

Self-tracking devices and sustainable labour participation of older workers

Professorship Labourparticipation





Self-tracking devices and sustainable labour participation

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Self-tracking devices and sustainable labour participation

Aim of this project:

Increasing sustainable labour participation of older workers by using self-tracking devices

In a broader context (EU-goals):

- (early) prevention of drop-out of older workers
- contributing to healthier lifestyle of (older) workers, while workers themselves are the main 'actors'



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Context:

- Sustainable labour participation: the degree to which individuals are able and willing to perform their current and future work in a healthy, valued way (van Vuuren, 2011; van der Klink e.a., 2010)



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This project:

Self-tracking devices as a means to increase self insight and self management when it comes to health behavior.

Result: higher level of sustainable employability, because workers are more self confident and are better equipped when it comes to health behavior



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Participating company: 'Museumtechnische werken'





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'Museum-technical products':

- Small company
- Supporting management



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Global overview of the project:

Twelve workers, varying in age, choose one of 5 domains to be measured ('big five for healthy life', QSI):

1. Daily physical activity
2. Food and nutrition
3. Sleep
4. Stress
5. Social interaction



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Global overview of the project:

- Preparation phase (Oct. 2013 – March 2014):
 - Selection of participants
 - Choice of self-tracking devices, adapting devices if necessary
 - Design of execution activities (additional self-report measures, how to integrate SDT-principles, etc.)
 - First measurement of relevant variables



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Global overview of the project:

- Execution phase (April 2014 – June 2014):
 - Participants use and test the selected self-tracking devices
 - Monitoring the results; adapting the devices/data-display if necessary
 - Final measurement of relevant variables



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Global overview of the project:

- Evaluation phase (July 2014 – Oct. 2014):
 - Evaluation of the results
 - Writing-up the final report





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Right now:

- Participants are using the devices (until 27-06)
 - 4 'fitbits' for daily physical activity
 - 5 'withings' for sleep and daily physical activity
 - 1 'inner balance' for stress
 - 1 'zeo' for sleep
 - 1 'emwave' for stress
- Participants are supervised by an external 'vitality-coach' during those three months



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Some preliminary observations:

- Moderate to high values of satisfaction (according to logbooks)
- ‘Subjective’ behavioral change
- Two devices lost...
- Coach: valuable project, however, devices can be ‘distraction’ of ‘real’ problems



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Some preliminary observations:

- Autonomous choice of participants causes some problems for researchers
- Not properly functioning devices cause ‘backfiring’
- Support ‘on demand’ should be considered



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Advocates' comments in green (= taken care of), blue (= work in progress) and red (= not followed):

- 'All employees should participate, older and younger'
- 'Staff should be enthusiastic and supportive and fully informed'
- 'No ict-skills should be assumed'
- 'Be aware of stress that could be evoked by device itself...!'



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Advocates' comments:

- 'In case of larger scale implementation: involve other parties, such as insurance companies, branche organisations, practitioners'
- 'Gamification may increase the impact of the self-tracking devices'
- 'Participants should write a notebook during the testing phase'



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Advocates' comments:

- 'Try to investigate the impact of such a project, not only on participants themselves, but also on HR-policies of the company'
- 'Is the number of 3 participants sufficient?'
- 'Are participants clients or staff of MTW?'



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To do:

- Interviews with participants and coach
- Analyzing the devices' data
- Writing up the final results
- Strong intention: Measuring the project's effect after three months



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End product:

- Description of (some) basic principles for self-tracking devices (and their implementation) if they are intended to contribute to the increase of the sustainable labour participation of older workers.

Thank you!

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