



# WISE HAPPINESS 2015

A SURVEY ABOUT WHAT MAKES US HAPPY

— WISE HAPPINESS 2015 —

# CURIOUS ABOUT HAPPINESS!

In this year's survey, we've found that having a laugh with our colleagues helps us to feel good. We've also seen that many people think clear leadership and a good relationship with their manager are important when it comes to job satisfaction.

Happiness is particularly important to us here at Wise Group, and we are convinced that we feel and perform better when we receive positive feedback. But in a world full of demands, tough challenges and constant change, finding positive aspects isn't always easy. For this reason, we want to contribute in various ways towards raising awareness of what reinforces all that is positive in life.

Wise Happiness is a survey that looks at what makes people happy – in general and at work. We also investigate what causes the opposite. We are convinced that people who feel well do a better job, and our vision is that our employees should look back on their time with us as the most enjoyable period of their career.



*"WISE HAPPINESS IS A SURVEY THAT  
LOOKS AT WHAT MAKES PEOPLE HAPPY  
– IN GENERAL AND AT WORK."*

ELISABET WOHLFAHRT  
HEAD OF CORPORATE CULTURE, WISE GROUP

— SUMMARY: WISE HAPPINESS —

# FRIENDLY COLLEAGUES AND A GOOD MANAGER — THE IDEAL COMBINATION

The most important factors in terms of our happiness are people, a loving relationship, active leisure and job satisfaction. At work, it is our colleagues, working climate, meaningfulness and appreciation that make us happy.

Just over one third of employees are so happy in their jobs that they never want to change their workplace. Around one in three want to change their job within two years. The main reason for this is having a bad manager. A lack of leadership and clarity stresses us and leads us to look for new challenges.



# — HOW HAPPY WE ARE —

## OLDER PEOPLE ARE HAPPIEST WITH THEIR LIVES

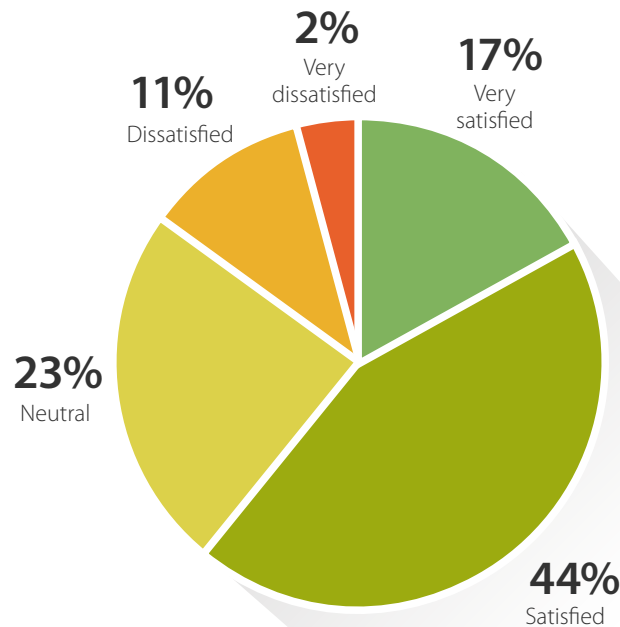
61 per cent of us are happy with their lives. 13 per cent are unhappy. Those who are unhappy with their job are also unhappy with their lives as a whole. At work, it's our colleagues, working climate and appreciation that make us happy and ensure we feel good. Bad managers, a lack of clarity and feeling unable to meet workplace demands have a negative impact on us.

Women and men are roughly as satisfied with their lives, and Danes are somewhat more satisfied than Swedes. As a group, pensioners are the happiest.

## HAPPINESS AND WORK GO HAND-IN-HAND

There is a strong link between happiness and having a job. Jobseekers and people on sick leave are significantly less happy than those who have a job to go to. However, our position is less important in terms of our well-being. Managers only report a slightly higher level of happiness than non-managers.

*How satisfied are you with your life nowadays?*



*On average, how satisfied are different groups?*



# — HAPPINESS AT WORK LEADS TO GOOD RESULTS —

## WE ARE IMPORTANT TO EACH OTHER'S HAPPINESS

Fruit baskets and fitness allowances are all well and good. But when it comes to what makes us happy at work, it's our relationships with our colleagues that are more important than anything else. In the survey, participants were asked to give a spontaneous answer to what makes them feel happy at work. The combined answers quickly paint a picture of everyday encounters and collaboration with their immediate colleagues, together with doing a meaningful job and achieving good results that they can be proud of.

