

# COMPETENCE-APP INCREASES BENEFITS FOR PARENTS AND ORGANISATIONS

PRESS RELEASE ABOUT THE PROJECT

„CREATING AWARENESS ABOUT THE VALUE OF FAMILY FOR THE ORGANISATION“

**Ober-Ramstadt / Bensheim, 10.12.2018 – The newly developed „Competence-App“ makes it possible for parents, supervisors and managers to appreciate their employees’ informally acquired competences, such as parenting skills, in a new way and to make them operationally usable. According to the results of the pilot study conducted by the WorkFamily-Institut and Goethe University, this new strategy of managing work and family leads to more employer attractiveness, employability and productivity. Furthermore, it is an important factor of organizational success as well as of employees’ satisfaction.**

23 employees and supervisors of seven organisations participated in the pilot study „Creating awareness about the value of family for the company“ from September to October 2018. The project was supported by the Hessian Ministry for Social Affairs and Integration and by “hessenstiftung – familie hat zukunft“ (“Hessian foundation – family has future”). Thereby they implement an recommendation of the Commission “Hessen hat Familiensinn“ (“Hessian has sense of family“). Participants used the Competence-App “be:able“ on at least three consecutive days to improve the naming of their own daily life soft-skills and their usage at work. To achieve this aim, participants estimated how successful they were with a specific competence. Further, they rated the degree to which this competence made them better employees. Finally, participants answered whether they wanted to practice this soft-skill more often.

The effect taking place at the parents’ home is what makes the Competence-App special. According to Joachim E. Lask, WorkFamily-Institut and leader of the project, parents learn unconsciously to name their applied competences at home. He further explains: “The Competence-App enables parents to easily recognize their soft-skills, such as emotion regulation or being consequent, which is difficult to train in a further education.”

“With the Competence-App we increase the usability of employees’ available competence resources. At the same time, we strengthen employed parents. Instead of focusing on the challenges or hindrances, which come along with managing work and family, we focus on the resources of employed parents and the chances parenthood offers for daily work. Due to this paradigm change, we support the development of a family-oriented company culture.” This is how Dr. Nina M. Junker from Goethe University summarizes the project results. She perceives SMEs and DAX-companies as good fields of application for the Competence-App.

Peter Ullinger, supervisor and manager of the company Dannewitz for 30 years, says: “The Competence-App helps me improving my self-guidance and self-awareness. The greatest benefit of this App is the realization of the employees about which competences they learn, and their personal growth. Moreover, if employees’ personalities grow, the company grows automatically.

The evaluation of the 350 entries of participants using the App shows that employed parents and supervisors informally practiced soft-skills especially in the following fields:

- (a) relationship-oriented soft-skills such as concrete praising, listening, showing gratefulness and communicating effectively and clearly,
- (b) task-oriented soft-skills such as guiding, giving solicitations, or proving assertiveness and
- (c) self-oriented soft-skills such as patience, emotion regulation, or time management.

All participants saw a clear benefit that these soft-skills made them more productive at the workplace (“... makes me a better employee”). Furthermore, they were highly motivated to further practice these soft-skills. In addition, they recommended to use the Competence-App for human resources development, provided the informal self-determination of the user is preserved. More than 80% of participants indicated to offer the App to parents, who are on or who return from parental leave, but also to all employees, who want to use their informally acquired competences at their workplace. Moreover, more than 90% of participants recommend the Competence-App for the development of leadership competences.

Although all participating organisations already showed a pronounced family-oriented company culture, using the Competence-App still lead to a further increase in the following company characteristics: “identification with the company” and “identification with the team”. Characteristics including “the relationship quality between supervisor and subordinate“ and “work-family balance“ were assessed more critically by participants. The project managers trace this assessment to the increased sensitization regarding compatibility. The use of the Competence-App is expected to be developed and further explored in 2019 within large companies located in Hesse.

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