on a subject which calm our thoughts, or usage of technique of free preventive stress which is based on imagination of ourselves in a stressful situation and this situation we solve inwardly by using positive thinking, effective is also visualization during which the thoughts are left to wander e.g. somewhere in a dream holiday, interesting exercise can be practicing of left and right part of a brain which supports the balance between hemispheres. The goal of each exercise is to distract the attention of brain from pressing problem and learn how to meditate, think and concentrate. (Kirsta 1986, 146-154)

## 5.5 Rituals

Many people argue that they have lack of time to reserve one hour per day on meditation, relaxation, exercising. In this case it can be caused either by bad time organization or by weak will. Will is considered to be short time character and therefore the solution can be found in rituals. Aristotle says the following about rituals: “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit”. (Zandl 2006, 31), (BrainyQuote 2001-2012)

Converted to numbers, 90 % of our everyday activities are done as a habit, and only 10 % belong to the will activity or will-connected ones with conscious decision. The reason is that rituals accompanied us from our childhood and if every activity became a ritual for us, we do not have to invest so much physical or mental energy in it. For bringing a new ritual to our lives, regularity plays an essential role. We do not have to invest many hours a day in the new activity, few minutes is enough and it will bring desired success in future. Developing the ritual roots requires 1-2 months and after that another ritual can be added. For ritual development the SMART technique - specific, measurable, agreed, realistic, traceable can be used. E.g. to place meditation in everyday activity, the first steps are following: determine the day, hour, technique, and how long will the meditation take. It is convenient to create a simply chart in which rituals will be recorded for whole week and the kind of remuneration. The remuneration has to come after each fulfilment of a task, as a form of motivation till the ritual gets under our skin. (Zandl 2006, 31-41)

Table 7. Rewarding rituals

Ritual	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Remuneration
Meditation every second day	x		x		x		x	massage
Breakfast every day	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	book
Office cleaning 1x/ week					x			dessert

Source: Data adapted from Zandl Dita, Life management: Jak získat více času, energie a pořádku v životě (Praha: Grada, 2006), 155.

## 5.6 Autogenic training (AT) and positive thinking

The task of AT is to stop perceiving negative thinking, concentrate on himself and thanks to the thoughts release and harmonize all body. It begins with basic level when with help

of formulas are created tension and released in a body which is essential during stress situation when the body is overloaded and cannot help himself. It is recommended to exercise three times per day from 1-10 minutes. Whole set consists of 6 exercises. It starts with releasing and 2 formulas are repeated:

The right (left) arm is very heavy (6 times)

I am totally calm (1x) after that stretch and bend your arm, breathe deeply and open your eyes widely. (Hašto 2004, 17-8)

The following exercises focus on creation of warmth in a body to limb blood supply, on calming pulse, on regular and calm breathing, on warmth in epigastric when easing of tension in stomach area, the last exercise is concentrated on clear head during which we get rid of tension. During exercises we can feel the so called autogenic discharges resulting in twitch of the body, unrest, cry, pins and needles and visualization. We should not be afraid of it at all, and should not try to influence it, it is just accumulated tension which the organism is trying to get rid of. (Hašto 2004, 17-50).

During AT, a man is healing yourself. It has the same effect as a strong coffee but without any negative effects. (Huber, Bankhofer, and Hewson 2009, 94-5)

## **5.7 Outdoor activity**

Modern way of releasing, relaxation and mainly possibility of finding themselves, this all fulfils outdoor activity. At first sight, it evokes reaching sports achievement in unknown environment. This statement is true only partly. It is primarily about discovering hidden potential, about overcoming changing possibilities beyond the limit of comfort zone.

Comfort zone is very individual as far as its size and shape are concerned. It is an environment in which people feel well, where nobody attacks anybody else or anything, the job is stereotype and no chance to get a demanding task to solve or people are afraid of having to solve because of potential failure. The smaller the space for development is, the smaller is our comfort zone. After managing new and difficult task, the feeling of achievement is accompanied by not only eustress but it creates a driver in the form of motivation and challenge to try some other difficult task which causes enlargement of the comfort zone. On the other hand, if a man fails, the comfort zone stays the same but the man is enriched by experience which he can benefit from in the future. Beyond this zone there is learning area which helps us to self-develop and self-improve. In this area,

a man acquires knowledge through experience, which brings deeper and longer remembering. (Svatoš and Lebeda 2005, 28-48)

According to the researches of David Kolba (1976), 80% of our knowledge stems from own experience. (Svatoš and Lebeda 2005, 17). Another research carried out by IBM and UK Post has confirmed that for about 3 months we recall six times more frequently what we experienced than information which we only heard. (Svatoš and Lebeda 2005, 17). The proof is in table 8.

Table 8. Recalling information in time period

	Experience gained		
	by communication	by communication, demonstration	by communication, demonstration, experience
After three weeks people recall	70 %	72 %	85 %
After three months people recall	10 %	32 %	65 %

Source: Data from Svatoš and Lebeda 2005, 17.

An outdoor activity as its name indicates, takes place outdoor in nature also in unfavourable weather. Educational organization in Great Britain, “Outward Bound” has influenced development of outdoor training as an educational method significantly. (Svatoš and Lebeda 2005, 33)

Duration (from one to five days) and purpose is completely in hands of a company which shows interest in this service. The rest is in hands of the tutors who accommodate the model situation to individual participants to be enough varied, funny and balanced. After that they work with the achieved results and give feedback. (Svatoš and Lebeda 2005, 103-130)

Stress can be present before the course itself, namely e.g. fear which may worry or afflict. The feelings are connected e.g. with failure, fear of not being a sporty type, of embarrassing, of being a center of ridicule, they will look at me through the fingers, of sprained my ankle and many others. (Svatoš and Lebeda 2005, 147-172)

If barriers are removed, each of us will success at minimum one task and this small success starts our psyche and our self-confidence is higher before the next tasks. Nelson Mandela says that: “Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that

we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frighten us.” (Heermann 1997, 327)

## 5.8 Time management

Everybody knows that wasted minute cannot be returned and nobody can afford to waste time. Even Michelangelo Buonarroti, the world known sculptor and painter states, “There is no greater harm than that of time wasted”. (BrainyQuote 2001-2012)

The more we try to have things under control, the less time we have for solving real problems. To reach the required results, it is necessary to be able to work with time. In life of each of us there are situation which we cannot influence (rain, death, behaviour of the others), and when a man is angry, is in fear and stress. The reason is that they are out of our control. The only effective measure is to avoid them and to eliminate them, to accept them and to learn how to live with them. On the other hand, there are situations which we can keep absolutely under control, the way of dressing, eating, presenting themselves in public. These give rise to our self-confidence, satisfaction and give us energy and power. (Smith 1994, 17-129)

While planning the time, the basic is to set priorities. Therefore the ABC system is used very often. With letter A, man solves tasks which are absolutely essential and it is necessary to solve them immediately. With letter B, important matters with which a man can cope after solving tasks in A are included and with letter C, there are matters a man can concentrate on after solving the previous two ones, these tasks are trivial. When coming to work, never, I stress again, never, start with letter C, under which a lot of tasks but very easy ones are included. On the contrary, immediately in the morning, when our energy is on the top, start to work on the most difficult task because its fulfilment brings the feeling of satisfaction and inner motivation to solve other difficult tasks. (Smith 1994, 17-129)

Most people have the tendency to postpone difficult tasks till the last minute because of their difficulty and demandingness or simply because they do not have sufficient resources which at their disposal and they are afraid of failure, and therefore they prefer less important tasks from the C category. There are 3 rules which can help us: 1 – specify the deadline. If we know that the task has to be submitted at the end of the month, we can plan its handing one week ahead so that we have enough time to finalize details

and acquire comments from our boss during the last week. 2 – divide the task into subtasks and always begin with the least pleasant portion as the easier one will be awaiting you afterwards. Then you will be happy due to the feeling of achievement and your motivation will be higher. No matter how difficult the task is – as Henry Ford says: “Nothing is difficult, if you divide it into numerous small activities.” (Smith 1994, 46) – remember to award yourself with some small gift.

Planning has to be learned. Our mentality urges us either to postponing tasks till later time, technically it is called procrastination, or to performing immediately. (Demornex 1994, 45). Both approaches are not fully effective. With task assignment, planning plays an irreplaceable role. Men tend to get down to tasks headlong and not to pay much attention to planning. This approach results in being overwhelmed by work, losing time over the assigned task and getting under pressure needlessly. If tasks are planned correctly, there is enough time to save and a great deal of opportunity to avoid stress test. (Knoblauch and Wöltje 2006, 11-85), (Truckenbrodt 2006, 13-36, 75-91)

The solution can be found in the 60:40 rule, which means that if the working time is 12 hours, then approx. 7.2 hours will be assigned exactly to tasks, on which I want to work, and the rest of time will be sort of wasted on unexpected events such as unexpected telephone calls, unannounced meetings, dealing with mail or arranging operational problems. (Knoblauch 2006, 46). The basics are to learn not to waste time and energy.

After we have identified the greatest thief of time, the fight can start. There are, for example, mistakes of the others, postponing deadlines, postponing tasks till the last minute, disorder in documentation, perfectionism, panic, bad communication, unnecessary meetings and never ending disturbing, whether by phone calls, e-mails or permanent appointments with people. In this case, it is essential to distinguish whether disturbing is unnecessary, and as such it has to be prevented immediately at the very beginning, or necessary, where fast response is welcomed or ill-timed when it does not fit our timetable and there is possibility to postpone it till later. (Smith 1994, 17-129)

According to the Czech Statistical Office, 62.2 % and 37.8 % women are exposed to time pressure/excessive amount of work; in the business sector the overall percentage is 17.7 % and in the employment sector it is 11.9 %. As the graph shows, legislators and managers suffer most due to time pressure. On the other hand, there are unqualified and unskilled workers. The higher responsibility the person has with respect to necessity

to make important decisions, the bigger the time pressure is as the time available is very limited.