People are happy when they do a good job, and businesses earn money when their employees do a good job – not only because their employees do better business and deliver faster. The survey shows that those who get on well with their work colleagues do not think security, salary and benefits are as important. Not only does a happy workforce do a good job, it can also cost less.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MEANINGFUL WORK TASKS

After working climate and colleagues, meaningfulness and appreciation for work carried out are the most important factors for feeling happy at work.

As in previous years, the survey showed that having fun at work, getting on well with colleagues, appreciation at work and opportunities for development came top of what makes us happy at work.



*"A HAPPY DAY IS A  
STRAIGHTFORWARD DAY, WHEN  
WORK GOES SMOOTHLY AND I  
MEET NICE PEOPLE."*

*"I'M HAPPY WHEN I FEEL  
CLEVER AND POPULAR. WHEN  
I ACHIEVE SET TARGETS AND  
CAN KEEP MY PROMISES."*

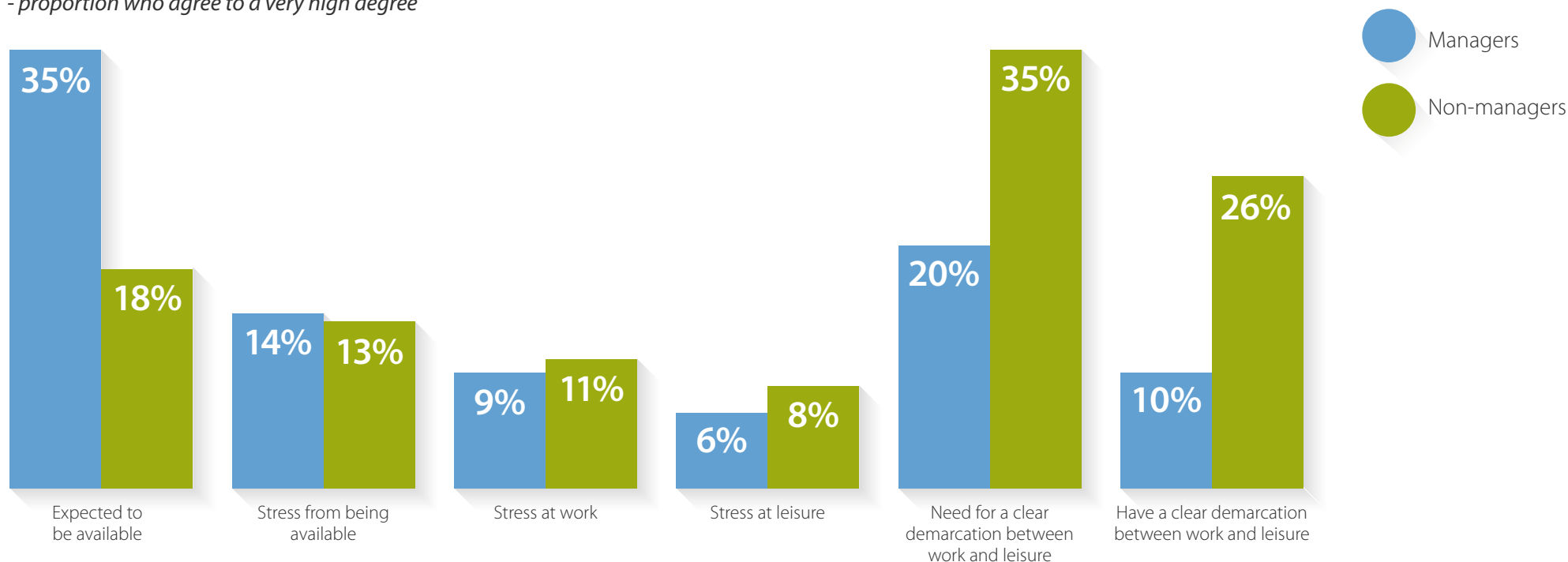


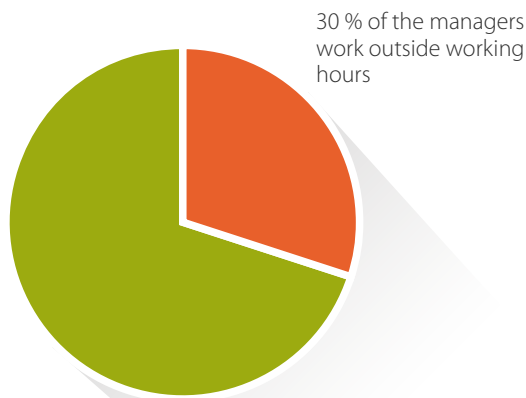
# — CONTINUITY BETWEEN WORK AND LEISURE —

The amount of contact people want with work during their leisure time varies from person to person. The survey shows that 35 per cent of the employees believe it is important to have a clear demarcation between work and leisure, and 26 per cent believe that they have this. This is most important to young people, with the need decreasing with age.

