Motivation and self-realization
A study of newly graduated, newly hired engineers in the Norwegian oil industry

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Abstract:

This thesis examines the motivational factors at work, specifically the implications of self-realization, from the perspective of post-bureaucracy while also looking at the tensions that the ideals for motivation and self-realization create for newly graduated, newly hired engineers in the Norwegian oil industry. The objective is to gain insight into a specific segment of knowledge-intensive workers and how they relate to the topics of motivation and self-realization. I have done this using a phenomenological method with qualitative semi-constructed interviews.

The results show three main motivational points: self-development, affiliation and financial motivation, where self-development is important focal point because it helps develop the thesis’s conclusion on self-realization. Furthermore, the thesis addresses what seems to create tensions for the subjects and perspectives on how they handle the tensions. The results of this thesis are concerning a specific and important part of Norwegian oil industry, namely the newly hired, newly graduated engineers.

Keywords:
Knowledge intensive worker, Motivation, HRM, Self-realization, Ideals, Post-bureaucracy, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, Phenomenology, Engineer, Primadonna

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Key terms

Here I will phrase the terms as I have used them in my dissertation, so that the reader may get an overview of what to expect out of the terms.

Motivation
Motivation derives from the Latin word ‘mover’, which means to move.

Self-realization (Western definition)
In my dissertation, it is defined as the fulfilment by oneself of the possibilities of one's character or personality.

Knowledge-intensive worker
Knowledge-intensive workers are workers whose main capital is knowledge. Typical examples may include software engineers, architects, engineers, scientists and lawyers, because they ‘think for a living’.

Ideals
An ideal is a principle or value that one actively pursues as a goal, usually in the context of ethics.

Primdonna
Term that is used for highly specialised creative employees. They are characterised as temperamental, demanding, self-important and not wanting to be controlled by leadership.

Post-bureaucracy
A complex term, but in this thesis it is used to capture a range of organisational changes aimed at dismantling bureaucracy.

HRM
HRM, or sometimes simply known as HR, is the management of an organisation's workforce, or human resources.

Engineer
An engineer is a professional practitioner of engineering, concerned with applying scientific knowledge, mathematics and ingenuity to develop solutions for technical problems.
1. Prologue

1.1 Personal motivation and background

The topic of this thesis was a personal choice, and I want to explain my thought process under this heading. I have always been interested in the concept of self-realization, with the basic idea of trying to figure out how to live my own life, either by figuring out what it means to ‘live life to the fullest’ or just by being a positive force in the world. Either one is interesting, if you are trying to figure out what drives people to do what they do. So I decided early in the thesis process to write about self-realization, and after reading literature on the topic, I found out that one could not use self-realization as a topic without illuminating the topic of motivation as well. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs has been with me as long as I can remember – I believe we learned about Maslow as early as primary school – and I remember that I thought it all made sense now: this is how human beings are driven in life. In retrospect, there is no doubt that life is a little bit more complicated. But there was simplicity to Maslow’s description, which fascinated me a great deal, and it stuck with me for a long time.

Now you know why I wanted to write about self-realization, and I put motivation into the mix mostly because you can’t write about one without including the other. What you don’t know is that I am from the fourth-largest city in Norway, namely Stavanger. The town is known colloquially in Norway as the ‘oil capital of Norway’. Because of the city and its background, it was natural that I chose to look into the Norwegian oil business. And with the combination of my own situation as a (soon to be) newly graduated student, my interest in self-realization and the Norwegian oil industry, I chose to dive into motivation and self-realization of newly hired, newly graduated engineers in the Norwegian oil industry.
1.2 Research issue

From a survey done by Boston Consulting Group\(^1\) in November 2012, we know that 84 percent of the firms surveyed in the Norwegian oil sector suffer from skill shortage, and the prognosis states that this may rise by 40 percent by 2016. This must be considered as a major challenge for the Norwegian oil industry. My goal in this thesis is to identify key points of motivation and ideals and to uncover how self-realization impacts and defines newly hired, newly graduated engineers in the Norwegian oil industry. My research question indicates an exploratory element as it seeks to discover information about the phenomenon of motivation and self-realization for a very small but unique segment of knowledge-intensive workers in the Norwegian oil industry. Therefore, I would state that this thesis has the goal of exploring the topic of motivation and self-realization for a specific segment of knowledge-intensive workers in the Norwegian oil sector.

1.3 Problem statement

Based on the research issue above, my problem statement is as follows:

Main question:

- What motivates newly graduated engineers in the Norwegian oil sector? And to what degree does self-realisation impact and define them?

Sub-Questions:

- Which ideals and dreams does the employee have in relation to work?
- Which ideals create tensions or ambiguity for the employee?
- How do they handle these tensions?
- How is motivation and self-realisation affected by their new working environment?

\(^1\) http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/28/norway-oil-idUSL5E8MS95R20121128
1.4 Limitations

This paper is based on the assumption that self-realization is a phenomenon which has been found in the Norwegian people’s consciousness the last 20–30 years. The focus will be on a Western context, where self-realization is seen through a humanistic individual perspective. Furthermore, I want to place self-realization in a context where the workplace is in focus but which is open to answers concerning fulfilment outside of the workplace. The segment of subjects investigated is newly hired, newly graduated engineers in the Norwegian oil industry. Therefore, the participation in this study is limited to engineers who

(a) Work in the Norwegian oil industry,
(b) Got their current job within three years, but has had it longer than 6 months
(c) Graduated within the last three years.

2. Theory

2.1 Literature review and academic background.

In this section I will explain why the themes I have chosen are relevant to understanding Norwegian engineers and thus the challenges I face in my dissertation. My thesis starts with an introduction to the Norwegian oil market, past and present so the reader may get an understanding of both the external and internal conditions for the Norwegian engineer working in the oil sector. Furthermore, this part explains the Norwegian economic situation. In order to frame my study from the perspective of Norwegian oil engineers, I pursued the themes of motivation and self-realization at work through literature about post-bureaucracy.