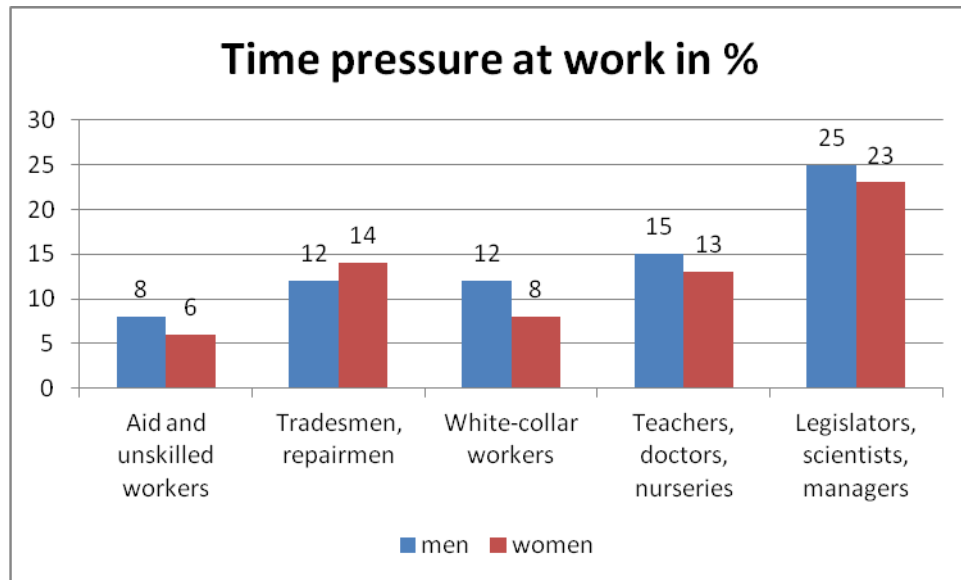


Figure 4. Time pressure at work

Source: Data adapted from Český Statistický Úřad 2008, 19.

## 5.9 Awards

Award for Czech companies achieving in the area of mental hygiene.

Since 2005, the National Health Institute organizes a competition to support health. The competition is held under the auspices of Czech Ministry of Health. It is divided into two categories. The first category concerns large companies among which Continental Teves Czech Republic, spol. s.r.o., Jičín and Danone, a.s. Praha were successful. The second category is reserved for small and medium-size companies, among which I would like to mention MP Krásno, a.s. Valašské Meziříčí. The best participants are not only awarded the prize but they are entitled to use the Mental Health at Workplace logo, such as Česká spořitelna, a.s.. (Ministerstvo Zdravotnictví České Republiky 2010)

## **II. ANALYSIS**



## 6 COMPANY PROFILE

Wüstenrot stavební spořitelna, a.s. (savings bank)

### 6.1 History

The history of the whole company falls within the year 1921 it started in German town Wüstenrot and the founder was Georg Kropp. Wüstenrot has its branches in all regions of the Czech Republic. Specifically in the Zlin region in the following towns: Bystřice pod Hostýnem, Holešov, Hovězí, Kroměříž, Napajedla, Otrokovice, Uherské Hradiště, Uherský Brod, Valašské Meziříčí, Vizovice, Vsetín and Zlín. Wüstenrot stavební spořitelna, a.s. (savings bank) is a member of the Wüstenrot financial group which is formed by three more companies, namely Wüstenrot životní pojišťovna, a.s. (life assurance), Wüstenrot hypoteční banka, a.s. (mortgage) and Wüstenrot pojišťovna a.s. (insurance). The registered office is in Prague 4 and the parent company, Wüstenrot Holding AG, has the seat in Ludwigsburg, Germany. (Wüstenrot 2012)

### 6.2 Organizational structure

Management of the branch is provided by the regional director to whom managers and financial advisors are accountable, in total 40 persons.

The manager's job includes:

- Recruitment of financial advisors
- Adaptation of financial advisors
- Training of financial advisors
- Coaching
- Planning – business plans, personal reports, work in terrain with financial advisors
- Motivation of advisors
- Organisation of different sales actions
- Meetings (Wüstenrot 2012)

Every client has their own financial advisor whose job consists of the following:

- Taking care of the assigned clients
- Providing professional advisory services
- Looking for new clients
- Regular training

- Reports
- Work in field
- Administration (Wüstenrot 2012)

Company strategy:

The company's strategy goal is to acquire and maintain 10 % share on the market in building savings and to look for new clients. (Wüstenrot 2012)

### **6.3 Subject of business**

- Acceptance of deposits
- Provision of credits
- Provision of contributions to natural persons (Wüstenrot 2012)

### **6.4 Offered products and services**

Wüstenrot stavební spořitelna, a.s. (saving bank) offers a wide range of products concerning building savings not only to natural persons but also to legal entity. Specifically:

- Wüstenrot Stavební spoření (building savings)
- Wüstenrot Kamarád + (friend +)
- Wüstenrot Vychytané spoření (uptake savings)
- Wüstenrot Team (team)

10 November 2011 – Wüstenrot stavební spořitelna, a.s. (savings bank) was awarded the Savings Bank of the Year 2011, due to the wide range of credits and innovations.

### **6.5 Economic result**

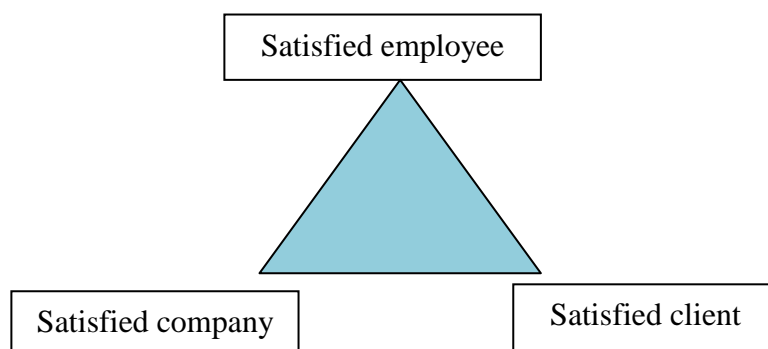
The economic result in 2010 compared to 2009 dropped by approximately 6.4 % from 287,282 thousand to 268,832 thousand CZK. (Wüstenrot 2012)

## 7 RESEARCH

### 7.1 Goal of the research

The goal was to analyse mental hygiene of employees from a savings bank, to find out what is behind the employees' better or worse performance and to suggest solution for the improvement of their quality of life, to increase their satisfaction and to improve their labour performance.

As I learned from the interview with the director of the company and with their employees, awareness of mental hygiene was very low, some of them were not able to explain what mental hygiene is and what to imagine under this concept. Therefore, before the research, first of all they had to be familiar with the interpretation of the concept. It turned out that the company does not deal with these issues but after some discussion, the company was willing to address with this issue and to improve the health of its employees. I applied this topic directly on the savings bank because its employees are in everyday contact with people and demands on professionalism are placed on them in particular with respect to their approach to clients. Mental hygiene is associated with satisfaction of a man and a client and a company too. Graphically, we can illustrate it as follows:



Picture 4. Triangle of satisfaction

This triangle is closely bound and any disruption of one of its vertices leads to weakening of all the three of them.

## 7.2 Methods of research

The primary sources of information were gained through a questionnaire. The questionnaire contains both close questions, which simplify fulfilment and thanks to this fact the dynamics of the fulfilment was higher, and open questions which give the space for consideration and for expression of own opinion.

The questionnaire itself is logically divided into 4 sections and contains 27 questions. Each section focuses on individual problems of mental hygiene. The first section deals with the working environment and tries to reveal causes and to find possible solutions. The second category is focused on healthy lifestyle and on sleep as a basic human need which is often pushed aside and which we are willing to get rid of. I engaged sports and health-related problems as well and I tried to find connections between healthy lifestyle and mental hygiene. The third category includes stress and detailed focus on the mental hygiene area. Here the questions are designed mainly for careful thinking and considering possibilities of spending the company's money on the mental hygiene. The fourth category works with general questions comprising sex, age, education and company position.

The analysis will work with this division which continues systematically on the theoretical part. Each individual section will have a brief introduction and will be finished with a constructive commentary including suggestions for improvements. Results will be evaluated using graphs and tables which are processed in MS Excel and MS Word.

Together with the questionnaire, I sent the Holmes-Rahes scale as well, thanks to which the respondents can get immediate feedback whether they are in danger of risk concerning stress limit or not. This method was very positively welcomed by all respondents because thanks to it they know the result immediately, which helps them to uncover mistakes they are making.

## 7.3 Organisation and course of the investigation

I chose 2 ways of submitting the questionnaires. One of them was electronic form and the other one was a personal submission to managers and financial advisors.

The investigation was held from 8 December – 18 December 2011. The surveyed company has 40 employees in total from the Zlín region. The employees were asked to fill in the questionnaire. I was returned 35 questionnaires, which represents a return of 86 %.

Table 9. Return of the questionnaire

	Number	Percentage
Sent questionnaires	40	100.00 %
Returned questionnaires	35	86.00 %

## 7.4 Questionnaire results

### 7.4.1. Questions of general character

The task was to find out the proportional shares of men and women, their age, their acquired qualifications and position in the company. These 4 indicators enable comparison and will help find the answers. All the aforementioned categories mingle through the research and contribute to its completeness.

#### What is your sex?

Table 10. Sex of the respondents

	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency in %
Male	10	29.00
Female	25	71.00

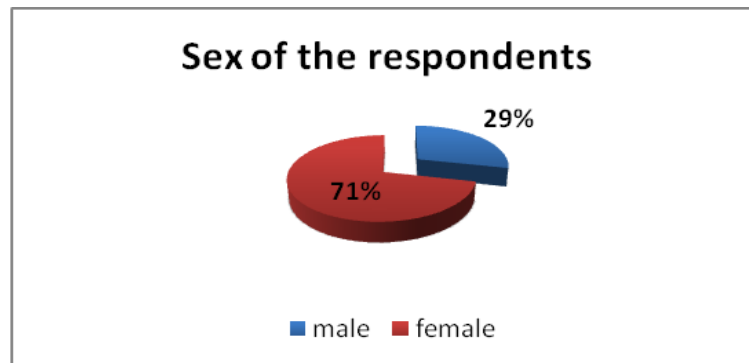


Figure 5. Sex of the respondents

Of the 35 employees, 10 (29 %) are men and 25 (71 %) are women. The difference between the number of women compared to men is considerable. It is caused by it that women are more interested in this job.