According to last year's survey, working over and above working hours was one of the main reasons for feeling time pressure during leisure time. Then, 17 per cent of women and 10 per cent of men said that they get stressed by being available outside their ordinary working hours. This stress is greatest for young people, and becomes less with age.

*Expected availability, perceived stress and demarcation between work and leisure  
- proportion who agree to a very high degree*

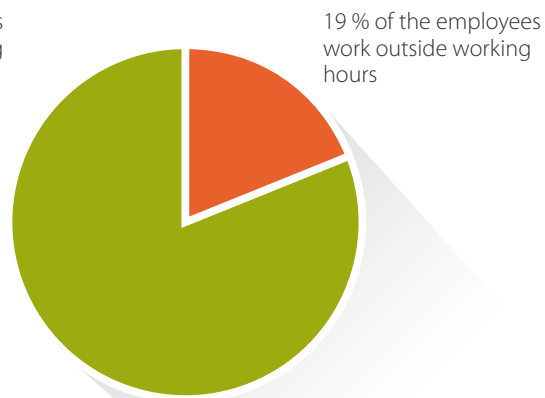




**WORK OUTSIDE WORKING HOURS  
– MANAGERS**

Working outside working hours appears not to stress managers as much as employees.

30 per cent of managers and 19 per cent of employees state that they work outside ordinary working hours; despite this, slightly more employees feel that they experience time pressure during leisure time.



**WORK OUTSIDE WORKING HOURS  
– EMPLOYEES**

### SET CLEAR GUIDELINES FOR EVENING WORK

Some people think that doing a few hours of work in the evening and at weekends is the most natural thing in the world. For others, the feeling of having to be constantly available is a source of stress – not least when employees feel that their managers and colleagues expect this of them.

As an employer, it's worth shedding some light on this relatively recent phenomenon.



Wise Group's tips, based on the surveys and our experience:

- Be clear about what applies within the work group.
- Respect individuals' living situations.
- If you are unsure how available you are expected to be, ask your manager.
- Break the habit of constantly checking your e-mail

# — WHAT MAKES US UNHAPPY? —

Research suggests that life events such as illness and trauma contribute towards unhappiness.\* So too do the absence of relationships, loneliness, unemployment and passive leisure time – in other words, the opposite of what essentially contributes towards our well-being. In our 2014 study, 23 per cent stated that they had experienced a specific event during the past six months that had significantly worsened their well-being.

Our survey shows that the biggest shadows cast over our happiness during leisure time are a lack of time, finances and health. At work, it is high workload, a lack of clarity and a lack of leadership that have the greatest negative effect.

Poor leadership has a serious negative impact on us. The stress that we experience as a result of poor leadership also spills over into our leisure time.

\*Bengt Brölde, researcher in philosophy at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

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## *What causes us stress at work*

WORKING CLIMATE (LACK OF) LEADERSHIP  
HIGH WORK LOAD WORKING ENVIRONMENT  
TECHNICAL PROBLEMS LACK OF CLARITY NO FEEDBACK  
INTERRUPTIONS OTHER

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## *What causes us stress in leisure time*

HEALTH NOTHING WORK  
OTHER FINANCE PRIVATE  
CHILDREN LACK OF TIME LEISURE ACTIVITIES  
RELATIONS FAMILY LIFE COMPARING TO OTHERS  
LONELINESS