Moreover, motivation and HRM as development facilitators are used to gain an understanding of how an engineer is motivated and developed by the organisation.
2.1.1 The importance of motivation

Jac Fitz-enz (1997) states that the average American company loses approximately $1 million for every ten professional employees who leave the organisation, and that does not include lost knowledge. The importance of motivation and retention cannot be understated. Because human capital and knowledge management have economic value to organisations, they represent capital because it enhances productivity (Dean Snell & James Dean, 1992). Furthermore, in a study done on architects and design engineers, Adeyi Oyedele (2010) found that unmotivated employees are likely to use little effort in their jobs, avoid the workplace as much as possible, exit the organisation if given the opportunity and produce low quality work (Theresa Amabile, 1993). On the other hand, “employees who feel motivated toward their work are likely to be persistent, creative and productive, turning out high quality work that they willingly undertake” (Oyedele, 2010, p. 193). Simon Lam and Loretta Tang (2003) recommended enhancing motivation and retaining employees through proper human resource management and job design, with life-long learning programmes, effective reward systems and empowering and valuing employees among the important ingredients for long-term motivation (Lam & Tang, 2003). Consequently, motivation theories for highly skilled workers are important to understand the research issue of this thesis.

My ambition is to understand central conditions of motivation and self-realization for knowledge-intensive workers in the Norwegian oil industry. Therefore, I will start the next section with a contemporary perspective on the employment market.

2.1.2 The Norwegian oil adventure

As written in the introduction, I will start with the Norwegian oil market. Here I will recap a short history of the Norwegian oil business and why it is as important as it is in contemporary Norway.

In October 1962, Phillips Petroleum submitted an application to the Norwegian authorities concerning exploration for oil in the North Sea. In May 1963, the Norwegian
government proclaimed sovereignty over the North Sea. New regulation claimed that the state owned any natural resources in their area, and that only the government was authorised to award search and drilling rights. In 1969, the Norwegian oil adventure really started with the project Ekofisk, and soon there was a multitude of discoveries. The oil activities have influenced Norwegian economic growth enormously, and after 40 years of operations, the industry has created values in excess of 8000 billion NOK. In 2009, the oil sector accounted for 21 percent of the value creation in the country. In spite of 40 years of production, the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy estimates that only around 40 percent of the total expected resources have been extracted. In 2012, Norway was Europe’s second-largest gas supplier and the world’s eighth-largest oil exporter (‘Norway’s oil history in 5 minutes’, 2013).

The internationalisation of the Norwegian community, which followed with the booming oil industry created an enormous amount of jobs all over Norway, especially in the city of Stavanger, as it, is colloquially known as the ‘oil capital’ of Norway because of its high density of oil companies. An article by Reuters in 2012 states that the Norwegian oil industry reported that 84 percent of the industry had a shortage of highly skilled engineers. Furthermore, firms expected that by 2016 the lack of qualified personnel would rise by 40 percent (‘Norwegian oil’, 2012). The skill shortage has become a battle for engineers, in which they are in demand, thereby giving them the opportunity to acquire highly competitive packages to be recruited by engineering companies.

I believe that the information and knowledge gathered from this report can contribute to understanding engineers and thus what motivates and attracts the knowledge intense worker, or the knowledge-intensive worker. Mats Alvesson (2004) uses the terms broadly for two types of knowledge-intensive work. The first is for research and development organisations that base their work on scientific knowledge. Examples are high technology engineering or professional work such as economics or law. In these

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knowledge-intensive organisations, the employees are viewed as core competitiveness (David Lepak & Scott Snell, 2002). In other words, employees are seen as the main resource of capital in the company. To get the most out of each worker, knowledge-intensive organisations develop a workplace where the employees are given a great deal of autonomy so that they may use their knowledge in both a creative and efficient way. Furthermore, Charles Heckscher and Anne Donnellon (1994) argue that this is one of the reasons why we see a growth in new post-bureaucratic forms of organisations, focusing on looser structures, project organisations and dynamic networks. In the next section, I will present post-bureaucracy as an important term in my dissertation.

2.1.3 Post-bureaucracy

In this section, I will introduce the concept of post-bureaucracy and how it affects the modern working environment so that there can be an understanding about what the dynamics and typical work methods are in the field of work chosen, namely the knowledge-intensive workplace.

Mahen Tampoe (1993) states that as early as 1970, Peter Drucker wrote about ways to approach the managerial side of the technology-based companies, raising the question of "whether traditional organization structure is going to work tomorrow the way it has worked for the past 40 years" (p. 49). Some years before this, in 1920, there was a turning point within organisational theory, namely the Hawthorne experiment. The experiment introduced the perception of workers as a social entity, as opposed to just 'mechanical' productivity. The study showed that it was clear that salary was not the defining variable for an employee’s performance. To create performance at the workplace, the organisations now had to cover the workers’ social needs and relations. This introduced the idea of creating smaller teams, which would utilise peer pressure and social responsibility to create performance (E.B Hart 1943). It is terms such as teamwork, social entity and organisational changes that are the defining terms in post-bureaucracy.
Mats Alvesson and Paul Thompson (2004) introduce a definition of Post-Bureaucracy in their article ‘Post-bureaucracy’, which argues for a change in perception of what the coordinating mechanism is in contemporary economy and society, namely from bureaucracy to the post-bureaucracy period. According to Harrow Höpfl (2006, p. 8), there are two purposes for the term post-bureaucracy. The first one is to describe the distinctive changes in the organisational and management system which bureaucracy cannot accommodate. The ‘new’ terms that cannot be found in bureaucracy are ‘team’, ‘mission’, ‘network’, ‘horizontal’ and ‘empowerment’, among others. What is discussed among scholars is not whether these words exist but how they differ from bureaucratic forms and how they are to be characterised (Alvesson & Thompson, 2005). The other purpose of the term post-bureaucracy is to identify the fundamental changes in organisations and management.