**What is your age?**

Table 11. Age of the respondents

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
18-29	5	8
30-49	4	12
50 and more	1	5

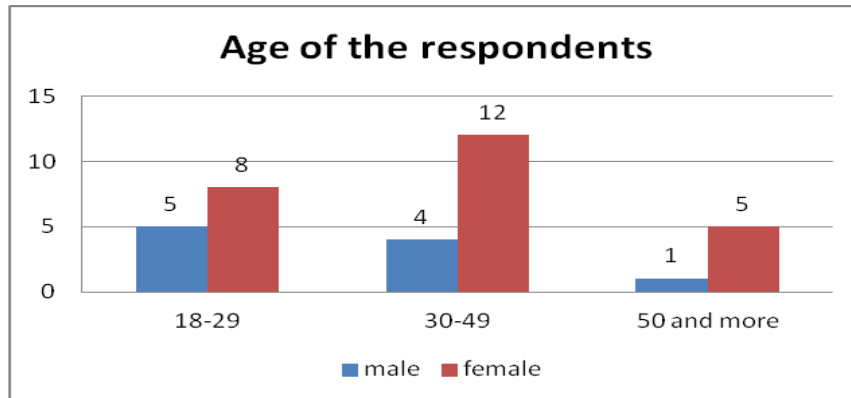


Figure 6. Age of the respondents

It is clear from the graph that the company employs people of a wide range of age, from 18 to 50 and more, what I think is an advantage because individual clients have the chance to choose a consultant not only according to his/her appearance but also according to his/her age as close to the client's one as possible. Some clients trust younger consultants, some prefer the older one. The most women fall within the category of 30-49 year (12 women). As far as the men are concerned, the strongest age category is the one of 18-29 years (5 men), followed by nearly identically strong age of men being 30-49 years old (the number is by one person lower). The important finding is that the company does not concentrate only on younger age groups but also gives opportunity to older employees who, due to their many-year working career, can bring to the company the acquired knowledge and experience which can be very beneficial. Such diversity can be a sort of backbone at the company's meetings as well where each age category brings different views and opinions. Up to the age of 29, people are dynamic, wild, full of energy and willing to risk. People, who belong to the age category of 30-49 years, are in particular realistic and thoughtful, and they are willing to run a medium-size risk. On the other hand, people older than 50 years are rather conservative, they do not look for risks and tend to be down-to-earth.

**What is the highest level of your education?**

Table 12. Level of education

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
Basic school	0	0
College without GCSE	0	0
College with GCSE	0	5
High school	7	17
University	3	3

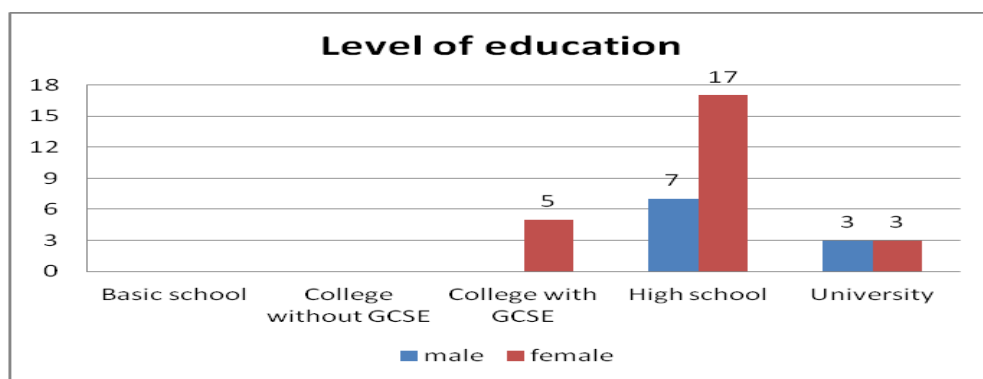


Figure 7. Level of education

As in the case of age range, the variety of the level of acquired education is also wide. I regard this fact as positive again and surely it is for the clients' benefit. The possibility to work in the savings bank is allowed only to people who acquired at least education completed by GCSE, and therefore, there is nobody in our graph with a lower level of education. People who have not reached the GCSE level can be employed as well but must be continuing their studies before they start to work for the company. Most of the women and men have high school, in total 83 %. Five women (14 %) graduated from college with GCSE. University degree is represented in 17 %, of which there are 3 women and 3 men. The Czech Statistical Office states that the women working in banks usually graduated from high school and have the GCSE level of education whereas the men have university degree. As far as the client is concerned, all employees are thoroughly trained regardless of the acquired level of education and therefore the client is not aware of possible lower quality of service. In addition, the university degree does not guarantee a managerial position automatically. Every savings bank has its own career development scheme and university degree is not the only prerequisite for getting a higher position.

**What is your job position in your company?**

Table 13. Job position in the company

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
Manager	6	1
Financial advisor	4	24

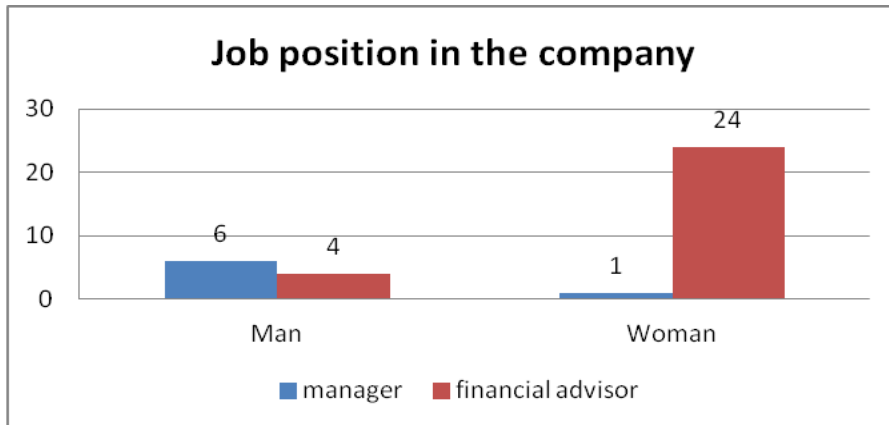


Figure 8. Job position in the company

As it follows from the above mentioned graph, 6 men of 10 and only 1 woman of 25 works in managerial position.

*Summary of the first part:*

From the above mentioned graphs it is clear that the company is formed by the core of young, 13 people at the age of 29 years and 19 people younger than 49 years. The company gives opportunity also to people older than 50 years, which I would like to highlight because it means that the company is open to the labour market and breaks the stereotypes about people above 50 years of age.

At present time, GCSE is basic and in the savings bank concerned, it is one of the primary prerequisite of employment. It is evident from the graph that 83 % of the employees have GCSE and 18 % university degree. In the company, in total 7 managers and 28 financial advisors are working. The results show that the company has a strong base, on which it can built and improve its potential for the future.



**7.4.2. Questions falling within the category of working environment**

Here I concentrated on whether the working environment for the employees is stressful, what is the cause (noise, illumination) and what they would like to change in the office to feel more comfortable. All the section gives evidence about satisfaction of employees with the environment which surrounds them and in which they have to bring maximum performance. It is necessary to realize that the working environment does not affect only employees but the clients as well and therefore it should be paid high attention.

**Is the working environment stressful for you?**

Table 14. Stressful working environment

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
Yes	2	5
No	8	12
Partly	0	8

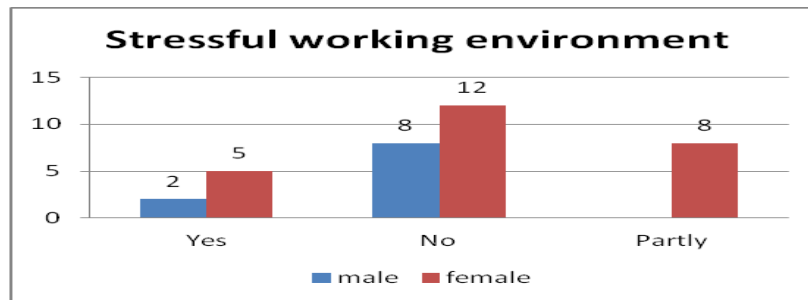


Figure 9. Stressful working environment

Women are more sensitive and susceptible and 52 % of them regard the working environment as partly or totally stressful. From this fact we can deduce that more than half of them perceive the working environment as unpleasant, they are unable to get used to it fully and they would welcome a change. Seven respondents of the women stated that the working environment is not satisfactory and is stressful for them. On the other hand, 80 % of the men regard their working environment as not stressful. It is necessary to perceive this piece of information in the context of the individual offices which are considerably different as far as size, number of people or equipment is concerned. In total 52 % of the women and 20 % of the men do not feel comfortable and satisfied in their office. In the long-term horizon, it can be reflected in working performance reduction, interpersonal relationships and pointless tension. It is necessary to reveal the causes and find the right solutions.

**Are you disturbed by ambient noise at work?**

Table 15. Noise at work

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
Yes	2	1
Sometimes	3	8
No	5	16

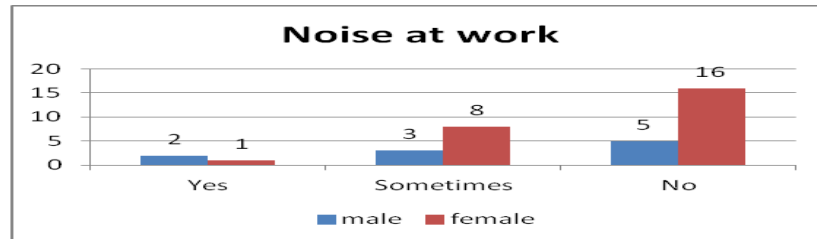


Figure 10. Noise at work

This question was concentrated on noise because none of the offices is located on the outskirts or some calm places and the background noise of the town is inescapable. Nevertheless, 60 % of the respondents claim that they are not disturbed by any surrounding influences. The reason can be the convenient location and sound isolation of the buildings or higher tolerance towards co-workers and higher resistance to outer influences. However, 9 % of the respondents perceive noise as a very disturbing element and 31 % of them are bothered by noise sometimes only. 50 % of the men are exposed to noise when the sources of outer noise are cars, emergency services vehicles and the sources of inner noise are predominantly phone calls. 36 % of the women are exposed to outer noise such as cars, roadwork and building works in the neighbourhood as well as inner noise such as phone calls and noise generated by co-workers. Noise level of all the above-mentioned sources exceed 30 dB, which is considered as unfavourable noise distracting our attention and it is necessary to do anything with it. I recommend concentrating on this problem because it is always possible to find a good solution for sources of inner noise either by reconstruction of the office or improving privacy. All 13 people belonging to the younger age category, 18-29 years, claim that they are not bothered by noise and noise is not a disturbing element for them. This could be attributed to the fact that younger generation searches busy and pulsing environment and does not perceive noise levels in the neighbourhood and the fact that a younger organism copes with stress better while people over 30 prefer to work in a calmer atmosphere and are more sensitive to external stimuli.