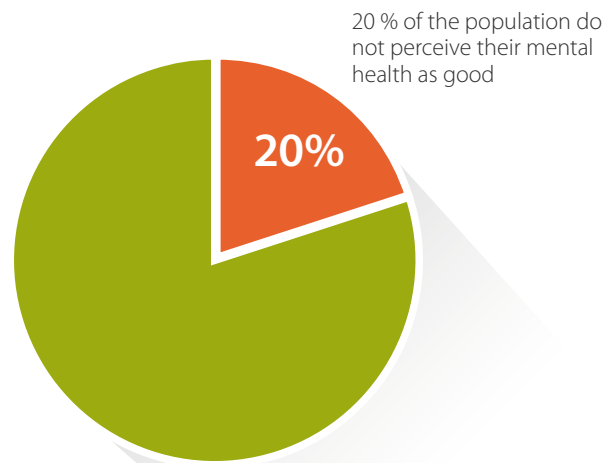
## — WHAT MAKES US UNHAPPY? —

### WORK AND POOR MENTAL HEALTH

In our 2013 survey, we noted that good mental health is essential in order for us to feel happy. 20 per cent of the population feel they are not in good mental health, and naturally this is due to a number of interacting factors. However, it's worth noting that those who feel they suffer from poor mental health think that work-related factors have the greatest negative impact on them:

1. A lack of respect from management
2. A lack of pride in working for the company
3. Not having fun at work
4. A lack of work/life balance

There are opportunities here for employers to raise awareness within the organisation, for example by emphasising the importance of employees feeling that they are respected by their manager. Not least when an individual is not feeling at ease. Act quickly if you suspect that harassment is taking place within a work group, or when you notice that a colleague doesn't appear to be feeling at ease. We have a duty to look after each other.



### NO LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

Having a job contributes towards happiness, but 2 per cent do not feel that anything at work makes them happy. They don't get on well with their colleagues, and they don't enjoy their work. Nor do they feel that their work is meaningful, or that they are proud of the company they work for.

# — HAPPINESS AND STRESS AT WORK —

What makes us happy at work and what stresses us in life varies according to whether or not we work as a manager.

For employees, the most important thing is to get on well with colleagues and to enjoy working. Managers feel that meaningfulness and appreciation rank higher. Managers are more stressed about their personal relationships, while employees are more stressed about their health.

Employees are stressed by a lack of leadership, while managers are stressed by constantly being interrupted. Everyone is affected by a lack of clarity – managers slightly more so than employees. In an ever-changing world, the challenge lies in clarifying what applies today – a challenge that begins with management and should be filtered down to all employees within the company. This is difficult, but not impossible. 93 per cent do not cite a lack of clarity as a stress factor.

## HAPPINESS – TOP 3

*The following factors make for happy **employees**:*

1. WORKING CLIMATE AND COLLEAGUES
2. MEANINGFULNESS AND APPRECIATION
3. SECURITY, SALARY AND BENEFITS

*The following factors make for happy **managers**:*

1. MEANINGFULNESS AND APPRECIATION
2. WORKING CLIMATE AND COLLEAGUES
3. SECURITY, SALARY AND BENEFITS

## STRESS – TOP 3

***Employees** are stressed by:*

1. HIGH WORKLOAD
2. A LACK OF LEADERSHIP
3. A LACK OF CLARITY

***Managers** are stressed by:*

1. HIGH WORKLOAD
2. BEING INTERRUPTED
3. A LACK OF CLARITY

# — WHEN WORK TAKES UP TOO MUCH OF OUR LIVES —

## WE EXPERIENCE STRESS AT DIFFERENT TIMES

34 per cent say that they have felt stressed or very stressed at work. The corresponding figure for leisure time is 25 per cent. On average, Danes are less stressed than Swedes.

Those who are stressed at work also feel that they are stressed during their leisure time. As employers, we need to take employees' entire life situations into account since stress during leisure time can spill over into work, and vice versa.

## WOMEN AND STRESS

Our figures show that women experience more stress at work than men. But rather than being down to biological differences, this is likely to be related to career choices. Surveys\* show that male and female stress levels are in fact the same when individuals are in the same occupation.

## THE QUEST FOR VALUABLE MINUTES

A lack of time – not managing to do what we feel we want to and should – is the biggest source of stress. We feel that we are short of time throughout our lives, whatever our age, life situation or position. The only time we feel we have enough time is when we are on parental leave or when we have the luxury of being a housewife or house husband.