One of the most noticed and supported factors that reflect the break from traditional bureaucracy is the emergence of technologic breakthroughs in management and organisation, which seem to invoke democratic and decentralised working organisations (Steven Taylor, 1994). According to Alvesson and Thompson (2004), the business market has become more volatile and competitive, creating a focus on being adaptive to customers’ needs, which requires flexibility. To obtain flexibility, the organisation has to trust their employees to make the right decisions and give them the tools to do so. Furthermore, the need to create empowering and know-how knowledge about how to manage employees with the best possible working system for the new industries became the focus area. With the new generation of knowledge workers, there are changes, such as community, networks and social relations, in what they expect and need to function in a working environment, and these new ingredients break radically with the conventional ideas of bureaucracy, such as authority, closed innovation and specialisation. These changes include an organisational change, where the focus of information and power is lowered in the hierarchy, thereby breaking down the bureaucratic hierarchies and creating a less hierarchic organisational map. The workers require a reversal of the traditional thoughts as a fixed hierarchy, a formal rationality
and a strong reliance of formal rules and standards (Alvesson & Thompson, 2004; Max Weber, 1958,p.180-181). Alvesson and Thompson (2005) debate the phenomenon of post-bureaucracy and argue that although it is claimed to engulf virtually every change undertaken by organisations in the past two decades, there are some general terms which considered to be most recognised: “The reversal of centralization, a fixed hierarchy, formal rationality, a strong reliance on formal rules and standards, and the division of labour is associated with interrelated internal and external changes” (Alvesson & Thompson, 2005, p.5).

One critic of the term ‘post-bureaucracy’ is Jacques (1990), who argues that the terms discussed by Alvesson and Thompson (2005) fail to understand that bureaucracy is the best way of getting work done because it is the only form of organisation which deals with size, complexity and the need for accountability. Jason Barker (2002) describes how team work evolves into intensified control, despite being sold as empowering and autonomous work methods, with a process of three phases which overtake the hierarchical structures: consolidation, developing strong norms, and formalising the norms into rules. “His point is that once the team has arrived at phase three, the control is as encompassing and rule-based as the former bureaucratic control” (Susanne Ekman, 2010, p. 24).

The post-bureaucracy literature review informs the reader about the debated organisational control mechanisms which exist in the 21st century. In the high-knowledge work field especially, the post-bureaucracy phenomenon can be seen as pivotal part of the organisational structuring, as terms such as teams and decentralisation can be found throughout the oil industry where high-knowledge work is being done.

2.1.4 HRM PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT IN HIGH INVOLVEMENT WORK

Some of the strong characteristics of the concept discussed above, ‘post-bureaucracy’, are terms such as teams and personal development (Alvesson & Thompson, 2005).
Teambuilding and personal development have become a part of modern working life. They are seen as a trend, which exists with themes that borderline between religious existentialism and modern leadership theory (Kirsten Bovbjerg, 2001). In this section I will explain HRM's role in this puzzle, how the focus has changed to personal development and how self-realization has become an important part of working life.

Bovbjerg (2001) describes the path from the human potential movement, which is a reference to the first ideas of HR, to the professional division of human resource management (HRM). Bovbjerg states that HRM uses human resources from two perspectives. The first one is based on a person's goal in life to realise themselves; this means to use all their resources to become their best possible self. From this angle, work is seen as a means to self-realization. The other perspective is based on an organisation’s wish to exploit the human capital of its employees. HRM, from Bovbjerg's perspective, is the idea of a continuing process that constantly works to develop the organisation, using internal and external development possibilities. Bovbjerg (2003) is not a strong believer in the positives of using HR as self-realization tool as she believes this kind of personality development is not a universal feeling; not everybody wants to self-realise through work. Hence, using a lot of work time to get all the employees into one culture can have the opposite effect instead of uniting the employees. The time spent on development is only useful for the employees who have an interest in self-development through work because the idea is that the employees should have a genuine inner feeling of having the same interests as the company. If the employees do have the same values, the commitment to work will be only based on a work contract, and not on a genuine social and value-based commitment to the company.

Bovbjerg (2001) refers to personality development as a change in something within a person’s inner self but which is not directly apparent. The inner self can be changed with transpersonal methods such as self-transcendence with therapy or mental training. Personality development as a practice works to liberate a person from habitual actions and thoughts in order to be free from different levels of institutionalised frameworks,
such as gender, parental upbringing or social classes. Furthermore, among the many implications of a post-industrialised society, or post-bureaucratic condition, is a strengthened focus on the self, instead of the traditional and modern bonds of social solidarity. This is partly caused by the new forms of production and organisations where specialisation and knowledge are focused upon, thereby creating the need for personal development through the organisation (Cathrine Casey, 1995).

As I mentioned at the beginning of this section, teambuilding and teamwork are characteristic of modern working life. Bovbjerg (2001) argues that today's work environment could not exist without teamwork, though there is a tendency for a higher degree of individualisation among the worker. This might seem contradictory, but these two ideas should be kept separate, as they do not perform the same function. The process of teamwork is a new form of work regulation, where team members live up to each other's code of work ethics, thereby creating a bond based on loyalty and expectations (Bovbjerg, 2001). As for individualisation, it is seen as a form of personal development. The individualisation process of the knowledge worker, as Peter Senge (1999) describes, relies on faith in a person's own skills, thereby gaining success and more control of their own life. The belief that work can be a learning experience and that results can be gained from learning gives a higher grade of self-efficiency and thus the worker realises himself. This claim is based on Abraham Maslow's (1954) definition of self-actualisation or self-realization, which is “the impulse to convert oneself into what one is capable of being”, thereby learning to become the best that he can be at work, hence gaining confidence and efficiency at work.