**What is the number of lighting devices in your office?**

Table 16. Number of lighting devices

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
Just one source of daylight	0	0
1 artificial light + daylight	2	3
2 artificial light + daylight	5	8
3 artificial light + daylight	1	4
4 and more	2	10

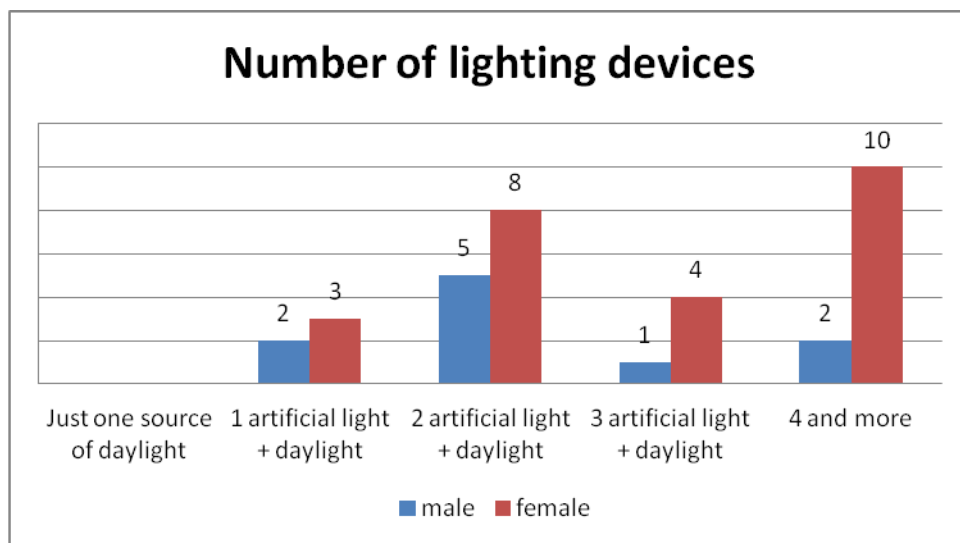


Figure 11. Number of lighting devices

Here, I would like to highlight amount and quality of illumination in the individual offices. As I have already mentioned, each office is unique and I appreciated the fact that in the old as well as the newly reconstructed offices illumination is on a high-quality level. The essential fact is that each of the employees has daily light as well as several artificial lights at their disposal. Only 5 people fall within the category of 1 daily + 1 artificial light, in this case, I would recommend adding an easy-to-operate illumination for PC, which will solve this little imperfection. We can conclude that in this case the office is correctly oriented and has sufficient natural illumination all day as none of the respondents mentioned illumination in the next question where I tried to find out what they would like to have improved.

**What would you change in your office to be able to feel more comfortable?**

Table 17. Changes in an office to feel more comfortable

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
Music	1	0
Picture	0	1
Change of colleagues	1	1
More plants	2	1
Nothing	6	1
More private	2	6
Chair/modern furniture	3	10

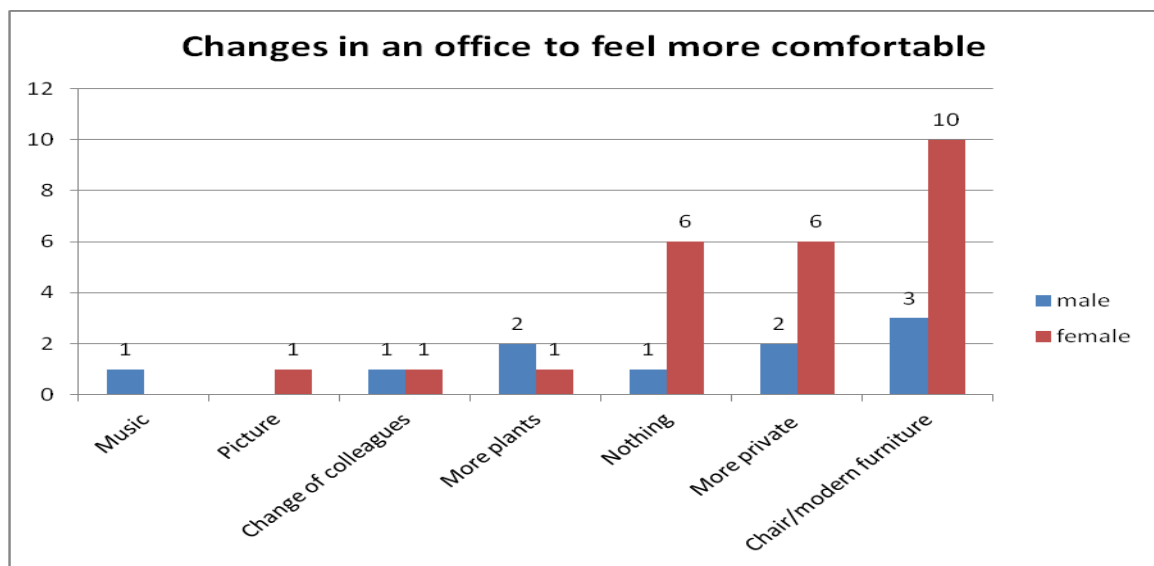


Figure 12. Changes in an office to feel more comfortable

In this part, I gave the respondents opportunity to think about how they could make their stay in the offices more pleasant. The key to success was to become aware of and determine what would lead to more comfortable feelings. Six men and 1 woman stated that they are satisfied with their offices and that they like the space and the equipment. On the other hand, these 7 people work in managerial positions which brings many advantages and one of them is a better office and equipment which can be motivating for the other employees. Financial advisors long for a change. These changes can be divided into those which we can influence ourselves, such as music, plants, pictures, chairs. These things can be purchased at their own expense as they are usually not costly and contribute to a more pleasant environment. The women and the men long mainly for the same, namely a good chair and privacy. Privacy is associated with relationships

in the workplace. In two cases the respondents wish to change their co-workers, which can lead to complication in the workplace, and it should be implemented immediately.

*Summary of the second part:*

To increase the capacity of our team, we should not omit working environment which can arouse both positive and negative emotions. From the research it is obvious that 80 % of the men feel more satisfied whereas, satisfaction among the women is only 48 %. This fact may have multiple causes. One of them is noise. Noise is a marginalized part of life, but it is an element which we can influence either partly or wholly. I consider as a very positive thing sources of illumination. 86 % of the respondents state that their office is equipped with at least 1 daily + 2 artificial lightening which fully complies with standards applicable to offices. As far as the question regarding the change is concerned, I would like to concentrate on the replies: more privacy and change of colleagues. The women long for privacy more than the men, in the proportion of 6:2. The causes may be different, one of them – noise, which is generated by co-workers' loud conversation, has been mentioned already. The usual number of people in an office is 3-5 and it may not be suitable for everybody. These 2 replies, I would include in the category of serious ones, and it is necessary to deal with them more deeply, in particular in the case where 2 people would like to change their colleagues. Conflicts in the workplace created by unpleasant atmosphere may lead to gossiping, may destroy interpersonal relationships and have a considerable impact on performance and they may even harm the company and its good name. Here, I would to recommend coaching which would discover the causes of the conflicts immediately and provide for solution. This reply was provided in 1 case by a woman and in 1 case by a man but for these employees it represents certainly a very serious problem they have to deal with every day. The other replies of the employees concern financially acceptable changes and I do not see any reason why they should not realize the respective changes either at their own expense or for the company's money as plants, pictures and comfortable chairs are concerned. They could be seen as negligible things but their importance and benefits for the employees may be significant because they are associated with the working environment which affects our psyche.

**7.4.3. Questions relating to sleep and healthy lifestyle**

This area touches sleep, sport, healthy problems, smoking, coffee, alcohol and eating habits. I was trying to find out to what extent individual habits influence mental hygiene and whether there is any space for improvement.

**Do you have problems with sleep and falling asleep?**

Table 18. Problems with sleep and falling asleep

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
Yes, I do	5	12
No, I do not	4	5
Yes, I did.	0	4
Sometimes	1	4

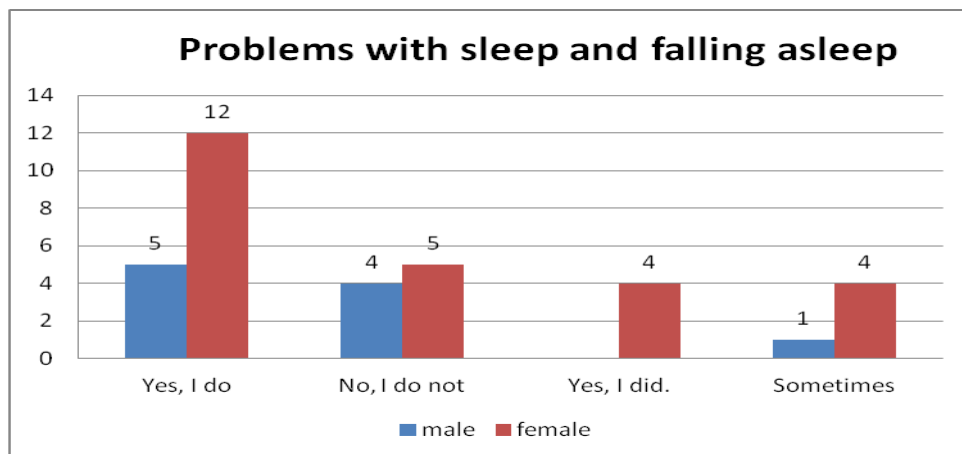


Figure 13. Problems with sleep and falling asleep

The reply “No, I do not” was used in total nine times. It concerned 4 men in the age category from 18-29 and 5 women in the same category, from which we can deduce that young organism is able to cope with stress better. The men replied “yes” in 5 cases and “sometimes” in 1 case only and among the reasons the respondents stated were worries, stress and inability to stop thinking about work. The women are doing considerably worse, as the causes they mentioned were overburden, worries and work. Only 5 of them have no problems with falling asleep and 20 of them said that have or had these problems. This can be attributed to the fact that women are more fragile, preoccupied with matters more often and they bring worries from work to home. Six managers of 7 stated that they have problems with sleep and falling asleep. The cause can be found in stress, responsibilities and time pressure.

**How many hours do you sleep per day?**

All the respondents stated identically that they sleep 6-8 hours. It is thanks to their flexible working hours, which allow them to sleep long enough, to let the organism regenerate and to recharge batteries. They usually work from 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.. This question is closely linked to the previous one because among those who cannot fall asleep, as it follows from the previous graph, there are 60 % of both men and women suffering from sleepless problems and it is essential for them to have longer time for awakening.