## SOURCES OF STRESS - TOP 3

### *Employees -Top 3:*

1. TIME PRESSURE
2. FINANCES
3. HEALTH

### *Managers -Top 3:*

1. TIME PRESSURE
2. FINANCES
3. PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

\*SBU the Swedish Council of Health Technology: The importance of the work environment for symptoms of depression and exhaustion syndrome

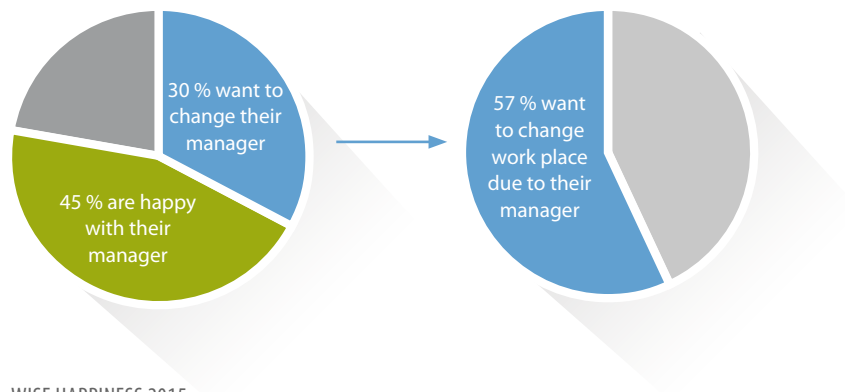
# — MANAGEMENT AND HAPPINESS —

## GOOD MANAGERS ARE WORTH THEIR WEIGHT IN GOLD

The survey shows that people with equally high workloads experience this in different ways depending on whether or not they have a good relationship with their manager. A person who gets on well with their manager and where expectations are clearly communicated has a higher stress threshold. Another positive effect of good leadership is that employees are less inclined to want to change their workplace.

Three out of 10 want to change their manager. 57 per cent of those who want to change their manager say that they want to change their job either now or within two years, and they feel that it is their manager's lack of leadership that causes them the most stress at work.

45 per cent are happy with their manager, and half of these do not want to change their workplace. They do not think that salary is as important as those who are unhappy with their manager do.



*"As a manager, it's easy to prioritise tasks that can be 'ticked off', such the Friday presentation, receipt accounting or quotations for customers. But this time should often be used for checking in with employees instead, both in connection with current business and to listen to their thoughts. I succeeded in reprioritising things a few years ago, and I've seen that it's had a positive effect in terms of both satisfaction and business. I'm convinced that there's a clear correlation between plenty of manager-employee interaction and good results. Add going round your colleagues to your agenda if that's what it takes."*

**JOHAN SEGERGREN**  
CEO OF K2 SEARCH AB  
A COMPANY WITHIN WISE GROUP

*"... THIS TIME SHOULD OFTEN BE USED FOR CHECKING IN WITH EMPLOYEES INSTEAD, BOTH IN CONNECTION WITH CURRENT BUSINESS AND TO LISTEN TO THEIR THOUGHTS."*

# — CHANGING JOBS —

## MANY DREAM OF QUITTING

Of those who work in Sweden, a fifth would change their job straight away given the chance. In Denmark, a tenth of the employed workforce feel the same way. The differences between Sweden and Denmark can be partly explained by the economic situation and employment law.

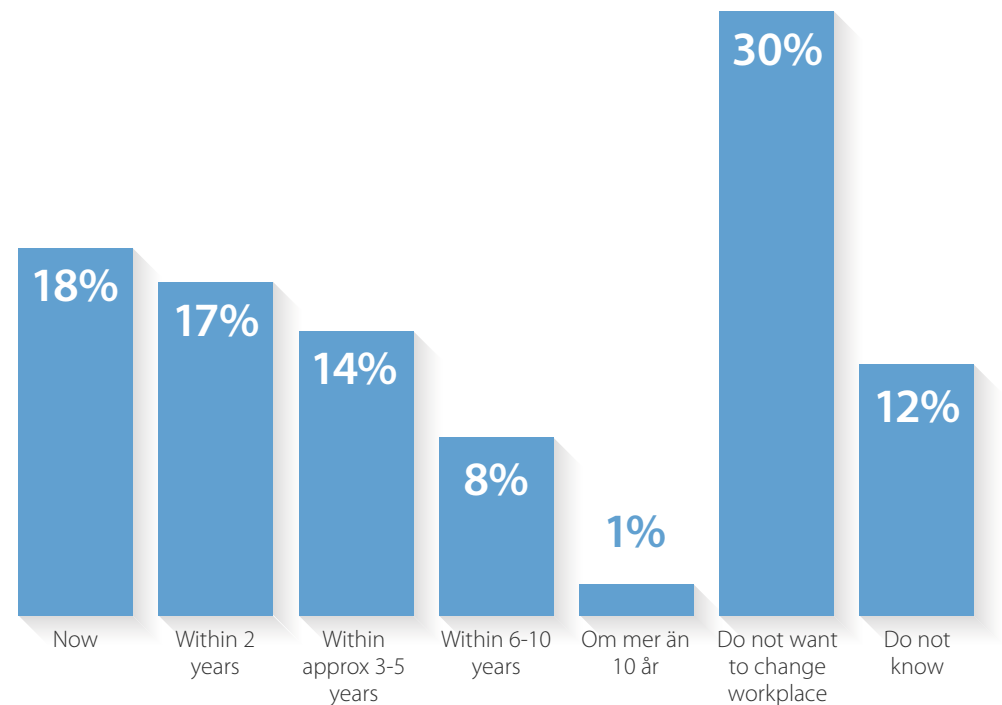
As employers, it is interesting to investigate whether these figures reflect our own workplace. How would it affect us if those who want to leave immediately actually did it? And how does it affect our operations – for example, customer relations – if a fifth of our employees are unmotivated and want to leave?