In section 2.1.5, I refer to Bovbjerg’s perspective on how personal development and the individual has become a much-emphasised topic within the field of HR. Furthermore, in this section, I have explained the contribution of the individual and self-realization, as according to Bovbjerg (2001), Maslow (1954) and Senge (1999), it is a large part of the success factor for a high-knowledge worker's productivity.
2.1.5 Motivation, self-realization and individualisation

Here I will explain the specifics of motivational theory for highly skilled workers, using Helle Hein’s (2009) summary of different motivational theories as the starting point. Furthermore, I will go on to explain the father of all motivational theories in Maslow’s needs theory, as it comprises an important part of my dissertation with its focus on self-realization. I also include critics of Maslow, thereby gaining different perspectives on his theory. Edward Ryan and Richard Deci (2000) are also given attention as they describe where motivation derives from, with their theories about the inner (intrinsic) and outer (extrinsic) motivation. As an important conclusion, I have added Kristiansen’s (2009) TURPAS model and other associated theories about high-knowledge motivation from Bård Kuvaas and Anders Dysvik (2010) and Hein (2009). Drawing on Catherine Casey (1995) as a key author to understand the characteristics of my subjects, I take an in-depth look at the post-industrialised high-knowledge worker.

Motivational theories

“To be motivated means to be moved to do something. A person who feels no impetus or inspiration to act is thus characterized as unmotivated, whereas someone who is energized or activated toward an end is considered motivated.”
-Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 54

The definition gives insight into the very basics of what makes a person do a certain action, or choose not to do it. In my thesis, it relates to the topic of making an employee, more specifically an engineer, do what the organisation wishes him to do. I will start with Hein’s (2009) argument on the idea that there are two categories of motivational theories, with content theories and process theories on two separate axes. Content theories describe what motivates the individual. They focus on which forces within the individual or in the individual’s environment activate certain behaviour. Examples of content theories are Maslow’s needs hierarchy, Alderfer’s ERG theory and McClelland’s motivational needs theory, while process theory describes why and how the individual
is driven towards certain behaviour. In contrast to content theories, process theories
give the individual a cognitive decision-making role in the choices of their goals, the
means to achieve them and how the individual’s behaviour is driven, activated,
maintained and stopped (Hein, 2009). Examples of process theories are Adam’s equity
theory and Vroom’s expectancy theory. In this dissertation, I will focus on content
theories, such as Maslow’s needs hierarchy, as they incorporate self-realization and
motivation, which both are key terms in this study. An alternative that also includes self-
realization is McClelland’s motivational theory. This theory is an achievement theory,
which corresponds to some needs in the Maslow’s theory, one of which I focus on in my
thesis, namely self-realization, i.e. reaching one’s owns full potential. The other ones are
esteem and affiliation. Michael McClelland (1990) states that people are motivated by
four main arousal-based and socially developed motives: achievement, power, affiliate
and avoidance motives.

Self-realization
Maslow argues that a person's goal is to achieve self-actualisation using five sets of goals
that are referred to as basic needs, which humans strive for and act to achieve. The
goals are classified as physiological, safety, love, esteem and self-actualisation (Matthew
Stephens, 2000). The hierarchy is based on certain requirements that must be satisfied
before other needs take effect. A person will not, for example, feel the need for status or
self-actualisation if he is starving. When the basic needs are satisfied, the need for safety
and security arises, and on it goes up the hierarchy. Self-actualisation is considered to be
the driving force for every individual’s growth and development. Maslow considered the
need for self-actualisation to be a key feature and unique trait of the human species
(Bovbjerg, 2003).

Critics of Maslow theory argue that the theory does not take into account individual
differences (Gary Latham & Graig Pinder, 2005). Also promoting the importance of
individual traits are authors like Mitchell and Daniels (2003), who reported that
research on personality is the fastest-growing area in the motivation literature.
The order in which the needs are arranged has been criticised as being ethnocentric by Dutch researcher in cultural differences Geert Hofstede (1984). He argues that Maslow did not distinguish the difference between the social and intellectual needs of people in individualistic and collectivist societies. Clayton Alderfer (1969) specifically denies Maslow's claim that a demand first becomes dominant when other needs are covered. According to Alderfer, all three requirements can be active at once.

**Personality traits**
Christina Schmitt (2003) argues for the idea that personality is the predictor of which elements are motivational. She argues that research shows that traits predict and/or influence job search and choice of job, as well as job performance and satisfaction. These traits include extroversion, conscientiousness, self-regulatory and self-monitoring strategies, tenacity, core self-evaluations, and goal orientation (Schmitt. 2003).

**Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation**
Ryan and Deci (2000) explain different kinds of motivation related to the concept of motivation orientation. The authors describe orientation as the underlying attitudes and goals that rise to action. A good way of explaining intrinsic motivation is on the basis of how it first was coined. It was first explained in Robert White’s (1959) studies about animals engaging in exploratory curiosity-driven behaviours when there was an absence of reinforcements or rewards. These relatively spontaneous behaviours appeared to be performed based on positive experiences associated with exercising and extending one’s capabilities. To transform this into an example befitting this paper, consider an engineer who chooses to educate himself outside of his workplace on a topic that is not directly related to his profession. In this example, the amount of motivation does not necessarily vary too much, but the orientation and focus certainly does. The orientation of motivation concerns the underlying attitude and goal towards the given action (Ryan & Deci, 2000).
Ryan and Deci (2000) differentiate between intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation, intrinsic referring to something that is interesting or enjoyable, while extrinsic motivation is the performance of an activity which is done in order to attain an separable outcome, whether or not that activity is also intrinsically motivated. Typical outcomes could be salary, grades or other rewards for doing an activity.