**What sports do you do regularly? If you do not do sports, please mention the reason.**

Table 19. Sports which the respondents do regularly

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
Hockey	1	0
Bicycle	1	3
Tennis	3	0
Ski/snowboard	2	1
Squash	3	0
Run	0	2
No sport	0	19

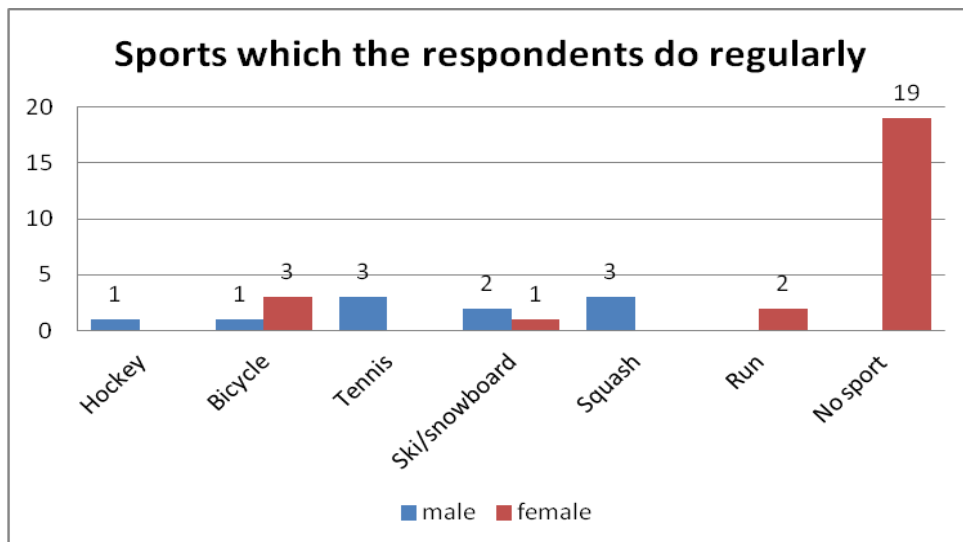


Figure 14. Sports which the respondents do regularly

Sport is a very individual matter and its popularity among men is mostly limited to tennis and squash. The men prefer fast and collective sports. From the above-mentioned graph, we can see that none of the women mentioned collective sport, they prefer bicycle or run. These sports fall within the category of aerobic sports and are very beneficial

as a prevention of stressful situations. 19 women (54 %) do not do any sport and as the most frequent reason, they state time (58 %) and laziness (42 %). The first reply indicates wrong organization of work and the second one is associated with wrong habits and rituals. Here, it is necessary to use time management services and the rewarding rituals table (see the theoretical part, page no. 34). 25 % of them are at the age of 18-29, which I find alarming. The solution may be found in collective sports where people support each other and interpersonal relationships release or even eliminate excessive stress.

**What health-related problems do you have?**

Table 20. Health-related problems

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
Problems with back	2	12
Problems with joints	0	3
Others (heart, skin)	1	3
No problems	7	7

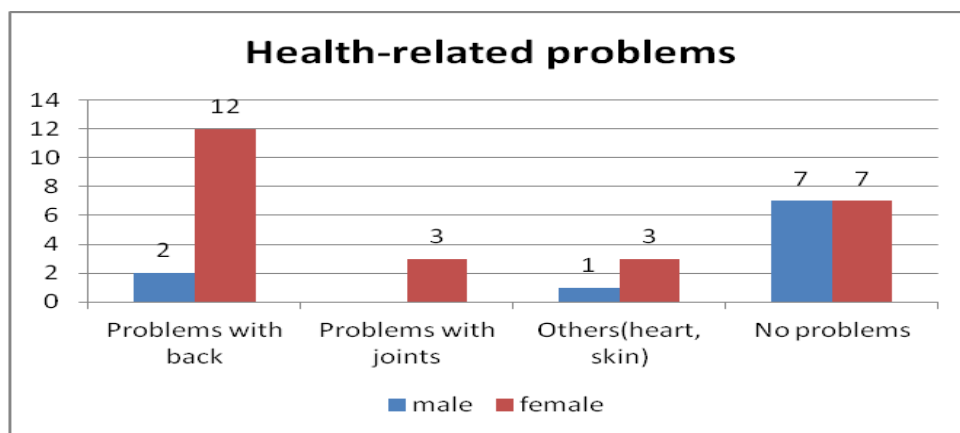


Figure 15. Health-related problems

The graph deals with health-related problems which are induced by long-term stress. Every physical pain will be reflected by our psyche. 14 respondents do not have any health-related problems. These are people from 18-29 doing sports and those who do not have problems falling asleep. The other respondents suffer from various problems. 7 women do not have any problems and 18 women have some. Here, we can see relation to the 19 women who do not do sports at all. Back pain can be attributed to wrong ergonomics of the working space or the office chair, in respect of which 13 respondents (3 men and 10 women) wish to have a better one.



**Do you smoke?**

Table 21. Smoking

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
Yes	4	0
Occasionally	0	5
No	6	20

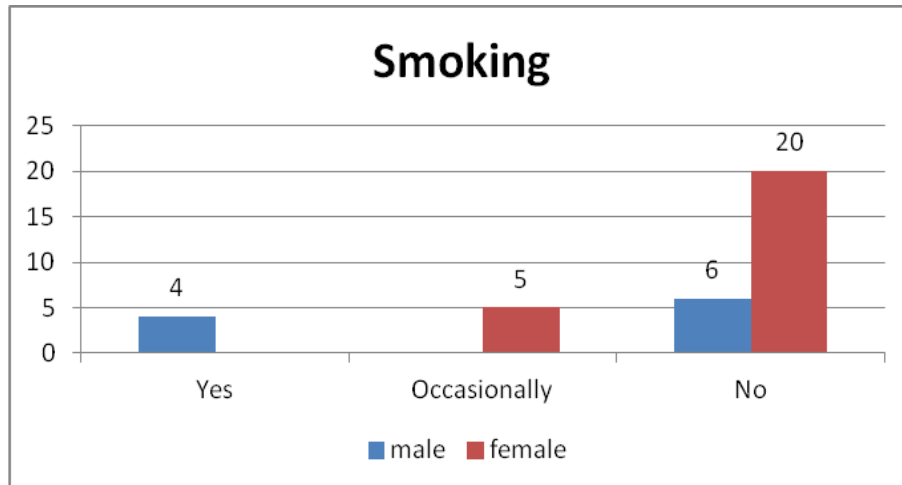


Figure 16. Smoking

Four of the men (11 %) stated that they are smokers and the reason is that they like it and that cigarette is calming for them. The reason why cigarette is calming for them has certainly deeper roots which need to be discovered. It can be the already many times mentioned stress or co-workers or work itself. 5 of the women (14 %) admitted that they smoked just occasionally. In this case, I would be very careful because it is a bad habit with which it is necessary to fight as it is unnecessary burden for the organism narrowing blood vessels, the body is in tension and spasm and these symptoms contribute to stress increase as well.

**Do you drink coffee?**

Table 22. Drinking coffee

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
Yes	10	25
No	0	0

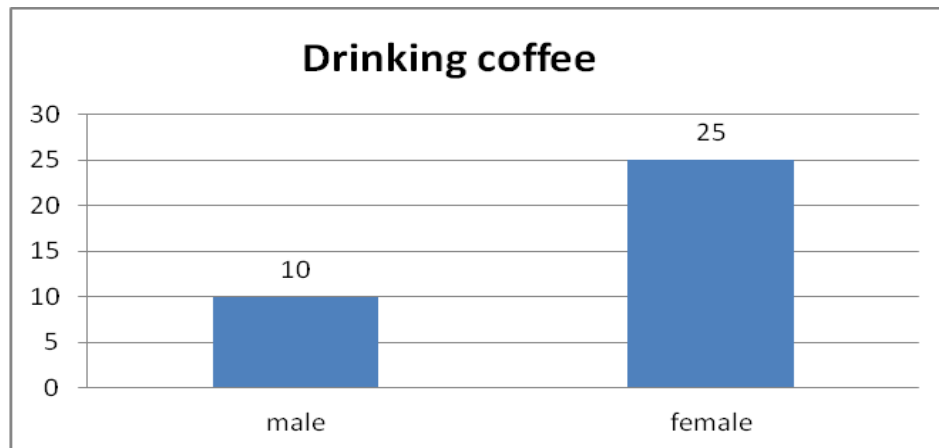


Figure 17. Drinking coffee

All the respondents drink coffee (100 %). They state that they drink it in the morning, after meals or after smoking because they like it, it is tasteful and they have feeling of higher commitment. If they drink coffee in the morning or after the meals, it indicates wrong eating habits, lack of time or simply a bad habit. The men smoke more and the women drink coffee more. The difference between the men and the women is in the number of coffee cups drunk. While the men drink 1-2 cups of coffee per day, the women drink from 2-3 cups per day. Drinking coffee results in revitalization of the body, causes dehydration and can be one of the causes of bad sleep. From the health-focused point of view, to drink 3 cups per day is not so harmful for the organism but we still have to perceive coffee as a drug. If the body does not receive its everyday dose to which it is used to, it asks for it in the form of headache, increased tiredness and lower concentration. I personally, would prefer green tea which has vitalizing effects lasting longer. The important thing is not to forget about drinking regime (2 litres of water per day) as both coffee and tea are dehydrating.

**Do you drink alcohol?**

Table 23. Drinking alcohol

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
Yes	3	4
No	1	1
Occasionally	6	20

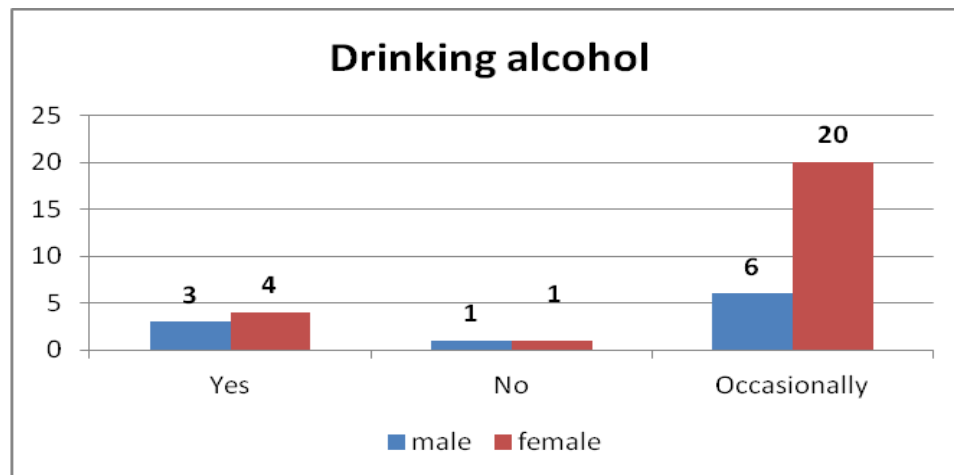


Figure 18. Drinking alcohol

People of all ages, all education levels and all walks of life drink alcohol regularly or occasionally. In 20 % the answer sounds yes and in 74 % occasionally. Only 2 respondents (1 man, 1 woman) stated that they were abstainers. Alcohol removes barriers, releases and harms the whole organism as well as interpersonal relationships. Drinking alcohol is therefore incompatible with mental hygiene.