## KEEP AN EYE ON THOSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO RETAIN

As an employer it is of interest to find out which ones of the employees who are dreaming of changing jobs. If those are the ones we want to keep we would gain advantage by knowing why and what we can do to keep them.

Just under 30 percent of the Swedes would like to stay with their employer. In Denmark the figure is 42 percent.

*Within which time interval would you like to change workplace? (Sweden)*



## ALEXANDER KJERULF ABOUT THE — HAPPINESS KEY —

Just imagine that you've applied for and got your dream job, but that it all ends badly. That's what happened to Maria. She had just started working for a large, well-known business with smart headquarters in the centre of Copenhagen. She'd been given a good title, a corner office with fantastic views and an excellent salary. There was an on-site gym, and the canteen had a French chef.

But she'd only just started when she noticed that something was amiss. Rumours and bullying were the order of the day. No one had time to help anyone else. Everyone formed into cliques. Her manager was short-tempered and rude. In short, working there was hell. The excellent salary, corner office and fantastic views were no use when Maria woke up every morning with a sick feeling in her stomach at the thought of going to a dull job at a

bad business, with unpleasant managers and surly colleagues.

I thrive on spreading happiness at work, and I meet hundreds of people just like Maria. They often end up sad, dispirited and cynical. This can ruin their working lives, their private lives and their relationships. In the worst case they suffer from stress, and end up ill – or even dead – as a result. There's simply no point in having a job you hate, and sadly this survey shows that many people in Denmark and Sweden hate their jobs.

*“I THRIVE ON SPREADING  
HAPPINESS AT WORK, AND I MEET  
HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE JUST LIKE  
MARIA.”*

And this feeling doesn't end when they go home. The survey also clearly shows that a lack of job satisfaction spills over into home life. To make things even worse, medical studies show that people



**ALEXANDER KJERULF**  
CHIEF HAPPINESS OFFICER  
ARBEJDSGLÆDE NU

who lack job satisfaction have a greater risk of cardiovascular disease, cancer, stress and depression.

Maria accepted the consequences and left her 'dream job' after just three months. Her new job only pays her a third of the salary, and she and her colleagues sit on camping furniture in a basement office. She can only dream about the French chef, but whereas she used to wake up to stress and stomach aches, she can now look forward to another day with job satisfaction.



And that can only be good for her career. A recent American survey has shown that job satisfaction leads to success. Happy people have a better chance at succeeding at work, as they are more motivated, creative and energetic – all of which are requirements for success.

Of course you can have job satisfaction. Everyone can. It's not necessarily true that you can have it where you work now, but it's your responsibility to ensure that you move on.

And the rewards are immense. When you love your job, you feel much happier at work and when you come home. You become much better at your job, and you achieve more. You have more energy and are healthier. You become more creative. If you are a manager, you become a much better leader.

So make the choice once and for all. From now on, it should be your passion that drives your work, and not your work that drives your passion. Put job satisfaction first, and forget about titles, pay rises, corner offices and company cars. None of these things mean anything if you're not happy. What does mean something is being able to talk with a sense of pride and happiness about your workplace and the fantastic work you do.