Intrinsic motivation is seen as motivation resulting in high-quality learning and creativity, as it is based on a natural wellspring of learning and achievement. Deco and Ryan (1985) created self-determination theory (STD), which is an approach to intrinsic motivation. STD is an empirically based theory about human motivation, development and health. The theory focuses on human action and to what degree it is self-determined. Deci and Ryan (1985) distinguishes between motivations, which are independent from external influences. It explains intrinsic motivation in terms of basic psychological human needs and is founded on the idea that all people have three different basic human needs: the need for competence, the need for a sense of autonomy and the need for a sense of relatedness. All of these factors influence intrinsic motivation. It is also important to point out that Ryan and Deci (2000) argue that the external influences always regulate and dictate the level of intrinsic motivation, because then external factors can be seen as an important part of daily actions as well.

Dysvik and Kuvaas (2010) reflect on how intrinsic motivation for high-knowledge workers is absolutely essential for them to be satisfied and to be productive workers. Furthermore, Wong and Pang (2003) argue that motivation is a vital component of individual creative performance.

TURPAS model

I have chosen to use Peter Christensen’s (2007) TURPAS model, which argues for the knowledge worker as an employee with his or her own motivational factors. TURPAS is a Danish acronym that translates to ‘association to work, challenging assignments,'
fairness, achievement, autonomy and self-realization’. Furthermore, he argues that there are complications for these motivational factors as they are not always coherent with the way the management wants to run their company. For example, the insatiable need for self-realization can make it hard to differentiate between working life and private life, thereby creating stress for the knowledge worker. The second case I want to illustrate, derives from the self-realization, where the appetite for self-realization makes a knowledge worker very egocentric, thereby losing loyalty towards the organisation.

**Primadonnas**

In the context of egocentricity I want to introduce the term ‘primadonna’, which is used for highly specialised creative employees. The background for this term is an classification of knowledge intense workers which consists of four arc types: the primadona, the performance tripper, the pragmatic and the salary receiver (translated from Danish by me). In this case I want to focus on the Primadonna as they have an existential relationship to their work, where work is almost like a calling, where they have to answer the science or art form which they are involved in. The primadonna feels a duty to always strive towards the highest standard; this is supported by a strong value set, which works as a moral compass in their workplace (Hein, 2009). For the primadonna a meaningful work and meaningful life is keys towards searching for the meaning of life, a meaning related to the call where the primadonnas work and life is most meaningful, when work makes a difference to others. The key terms used to characterise them are: temperamental, demanding, self-important and not wanting to be controlled by leadership (Hein, 2009).

Furthermore, Alvesson (2001) describes knowledge intense workers as people with strong advantages for developing a positive work identity, with education, status, high pay and interesting work tasks as a foundation for a positive identity. To understand the identities of my subjects, and thereby the phenomena that I am researching, namely
knowledge workers’ motivation and self-realization, I will need to know about the characteristics of my subjects.

2.1.6 Characteristics in the workplace

Characteristics and behaviour
Catherine Casey (1995) refers to a change of character in the workplace happening along with the technological, organisational and socioeconomic changes in the age of post-bureaucracy. As a result, work increasingly takes place in ever larger and more complex organisations. Casey argues that the work environment has become more impersonal as there are more layers in the organisation, and technological progress has created norms for networked machine communication. Post-industrial work affects the worker in a number of ways that differ from industrial work. The primary impact is that there is no longer physical stress on the body; the main requirement now is the mind and heart of the employee. This does not necessarily involve the presence of the employee, as the communication problem can be solved by the use of cellular telephones, laptop computers and other means. Furthermore, corporate employees are increasingly expected to be available even outside of regular work hours. These possibilities all create a unique relationship between employees and their work, where their presence can be minimised but their full attention is expected nonetheless. Casey (1995) explains the new contemporary corporate culture as a new form of self-discipline, which is mediated through the rhetoric of self-realization, flexibility and hyper-adaptability. The traits Casey (1995) mentions are looked upon as important cornerstones for the analysis as they are a part of the characteristics of my subject.

‘Dirty Work’
Finally, I will look at some of the stigmatisations that some workplaces have to deal with according to Evrett Hughes’s concept of ‘dirty work’ from 1962. Hughes conceptualised the way some types of professional practises were stigmatised due to their physical, social or moral character. Though all professions have these traits in general, some traits are viewed as negative. For example, physical work as a garbage disposer, working with
food and other leftovers from private houses etc, is seen as physically tough and thus ‘dirty’. Other forms of stigmatisation can be related to social implications, e.g. working as a stripper or, the example used by Hughes (1962), a correctional officer. The correctional officer is stigmatised due to his work behind closed doors instead of in the public eye like police officers in the street. The social implications can also be related to popular culture such as movies or books, where they are often portrayed as rough and sadistic as opposed to the upstanding police officer in the public space (Hughes, 1962). The last form of dirty work, according to Hughes, regards moral character. A good example of work with a negative moral characteristic is massage therapy, where there is a close proximity to patients’ bodies and an erroneous association to illegal sexual activity (Elizabeth Sullivan, 2000). Though doctors also have some of the same traits, the difference is found in the professionalization of the job over a long period (Hughes, 1962).

In the section on characteristics in the workplace, I have described how Catherine Casey (1995) explains how post-bureaucracy has changed work methods and characteristics at the modern workplace. Casey uses technological communication forms, such as Internet etc, to emphasise the lesser need to be at work to do work, creating a distance between the employee and the workplace, and how there is less strain on the body as the high-tech industry has grown and made work more knowledge-based. Furthermore, I have given a review on Hughes (1962) concept of ‘dirty work’ and how stigmatisation of workplaces is based on different moral, physical and social characteristics, which are important when analysing subjects in a certain work profession.