**How long do you eat lunch?**

Table 24. The length of lunch break

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
1-15	1	2
16-30	2	19
31-60	7	4
61 and more	0	0

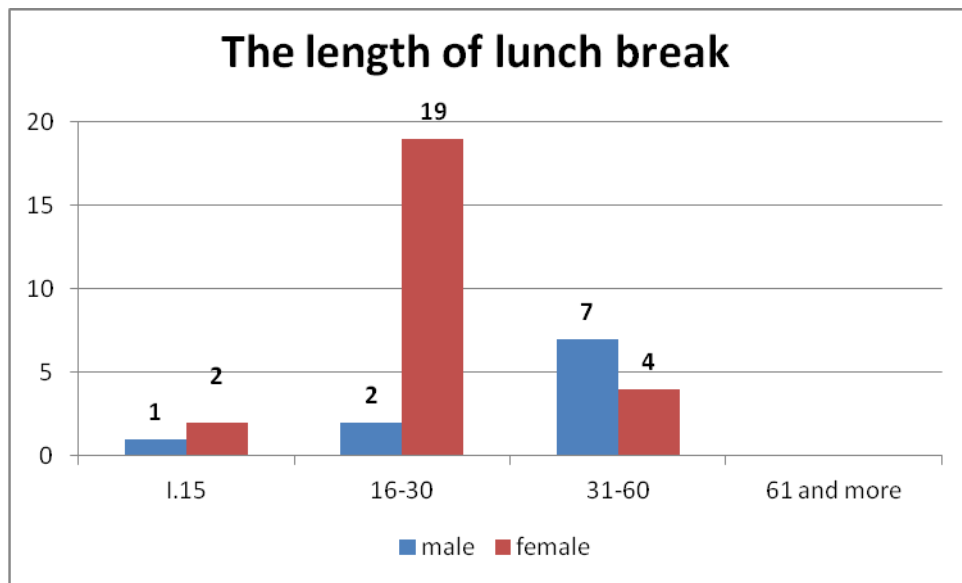


Figure 19. The length of lunch break

This is a positive result because time for lunch is time given to ourselves. Three managers of 7 spend 1-15 minutes on lunch and the reason is lack of time and therefore they are reducing the time determined for lunch so that they could catch up with work. Lunch is, from the mental hygiene point of view an integral part, as during this break the body has time for regeneration and relax. If the body suffers, in this particular case if it is starving, it mirrors in our psyche, we feel irritated, nervous and make useless mistakes. If people do not find time for lunch break, it means that they probably do not have time for any other shorter breaks which are very beneficial and improve performance. From a long-term point of view, it is an unbearable situation and it can lead to exhaustion of the organism.

Results of the other respondents are very satisfactory: 16-30 minutes spent by lunch in 60 % of the respondents and 31-60 minutes spent by 31 % of them.

*Summary of the third part:*

I consider sleep hygiene as one of the key areas of mental hygiene and I try to make clear whether the respondents have problems with falling asleep and sleep itself, what the causes are and how many hours per day they sleep. The research shows, that in most cases the respondents stated that the reason for not being able to fall asleep is their work. I would like to recommend the employees to undergo some training in the area of stress and time management which would certainly discover the mistakes they make and show them how to work with time and the accompanying stress. If the employee goes to sleep in late hours, it is important that they have enough time to sleep and not to have to wake up too early. Sleep is beneficial for the organism as well as mental hygiene. The same is true for sports - if we take care of our body, we improve our mental hygiene. The men in this company are very active and each of them does at least one sport regularly. Unlike the women who do not do any sports in most cases and who state as the second reason therefore not to have enough time, which, again indicates wrong organisation. Civilization diseases are closely related to mental hygiene and are rightly called psychosomatic. The question relating to drinking coffee – a long-term trend has been confirmed; as coffee is the most favourite and the most-widely consumed non-alcoholic drink, all employees drink coffee, on average 2 cups per day. The last question in this section deals with lunch break. Lunch break plays an irreplaceable role in the area of mental hygiene, both for the reason that we give necessary substances to our body, and also our psyche relaxes and the flow of thoughts is changing. 8 % of the respondents do not have time for lunch. In this case I would recommend some training concerning time management again.

**7.4.4. Questions related to stress**

In the last section I concentrated on the influence of stress on mental hygiene. I analysed whether they felt stressed at work, whether they use some relaxation techniques, how much time they spend on mental hygiene and how much time they would want to spend therein, whether they are interested in the company's contribution, how high the contribution should be, how they would use the money and how important mental hygiene for them is. In this section 6 questions of 8 are open to make the respondents think thoroughly and think about the topic and their approach to mental hygiene.

**Do you experience stress at work?**

Table 25. Stress at work

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
Yes, all the time	0	7
Sometimes	10	18
Never	0	0

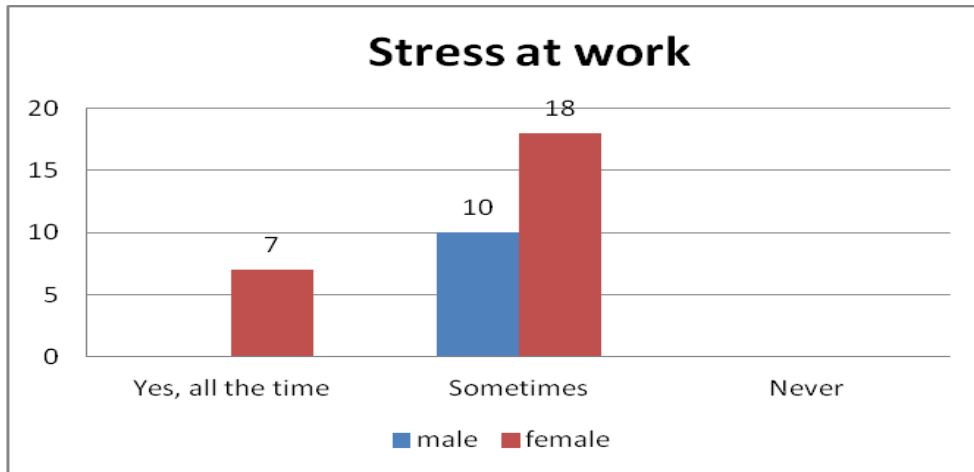


Figure 20. Stress at work

As we can see from the graph, there was nobody who did not experience stress at work. 20 % of the respondents experience stress all the time and 80 % sometimes. This fact can be assessed positively because both stressed and unstressed people experience the same mental stress. Both excess of stress and lack of it are harmful.

From the age categories' point of view, 5 women above 50 years of age experience stress all the time. It can be because of the age as older body is coping with stress more difficult and it can also be caused by the stressors mentioned in the previous graphs.

Independently of this question, the respondents applied the Holmes-Rahes scale which gave them immediate feedback in the area of stress. Holmes-Rahes scale contains both positive and negative life events. Both have considerable impact on human health. I choose 3 the most recorded eustressors and 3 distressors which the employees have to cope with most often.

Eustressor:

Holiday

Christmas

Change of life conditions

Distressors:

Change in occupation

Change of job description

Personal injuries or illness

The results demonstrated main distressors, which mean burden and harm for health of the organism. 40 % of the respondents are in the category of 300 and more points, which illustrates a higher risk of illness. The rest of the respondents are in the category of 150-299 points, which means that the stress level is medium.

### Do you use some of the relaxation techniques?

Table 26. Usage of relaxation techniques

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
Yes	1	2
No	9	23

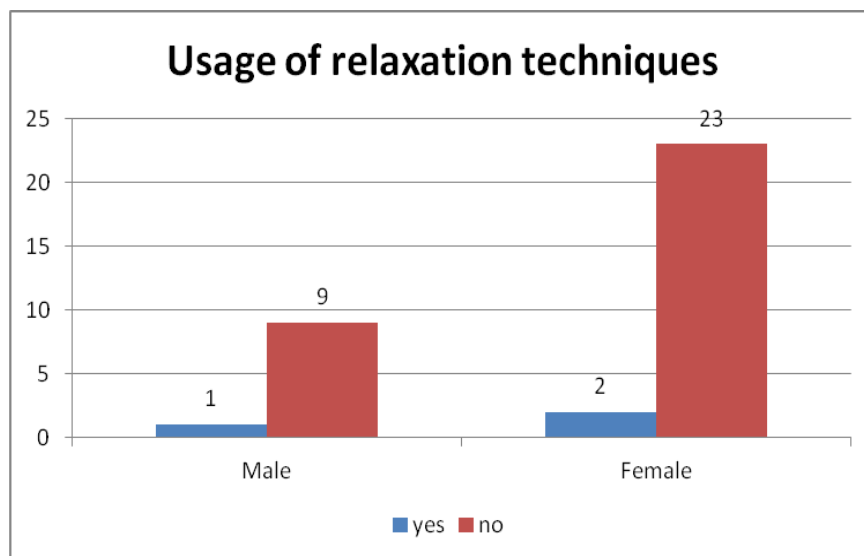


Figure 21. Usage of relaxation techniques

The vast majority (91 %) do not use any technique. As a reason they stated that they do not know any or do not have any experience with them. Only 2 women and 1 man use a form of relaxation technique.

Please, specify how much time you devote to mental hygiene every day.

Table 27. Time devoted to mental hygiene every day

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
0 min	10	23
10 min	0	1
20 min	0	1

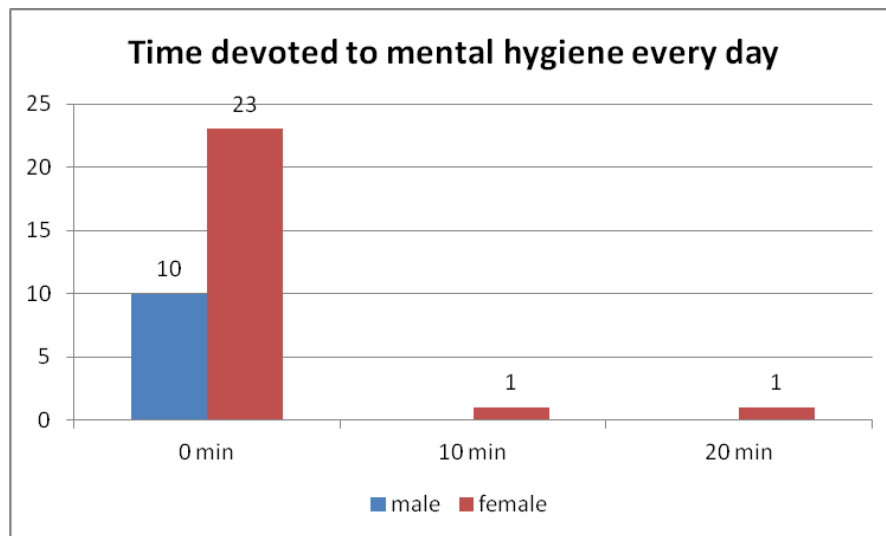


Figure 22. Time devoted to mental hygiene every day

On the first hand, it is apparent that this graph copies the results of the previous one. 94 % devote to mental hygiene 0 minutes per day. Only 2 women are engaged in relaxation techniques as it is clear from the previous graph. Time span seems to be short but apparently it is sufficient for their needs. One female respondent spends 10 minutes and the other one 20 minutes on mental hygiene. As we can see in the next graph, desire to spend time on mental hygiene is much higher. The men from the previous graph, who uses a relaxation technique, probably does not use it every day and therefore his reply is in the first column - 0 minutes.