: “AND THE REWARDS ARE IMMENSE.  
: WHEN YOU LOVE YOUR JOB, YOU FEEL  
: MUCH HAPPIER AT WORK AND WHEN  
: YOU COME HOME.”  
:

# — 55+ AT WORK —

## NOT OVER THE HILL YET

Older people are less stressed, enjoy their work more and see their work as more meaningful than younger people do. Because they change employer less often than younger employees, they also contribute towards stability in the workplace. Regularly weeding out older candidates during the recruitment process is not a smart business decision. Diversity – including in terms of age – benefits the workplace.

### *“WE DON’T MAKE THE BEST USE OF GREY GOLD*

*Employees over the age of 50 are not in as much demand in the job market, and are not therefore seen as being as attractive. There seem to be fewer options, and older employees have to be more assertive than their younger counterparts in order to compete.*

*“Preconceptions that older people are less open to change than younger people and the fact that the majority of job adverts seek younger or middle-aged target groups creates a clear age complex among employees. We don’t make the best use of grey gold.”*

LENA NOAKSSON  
CEO, WISE CONSULTING



### OLDER PEOPLE STAY LONGER

A little over 15 per cent of people aged 18-34 say that they do not want to change workplace. The corresponding figure for those aged 35-49 is 27 per cent. Of the over 50s, 54 per cent say that they do not want to change workplace.

### GROWING EVER OLDER

Sweden has an ageing population. By 2030, 25 per cent of the population will be over 65. This is an increase of 55 per cent between 2001 and 2030. Politicians have warned that more people will have to work for longer in order to balance the welfare equation.

### EVERYONE WANTS TO DEVELOP

Development opportunities are extremely important to people of all ages, and not just at the beginning of their careers. As employers, we may wonder how best to motivate the very grateful group of employees aged 55+.

*"I'VE ALWAYS LOOKED FOR OPEN COMPANIES WHERE I CAN GROW AND WHERE IT'S EXPECTED THAT I'LL DEVELOP. FOR ME, IT'S ONLY NATURAL TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY OWN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, AND IT SHOULD BE NATURAL FOR MY EMPLOYER TO CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THIS.*

*As the years go by, I feel more confident about the direction I want to take, and I can clearly see the development I need in order to be at the leading edge within my area of expertise. Life is about constant development – and for me, the journey never ends."*

**KIA LINGEGÅRD**  
COACH/CONSULTANT  
WISE CONSULTING, A COMPANY WITHIN WISE GROUP

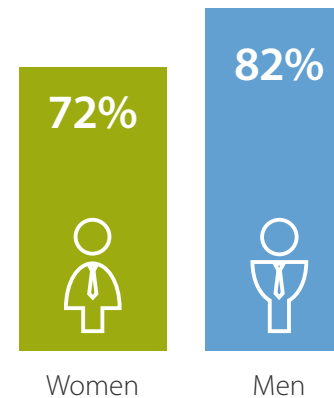


# — FEMALE MANAGERS FEEL LESS HEALTHY —

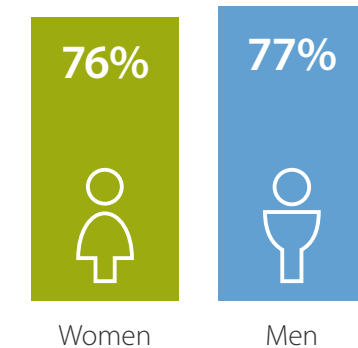
There isn't much difference between the physical health of managers and non-managers. However, our 2014 survey showed a significant difference in how women and men who work as managers perceive their health.

Of male managers, 82 per cent believe that their physical health is fairly good or very good. The corresponding figure for female managers is 72 per cent. Possible explanations include the fact that women are more likely to have two jobs, and are more often middle managers with pressure from both directions.

*Managers with good health:*



*Employees with good health:*



## — WHY DO WE CARRY OUT THIS SURVEY? —

We are more interested in what makes us happy than what makes us unhappy. We believe in reinforcing the things we do well and not staring blindly at what we do wrong. Our vision is that Wise Group should be an international group in which our employees spend the most enjoyable period of their careers, with every subsidiary being the customer's natural choice. Our motto is "Progress through people".

Employees' perceptions of their everyday lives rubs off on everyone we meet: our customers, our suppliers and our partners. The link is strong. We believe in people's inherent ability to do a good job.