### 3. Methodology and data

In this chapter, I will explain my choice of research method, and I will describe the process of locating research subjects, giving them all short introductions and collecting data, as well as the researcher’s role and how the analytical work will be presented. At the end, I will look at the quality of the data and at ethical considerations of the study.
3.1 Method

The main research question is “What motivates engineers in the Norwegian oil sector? And to what degree does self-realization impact and define them?”

I have chosen to use a qualitative research method to investigate these questions. For the chosen problem statement, I want to get the opinions, experiences and perspectives around the phenomenon of motivation and self-realization for newly graduated, newly hired engineers in the Norwegian oil industry. Furthermore, the most logical method was to use a semi-structured interview by which it is possible to explore topics chosen in advance while also being able to improvise and ask questions, which seem relevant during the interviews. When doing interviews through hormonology the focus is on the subject, and its actions and direct experiences. Using open questions with interpretations through the life-world of the subjects (see p.20) an alternative could have been to use ethnography, the purpose of ethnography is to describe and explain the social world the research subjects inhabit. (Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis, & Adrian Thornhill, 2009) But this is a research strategy that is very time consuming and takes place over an extended time period, as I would have to immerse myself in the social world of the subjects. As for what could have been the consequences for the results of this study by choosing ethnography, I would argue one could get a very good insight into the particular context and understanding of interpretations of the subjects from the perspectives of the subject (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

3.1.1 Theory of science

As I wrote in the last heading, I will be focusing on the phenomenological perspective, and in this part, I will explain my choice of methodology and relate a short history of the philosophical branch of phenomenology.

The term phenomenon derives from the ancient Greek concept and means “what it immediately comes into view” (Søren Kristiansen & Hanne Krogstrup, 1999, p. 68).
Furthermore the phenomenological perspective comes from the philosophical tradition developed by German philosopher Edmund Husserl. Husserl’s student Alfred Schutz transferred his ideas and introduced phenomenology in the social sciences and sociology (Kristiansen & Krogstrup, 1999).

The basic purpose of phenomenology was to create an opposition to objectivism (Lise Justesen & Nanna Mik-Meyer, 2010).

Using May Britt Postholm (2010), who argues that the choice of method should be based on the goal of the project, I decided on a phenomenological approach in this dissertation because the goal is to study the experience from the perspective of the individual. Furthermore in this thesis, the phenomenological approach fits well as it look towards the meaning of what the subject relates and describes according to a specific phenomenon that the interviewer presents (Postholm, 2010). Through phenomenology, therefore, I want to illustrate my analyses and descriptions from the subjects’ everyday life-world and different forms of consciousness in order to look at the relationship between individuals’ subjective consciousness and social life (Kristiansen & Krogstrup, 1999). Through the phenomenological perspective, I will analyse the individual engineers’ life world, which is based on the concrete daily situations which engineers find themselves in (Justesen & Mik-Meyer, 2010). The phenomenological approach requires that researcher be able to familiarise himself with the subjects’ life situation and life world through empathy. Furthermore the phenomenological researcher must maintain an open-minded approach to the investigative field. Here, phenomenology makes the interviewer go to task in the field without preconceived opinions (Justesen & Mik-Meyer, 2010) To avoid preconceived assumptions about the topic, me as the interviewer has to give the subject the possibility to describe his reality, without going into huge explanations and analysis. While also keeping the intersubjectivity term, where the assumption that knowledge is created and developed between humans and thereby can be connected to a common-world which the subject is telling about.

The solution to this complex interview problem is to ask questions which are built up neutrally without any form of pressure to answer in a certain direction.
To avoid preconceived assumptions in the analysis of the transcription, the first thing witch was done, was to gather the words and themes based a bracketing solution. Bracketing is according to Husserl an method taking away everything else than the actual word, in the way of bracketing the term or word, the phenomenologist hereby puts aside all questions concerning its objective existence or non-existence and considers only the experience that the subject has (Creswell,Hanson,Plano and Morales.2007).

With this exercise I gathered the words and themes into different groups, hereby getting a neutral perspective on what was said and put in a context where the subject meanings as seen through their life-world experiences is mixed together with their fellow-subjects quotes.

This thesis will look at engineers’ life world as something that is rooted in them, from a spatial horizon of how the phenomenon of motivation and self-realization makes sense to them, through their experiences and lessons learned in the context of their work life. From this perspective, it is essential to emphasise that the engineers’ life world must be approached from a common world and thus not assume that each engineer has his own private experiences and that opinion is a completely private matter, but rather that it is created in a shared context through interaction. Life-world is, from my point of view, something being created in a social, cultural and historical context, which helps construct the individual engineers’ opinions (Justesen & Mik-Meyer, 2010).

Qualitative validity in phenomenology based on observations and interpretations of situations that are able to reflect the phenomena or variables; the researcher extracts information and highlights the research problem (Kristiansen & Krogstrup, 1999). Furthermore, the definition of quality validity is, according to Kvale, “the strength and soundness of a statement; in the social sciences validity usually means whether a method investigates what is purports to investigate” (Steinar Kvale, 2009-327).
To confirm and test validity in a qualitative research method, there are different possibilities, according to Kvale (2009): communicative validation, pragmatic validity and craftsmanship.