Please, specify how many minutes per day you would like to devote to mental hygiene.

Table 28. Wished devoted time to mental hygiene every day

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
60 min	6	19
120 min	3	6
30 min	1	0

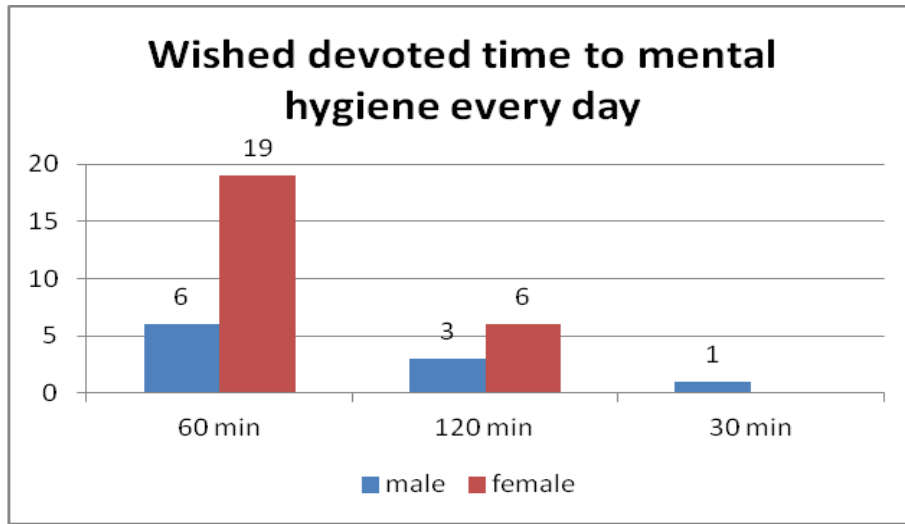


Figure 23. Wished devoted time to mental hygiene every day

This question should make the respondents think, how many minutes they would be willing to spend on mental hygiene. I assess the result as a positive one compared to the previous graph. The graph shows that all the respondents would like to change something in their life; they would like to try something new and find a solution to their problems, which brings us back to the idea that it is necessary to change something in their life. All the respondents would like to spend at least 30 minutes on mental hygiene. 60 minutes is presented in most cases and in 71 % and in 26 % they would be willing to spend even 120 minutes per day on mental hygiene, which requires time reorganisation on the part of the employees and some professional guidance at least at the beginning. As a start, I would recommend 30 minutes, which is ideal time for those who have never experiences any mental hygiene techniques, later on I would add 60 minutes, and divide the time into 30 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes in the evening.

**Would you welcome, if the company supported you in the mental hygiene area?**

Table 29. Support from the company to mental hygiene

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
Yes	8	24
No	2	1

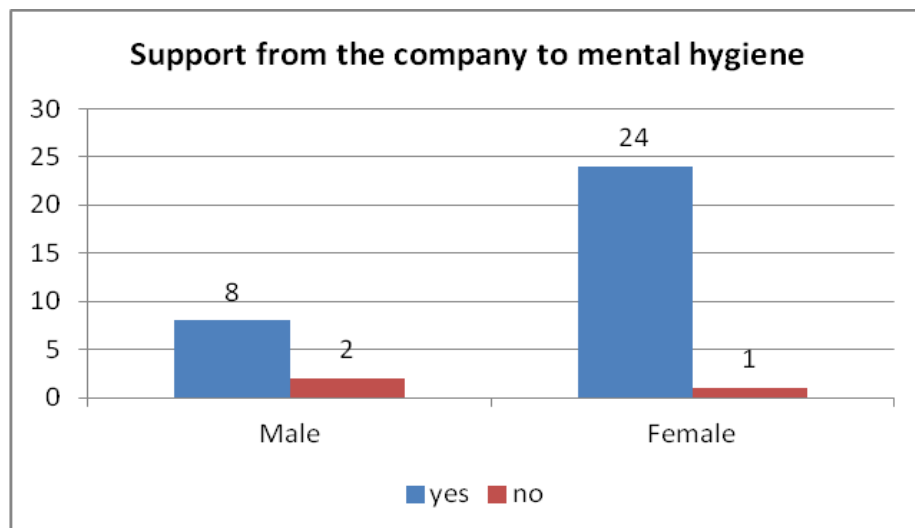


Figure 24. Support from the company to mental hygiene

Except for 2 men and 1 woman, all the respondents would welcome the possibility if the company contributed in the area of mental hygiene.

**How high contribution do you think your company could afford per month?**

Table 30. The height of contribution per month

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
500-1000	6	19
2000	0	3
5000	1	1
10000	1	1
No	2	1

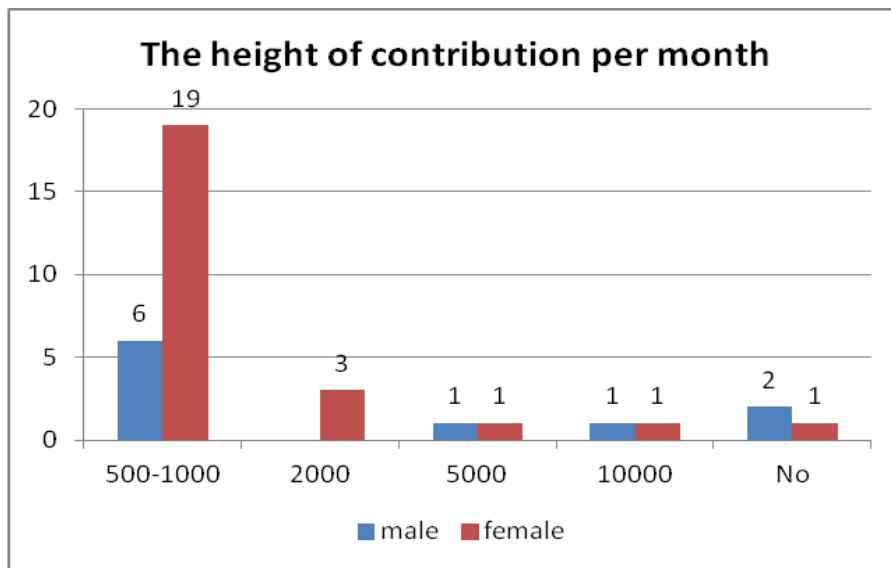


Figure 25. The height of contribution per month

Maximum percentage of 71 % would welcome the contribution CZK 500-1,000 per month, which I consider as reasonable amount. The women mentioned in the second place a contribution in the amount of CZK 2,000 per month. The amount exceeding CZK 2,000 seems to be too generous and I would not recommend spending so high amount to the company. It is not necessary to spend much money on mental hygiene, but it is essential to show the path to people who may become aware of significance of mental hygiene without wasting the company's money. Investment does not have to be in thousands to bring the benefit.

**How would you use the contribution? Please, state at least 3 options.**

Table 31. Usage of the contribution

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
Cosmetics	0	1
Relaxation	0	4
Sport	1	4
Wellness	2	1
Massage	5	15

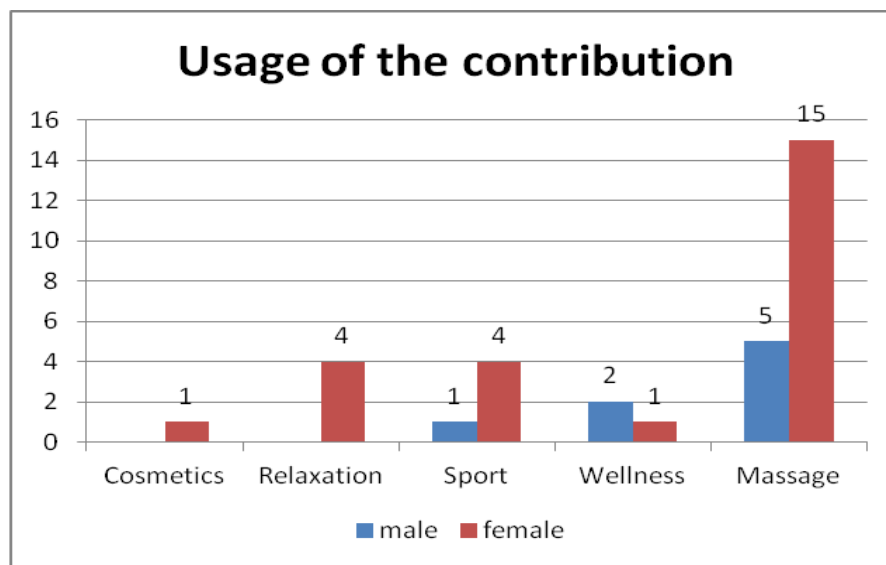


Figure 26. Usage of the contribution

The graph shows that all the respondents perceive mental hygiene as relaxation in the form of massages, wellness, relaxation and sport. This image is caused by not knowing about mental hygiene techniques. First of all, they need to be aware of the techniques and after that the above-mentioned activities can be beneficial for them. The highest percentage of 14 % among the men preferred massages and wellness in the second place. Among the women, the highest percentage would also prefer massages and as the second alternative, sports and relaxation which is important for the same percentage of the female respondents – 11 %. The sports option was chosen also by 2 women who stated in the previous graph that they do not do it on a regular basis, which I consider as a step in the right direction. Three people (2 men and 1 woman) did not provide any comments because in previous graphs they said that they were not interested in any contribution at all.

**What is, in your opinion, the importance of mental hygiene?**

Table 32. The importance of mental hygiene

	Absolute frequency	
	male	female
High	4	6
Average	6	18
None	0	1

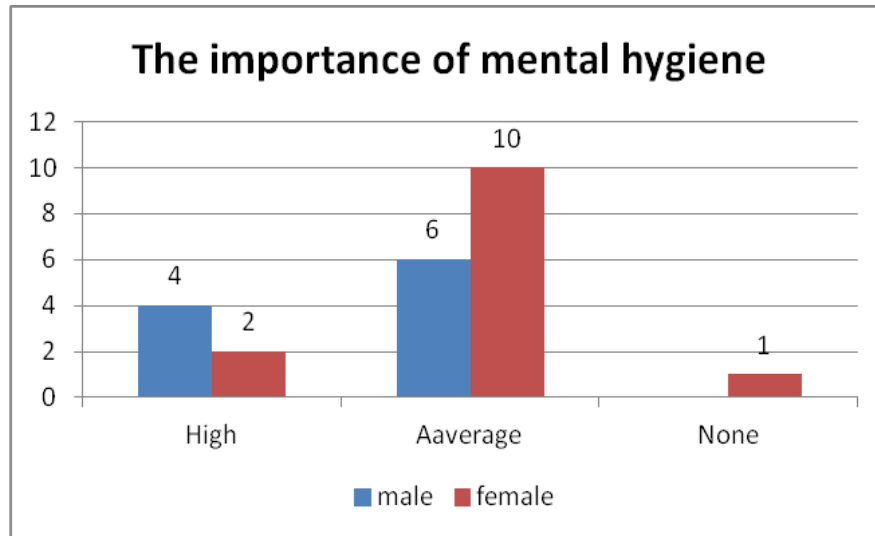


Figure 27. The importance of mental hygiene

The last question in this section focused on the respondents' own opinion on the importance of mental hygiene. Only 1 woman stated that mental hygiene has no importance. 26 % attribute average importance to mental hygiene and 70 % high importance. This implies that 96 % of the respondents considered mental hygiene as a crucial area of human health.