## — ABOUT THE SURVEY —

### **The Nordic region's oldest and biggest happiness survey.**

Research shows that, as humans, we both feel well and perform better with positive feedback. In a world filled with demands and tough challenges it's not always easy to find the positives; that's why we want to identify and reinforce the positive aspects of life with Wise Happiness. For the fourth year in a row we are reporting on what makes us happy both personally and at work. This makes our survey the oldest in the Nordic region. One new feature this year is the inclusion of information from previous years in the material. We believe that some of the driving forces are obvious, although we may need to be reminded of them, while others are there but are not as clear to see. The aim of Wise Happiness is to show some of the positive driving forces we humans need to give us energy for everything life entails. We want to use our knowledge from this survey to learn how we can become even better at giving advice to our customers and provide better conditions for our employees. The route to success is through employees. If we can become better at understanding happiness, that's good for everyone who works within Wise Group and consequently also for our customers.

### **PARTICIPANTS**

This is the fourth year that we have conducted the survey. The survey was conducted among men and women aged 18 to 74 in Sweden and Denmark during February 2015 via YouGov Sweden's Internet panel – an access panel with pre-recruited respondents.

An invitation to the survey was also sent out by e-mail to people who fulfilled the criteria. They make up a representative selection of the Swedish population in terms of gender, age and region. A total of 2,016 people took part in 2015 and just over 5,000 people in previous years – half Swedish and half Danish. The survey has been conducted by a group of employees representing all companies within Wise Group. The subsidiary Netsurvey, with analyst Jana Janssen, was responsible for expert knowledge and analysis.

### SWEDEN AND DENMARK

Since three of Wise Group's subsidiaries set up in Denmark in January 2013 – Wise Consulting, K2 Search and Sales Only – the study includes both Denmark and Sweden.

### COLLABORATION WITH HAPPINESS RESEARCHER DR FILIP FORS

Just like last year, we have been assisted by happiness researcher Dr Filip Fors, who defended his PhD thesis *'Lycklig? Sju studier om livstillfredsställelsen och välbefinnandets bestämningsfaktorer'* ('Happy? Seven studies on life satisfaction and determining factors for well-being') in 2012. Filip also wrote the report *'Nya mått på välfärd och livskvalitet'* ('New measures of welfare and quality of life') on behalf of the government's Commission on the Future of Sweden. From autumn 2013 his research also includes job satisfaction.

### THANK YOU TO THE WISE HAPPINESS GROUP:

**Kia Lingegård**

Wise Consulting

**Sandra Szepesi and Åsa Daxberg**

Wise Professionals

**Mathias Linarfve**

Wise IT

**Peter Bolinder, Ulrika Imark and Jana Janssen**

Netsurvey

**Lena Lindahl**

K2 Search

**Åsa Allard Andersson**

Edge HR

**Elisabet Wohlfahrt**

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## ABOUT WISE GROUP

*Wise Group AB (publ) is a corporation which owns, starts and develops companies specializing in recruitment, consultancy and other services within Human Resources. Each of our subsidiaries is run as an independent business unit with its own management. By understanding our clients' businesses and seeing the entire HR process as a tool to achieve business goals, we support our customers towards greater profitability.*

*Wise Group has offices in Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmö in Sweden, Helsinki in Finland and Copenhagen in Denmark.*

*For more info visit [www.wisegroup.se](http://www.wisegroup.se)*

## OUR SUBSIDIARIES

### Wise Consulting

- develops people and businesses, with a focus on business benefits. Specialists within HR, outplacement, development and change.

### Capacitet

- management training. Taking specific methods as our starting point, we develop and coach leaders and managers – thoroughly.

### Wise Professionals

- specialist recruitment and staffing services with a personal touch. We work on behalf of some of Sweden's most attractive and well-known brands.

### KIMM

- specialists in recruitment and consultant provision within communication, information, marketing and media.

### EQonomy

- specialists in recruitment and consultant provision of business-oriented economists.

### Edge HR

- offers web-based services, HR systems and seminars and courses within HR, salaries and Swedish labour law.

### K2 Search

- a business oriented consulting company which identifies, attracts and recruits key employees as managers, business oriented specialists and qualified sales people to our Swedish clients.

### Forte Executives

- a modern provider of business-critical management recruitment solutions. We offer both recruitment and Interim Management for management groups and boards and can thus provide both permanent and temporary solutions.

### SalesOnly

- specialists in recruiting qualified sales people and sales management

### Wise IT

- recruitment and consultant provision within IT.

### Netsurvey

- helps businesses to identify key behaviours and activities to create change that drives increased growth and profitability.