Kvale (2009) defines communicative validity as the after-test of the subject’s statements in a dialog. I will do this by giving the subjects a copy of the transcription and ask if they can check, correct and confirm what they have spoken about in the interviews. Furthermore, it is important to ask the subjects if they recognise themselves in the transcription (Justesen & Mik-Meyer, 2010). This criterion is especially relevant to the phenomenological perspective as it is phenomenology-inspired by the goal of gathering subjective experiences which are connected to specific phenomena in a subjective life world context. In this way, it is rather a subjective view, which becomes the reality, than an objective reality (Justesen & Mik-Meyer, 2010). Pragmatic validity goes one step further than communicative validity as it support itself on observations, interpretations and the means to work it out from the interpretations one makes. Kvale (2009) distinguishes between two types of pragmatic validity: whether a knowledge statement is accompanied by action, or whether it encourages the act. Through Kvale(2009) pragmatic validity understood as a way of helping the researcher act in a certain way in order to get the preconceived results, in other words to insure pragmatic validity in my paper. I have stated the reasons and context (see 2.1) for conducting this research together with the knowledge gathered in this thesis one can get a standpoint on how it can be used as a base of information towards new information on the field insures pragmatic validity. The third quality criterion that is often used by phenomenological researchers is called craftsmanship (Kvale, 2009). Craftsmanship relates to social, inter-subjective work where there is an established consensus among the phenomenological researchers as to what is good craftsmanship (Justesen & Mik-Meyer, 2010). The criterion states that it should be possible for the reader to get an insight into why certain choices were made throughout the research process using explanations (Justesen & Mik-Meyer, 2010). I will ensure good craftsmanship by explaining the process in detail throughout the thesis, with the goal of making the process as transparent as possible.
3.2 Interview method

In this part, I will describe the research process from conception to follow-through of my interview, thereby clearly illustrating the process and the method used. The idea of writing the thesis with a transparent perspective for the reader is based upon the craftsmanship criterion of Justesen and Mik-Meyer (2010) presented previously.

3.2.1 Semi-structured interviews

The empirical data are qualitative interviews about the subjects’ own understanding of self-realization and motivation. Qualitative interviews cannot be used to explain how large a trend is or to create generalities, but for our purpose it will be used to get a view of the individual subjects’ conceptual world, thereby explaining the way the subjects experience and handle their working life (Jan Jacobsen, 1993).

I have used semi-structured interviews (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). The semi-structured interviews are characterised by having questions prepared, but they can be given in an order that suits the researcher. In addition, the researcher can give ask questions spontaneously, thereby redirecting the interview. The goal is to create a relatively structured discussion in a completely open dialogue about the research topics, thereby gathering the information necessary for the research questions. When exploring phenomena such as motivation and self-realization, according to Kvale (1997), the researcher must allow for variety by taking the most consistent factors of the phenomenon and making those the description. To capture these different varieties of the phenomenon, I will interview seven subjects and ask them semi-structured questions so as to gather a picture of what is consistent in the phenomenon. The phenomenological perspective focuses on the ‘life world’, which refers to the daily situations, which one could take for granted. This means that phenomenology-based interview looks at the concrete time and space where the phenomenon is found and describes it using social, cultural and historical context (Justesen & Mik-Meyer, 2010). Furthermore, the phenomenological perspective wants the researcher to be empathetic.
towards his subjects and the research analysis, though still having a neutral stance, because phenomenology also demands a focus on the issue in hand without prejudice.

3.2.2 Subject profiles
In this section, I will explain who my research subjects are, and how and why I decided to use them. When deciding upon whom to use as subjects, the nature of my research question came to mind. As I was looking for information about engineers within the Norwegian oil sector who were willing to discuss why and what motivated them and made their identities at their workplace, I went for newly hired employees. I define newly hired employees as employees who were hired between the last six months and three years. I contacted a friend who was newly hired in an oil company in Stavanger, Norway. I asked him if he knew potential interview subjects and soon managed to book a series of interviews. The candidates were from different companies, but they all had engineering backgrounds and were around the same age. The majority of the interview subjects make their living in Stavanger, but there are also a few subjects in Oslo. The subjects who were chosen are the ones who had the most relevant information about newly educated and newly hired employees, as they are the most relevant to the research questions. These reason that subjects who were young and at the start of their career were chosen derives from the idea that younger subjects have a potentially long career ahead of them, and thus their thoughts about motivation and self-realization are future-based, instead of a person with a long career behind him who would experience greater uncertainty in relation to the impact he wanted to make with his work. All of the interviews were conducted with anonymous profiles whenever possible, without mentioning names, ages, positions or university backgrounds, so as to create an open and trustworthy atmosphere.

In this section, I have explained how the subjects were chose, what is my definition of their status of newly hired, newly graduated engineers in the Norwegian oil industry. Furthermore I have explained why I interviewed them with anonymous profiles, and I believe this sub-heading has given the reader a transparent process of my dissertation.
3.2.3 Conducting the interviews

In this section, I will describe the interview process and the practicalities around it in order to ensure good craftsmanship (see 3.1.1) by making the process transparent for the reader. I will also explain how the interview was created through different interviewing methods from well-established theorists such as Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009), James Spradley (1979) and Kvale (2009). When I started thinking about this dissertation, I decided that I wanted to book interview subjects at an early stage as I heard from my student colleagues that this could be a time-consuming process. To create the right atmosphere for the interviews, the first thing I considered was the location. All of my interview subjects could choose their own time and location. This meant that they could be choose a setting where they had time and where they were comfortable, thereby avoiding any form of stress for the participants.

When opening the interview, I made a checklist of opening statements (appendix 9.1) that I went through before I started with the interview guide. This was done according to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009) in order to create confidence and to reduce the possibility of interviewee or response bias.