*Summary of the fourth part:*

Stress is an everyday part of life and as the research shows, it is connected with all age categories, all levels of education and all positions in the company. If we are able to cope with stress, we can transform it into a drive motor which improves our performance. 32 people out of 35 mentioned that they do not use any relaxation methods, the remaining 3 respondents are engaged in a certain form thereof. This is related to another question - 33 people do not spend any time per day on mental hygiene. The wish to adjust regime and to devote time to mental hygiene is 100 %. I appreciate that the respondents not only mentioned the importance of mental hygiene in such a high percentage but, as it is obvious

from the graph. They are willing to try new techniques, to spend their time and to find a solution of their problems, both physical and mental. I perceive positively the approach of the company as well, which is proactive and willing to contribute to the improvement of mental hygiene of their employees. According to the director, she is willing to invest 500 -1,000 CZK/month based on performance, loyalty, responsibilities, etc.

## CONCLUSION

In my bachelor's thesis I concentrated on the topic of mental hygiene in the Wüstenrot stavební spořitelna, a.s. (savings bank).

I divided the theoretical part into sub-chapters, which served later as a base for the analytical part. In the practical part, I used the form of questionnaire which consists of both open and closed question. I divided the questionnaire into 4 sections (working environment, healthy lifestyle, stress, general questions) with which I worked subsequently in the practical part and in the conclusion as well. The questions contain tables with absolute and relative frequency and graphs which provide graphical representation of the facts.

The bachelor's thesis should serve for reflection and thinking of improvement of mental hygiene and bringing benefits to all participants.

In the conclusion, each section is divided according to positive and negative aspects of the research.

### *First section – working environment*

Here, the employees praise the illumination which contributes to their overall comfort. As far as the noise is concerned, it is necessary to deal with it, to find the causes and to remove them, mainly the inner sources of noise. In this category, it is necessary to concentrate on the area of lack of privacy and working relationships. Here, it could help to divide the office by separation walls or to reorganize the space, or where applicable, I can recommend very popular and often used technique called Feng Shui, which is used in developed countries. However, this approach is very costly at the beginning but its benefit is invaluable and unambiguously proven in terms of higher satisfaction of employees, clients, higher profits and reputation of company. The relationships at work are often very fragile and in 2 cases it is necessary to deal with them thoroughly and the management should be involved. I offer to carry out mediation or coaching in the whole company.

### *Second section – Healthy life style*

As in the previous paragraphs, I would like to draw attention to positives, and it is the number of non-smokers and the time spend by lunch. It is said that getting rid of smoking addiction is sometimes much difficult than getting rid of addiction to some drugs

and therefore I would like to appreciate the fact that more than 74 % of the respondents are not smokers. A pleasant finding was waiting for me while processing replies regarding lunch break as the results were very good and only in 8.57 % of cases lunch takes less than 15 minutes. Now I try to present more problematic issues. The first one is the problems with sleep and falling asleep. More than one half of the respondents stated that they have, had or sometimes have problems with this issue. Luckily it is compensated by longer time for sleep 6-8 hours which is enabled by their flexible working hours. The next even more problematic area is healthy problems. More than half of the respondents suffer from psychosomatic diseases, connected with stress, bad life style and not enough physical activity. The respondents complain about back pain, pain in joints and others.

There is a great difference found on the part of the women in the area of sport where the respondents stated the reason for doing them - they are laziness and insufficient time. It is possible to overcome laziness with in a group of good friends, which means collective sports, and lack of time could be resolved by some training concerning time management. On the other hand, all the men do some sports. I would not be afraid of solving this issue with implementation of sport events, sport tournaments or just trips.

### *The third section – Stress*

From the replies, we get to know that all the employees suffer from stress, some of them all the time, the others sometimes, which can lead to tiredness and exhaustion. If those, who replied “sometimes”, used the stressors for their own benefit, they would overcome themselves, get over the boundary of the comfort zone and they could improve themselves. On the other hand, excessive and long-lasting burden is very dangerous and damaging to the organism both physically and mentally. The respondents do not know any mental hygiene techniques which they can use to cope with burden and tension. The area of mental hygiene is very wide but a lot of people still have not met any specific forms thereof. Therefore I would recommend learning them and trying some of them because everybody have different expectations and do not have to be satisfied with every technique. Individual techniques may be combined together, you can use them whenever during the day and they do not require any tools or equipment.

I appreciate that the respondents not only mentioned in such a high percentage the significance of mental hygiene for human health but, as it is obvious from the previous figures, they are willing to try new techniques, spend their private time, at least 30 minutes



per day and to find solution of their problems. The solution to stress can be found in individual techniques of mental hygiene, it is e.g. meditation, relaxation, breathing and many others.

On the basis of the data I concluded that all the employees are interested in mental development and a huge majority of them would welcome a contribution from the employer; in most cases in the range of CZK 500-1,000. Mental hygiene comprises supporting services such as massage, wellness, cosmetics, which contribute to the overall relaxation and which were mentioned most frequently in the replies. Care for mental hygiene should become everyday part of life. I believe that if the questionnaire was used after a course on mental hygiene, there would certainly be some specific relaxation techniques mentioned.

Investment into mental hygiene is investment in human capital which is a key to success. But the invested amount should not be too high and should mean only a slight increase in costs. It concerns an initial investment in the course of mental hygiene because the techniques of mental hygiene show the people how to work with themselves when find the relation between bodies and minds. You just choose the right one which meets your individual needs. In this area, the company has to decide which form and how high the contribution will be as the supporting services can serve as a motivation factor. It is important to have a clear plan and not just waste your money. A course of mental hygiene costs from 700-2.000 CZK depending on number of courses.

At the end I would recommend annual observation and evaluation of mental hygiene of employees. The factors, which were evaluated as good, must be maintained minimally on the same level and the company should concentrate on negative assessment in individual sections. I suggest improvements in the form of a course on mental hygiene, sports actions, reorganization of the offices, mediation, coaching and stress and time management.

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## APPENDICES

P I Questionnaire

P II Holmes-Rahe Scale



## APPENDIX P I: QUESTIONNAIRE

Good morning,

I am Lenka Šenkeříková and I am a student of TBU in Zlín. Topic of my bachelor thesis is the analysis of mental hygiene in your company and I would like to ask you to fill in this questionnaire which is completely anonymous. Please tick just 1 answer if it is not stated otherwise.

Thank you very much for your time and assistance.

### MENTAL HYGIENE QUESTIONNAIRE

#### WORKING ENVIRONMENT

1

Is your working environment for you stressful

- yes
- no
- partly

What is the number of illumination in your office

2

- just one source of daylight
- 1 artificial lightening + daylight
- 2 artificial lightening + daylight
- 3 artificial lightening + daylight
- 4 and more

Are you disturbed by ambient noise at work

3

- yes
- no
- sometimes

If yes, please mention what is the source of noise

What would you change in your office to feel more comfortable (please mention at least 1 reason)

4

## MENTAL HYGIENE QUESTIONARY

### SLEEP AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

5

Do you have problems with sleep and falling asleep

- yes, I do. Please mention a reason.....
- no, I do not
- yes, I did
- sometimes. Please mention a reason.....

How many hours do you sleep per day

6

- less than 5. Please mention what is the cause.....
- 6-8 hours
- 9-12 hours

Which sports do you take regular, please mention at least 3

7

If you do not sport, please mention the reason (from time reason, from healthy reason, others)

8

What health problems do you suffer

9

- breathing problems
- problems with back
- problems with joints
- others
- no problems

Do you smoke

Reason

By which occasion

10

- |                                       |                      |                      |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes          | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> occasionally | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> no           |                      | <input type="text"/> |

Do you drink coffeee

11

- yes
- no
- sometimes

If you answered „yes“ or „sometimes“, how many coffee cups do you drink per day and during which occasion.

Do you drink alcohol

Reason

12

- |                                       |                      |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes          | <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> no           |                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> occasionally | <input type="text"/> |

How many minutes do you spend by lunch

13

- less than 10 minutes. Plese mention the reason.....
- 11-15. Please mention the reason.....
- 16-30
- 31-60
- 61 and more. Please mention the reason.....

**MENTAL HYGIENE QUESTIONARY****STRESS**

Do you experience stress at work

- yes, always  
 sometimes  
 never

14

Do you use some of the relaxation techniques (Autogenic Training, relaxation, meditation, breathing, others....)

15

Please mention, how many minutes do you invest in mental hygiene per day

16

minutes

Please mention, how many minutes per day would you like to invest in it

17

Would you welcome the possibility, if the company would contribute you in the mental hygiene area

18

- yes  no

How high contribution would you imagine, could your company contribute per month

19

What for would you use the money. Please mention at least 3 possibilities

20

What importance do you attach to mental hygiene

21

- high
- average
- none

## **MENTAL HYGIENE QUESTIONARY**

### **GENERAL QUESTIONS**

22

What is your sex

- female
- male

What is your age

23

- 18-29
- 30-49
- 50 and more

What is your highest level of education

24

- Basic school
- College without GCSE
- College with GCSE
- High school
- University

What is your job position in your company

25

- manager
- financial advisor

;

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH ALL THE REpondENTS FOR THEIR TIME,  
KINDNESS AND HELP**

**APPENDIX P II: HOLMES-RAHE SCALE**

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10. Retirement	45
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19. Change in frequency of arguments with spouse	35
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21. Foreclosure on a mortgage or loan	30
22. Major change in responsibilities at work	29

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24. Trouble with in-laws	29
25. Outstanding personal achievement	28
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27. Starting or ending school	26
28. Change in living conditions	25
29. Revision of personal habits (dress, manners, associations)	24
30. Trouble with boss	23
31. Change in work hours, conditions	20
32. Change in residence	20
33. Change in school	20
34. Change in recreational activities	19
35. Change in church activities	19
36. Change in social activities	18
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42. Christmas	12
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