According to Spradley (1979), there are three important principles, which facilitate reporting from an interview. The first is to make repeated explanations, such as repeating why you wanted to know something. The second is to restate what the informants say to check if the information you have gained is correct and to give the informant the possibility to rethink the answer. The last principle states that you should not ask for meaning but for use, thereby avoiding any element of hidden judgment towards the informant. During the interview, there are several factors to consider in order conducting the interviews as properly as possible, according to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) and Jacobsen (1994).
Kvale (2009, p. 28) describes twelve aspects of qualitative research interviews. I have chosen to highlight a few which find important to my thesis: life world, qualitative, deliberate naïveté, interpersonal situation, positive experience, sensitivity and ambiguity (see Kvale, 2009, p.28 for list). Life world relates to the topic of choice, which the interviewer chooses where everyday life is important, as I want to know the interviewees' relation to the specific phenomenon in his everyday life. My task is to interpret the meaning of central themes in the life world of the subject. I will register and interpret the meaning of what is said in the interview. The second highlighted aspect is qualitative, as I seek to obtain qualitative knowledge expressed in normal language, and not a quantification of the knowledge. Deliberate naïveté is also an important point because I will express openness to new and unexpected phenomena, rather that setting ready-made categories to interpretation. Interpersonal situation is arguably important to obtain as it provides trustworthy interaction, thereby allowing the researcher to gain access to personal and sensitive knowledge. The next one is closely related to reliability of the information. I will define reliability as quality of the measurement. In other words, it argues for the fact that different interviewers produce different statements on the same topics, depending on their sensitivity and knowledge of the topic. But as a rule, this can be handled through deliberate naïveté so that the questions and reactions from the interviewer’s side are well calculated, thereby getting to the same knowledge. Ambiguity is also an issue when conducting a semi-structured interview because a statement can have several possibilities of interpretation, and subjects can give contradictory statements throughout an interview. The aim of the interviewer is to clarify as much as possible whether the ambiguities and contradictory statements are related to a failure in communication or are genuine inconsistencies and contradictions in the interviewee's life situation. The last aspect I will mention is positive experience as one of my goals is to make the subjects think about the questions and perspectives that emerge from our interview. They will hopefully have an impact on how they relate themselves to motivation and self-realization.
On a practical and ethical note, I will end this sub-section with the fact that I will use an audio recording device in order not to miss out on information, as the interview is open. An audio recording device allows me to gather all the details and not focus on note writing. The subjects located outside of Stavanger were to be interviewed through the video and audio communication program Skype but were also recorded through software acquired for this purpose. Furthermore I would like to mention that the interviews where done in Norwegian, this was done in order to create the best possible atmosphere between me and the subject, as Norwegian is our first language and the hereby the best solution for good communication. The downside of doing the interviews in Norwegian was that I have to translate the quotes, which I chose to use in the analysis. The implications of this translation is an risk of me wrongly translating the meaning, so to make the translation as precise as possible, I have chosen to translate as much as possible word for word, hereby giving the quotes a very oral appearance and direct meaning.

3.2.4 Interview guide

An interview guide is a script, which structures the course of an interview (Kvale, 2009). My script is semi structured and is created by formulating 28 questions, with follow-up questions as add-ons. The purpose of these follow-up questions is to get more specific responses if I do not get a clear answer from the subject. This approach is called a funnel-shaped interview, according to Kvale (2009). The subjects will not receive the research questions or themes as I wish for their responses to occur spontaneously. According to Kvale (2009), an interviewer may choose different approaches to the formulation of the questions as befits the purpose chosen.
4. Analysis

I will start by presenting the sub-sections in this chapter, using the theoretical framework of chapter two. Motivation and self-realization will be disected first, as these terms are central to my main problem statement (see 1.2) I have chosen to present the main terms together as the theory and interviews have connected them in a way that reinforces this. In the next sub-section I will combine the two sub-chapters on post-bureaucracy (2.1.3) and HRM personal development in high-involvement work (2.1.4). I have chosen to address these two terms together because they represent trends and contemporary work-life situations similar to the work-life situations of my subjects. There are four pillars of theory through my dissertation: motivation, self-realization, post-bureaucracy and knowledge-intensive workers. Between them there are tensions and synergies that make up my thesis.

Throughout the analysis, quotations from research participants will be presented, and then interpreted and discussed in light of the theory presented in chapter two. I will exemplify consistencies between my interviews and the theory, and then move on to illustrate some of the divergence from the theory that can be seen in the same quotes. The quotes I have chosen are a result of the open coding process I did while reading the transcribed interviews. I have chosen to use the quotes as starting points for argumentation and interpretation while linking them to the theoretical categories presented in chapter two while also using the problem statements (see 1.2) as key points within each and every sub-section. They are seen under the sub-section as reminders of what is in focus under each sub-section.
4.1 Motivation and self-realization

“What motivates newly graduated engineers in the Norwegian oil sector? And to what degree does self-realization impact and define them?”

“Which ideals and dreams does the employee have in relation to work?”

Motivation and self-realization are addressed in one section as the theory and results of my interviews reflect a close link between them. In this section, I will use the quotes connected to motivation and self-realization to answer my main problem statement. The argumentation will be based on well-established theories, while also finding aspects that are not reflected in the theory, thereby gathering information about the individual engineers’ motivation and the impact of self-realization.

First, I will show examples of how workers are motivated by intrinsic factors such as affiliation, identity, personal development, self-realization and professional challenges. Then I will show extrinsic motivational factors with a financial focus and the surrounding tensions related to financial motivation. Concerning extrinsic motivation, I will discuss environmentalism together with the oil industry, which is defined as a dirty industry by one of the subjects, creating a tension between the two opposing terms. Self-realization will be discussed together with intrinsically motivated development, while also focusing on the personal definitions of what self-realization is to them and where it can be accomplished.

According to content motivation theories, like those of Maslow and McClelland, what motivates the individual is based on the forces within the individual or in the individual’s environment that activate certain behaviour. Motivation is an action towards a certain set of individual intrinsic and extrinsic preferences; given that the action is successful for the subject, the same type of behaviour is enforced. (Deci and Ryan.2000). So I will start with an example of intrinsic motivation for the subject’s
relation to affiliation at work. Intrinsic motivation is something that is interesting or enjoyable and thus an internally driven action, or motivation. Ola states that his motivational feeling derives from being appreciated at work by people who are like-minded while working in teams. From the theoretical review in section 2.1.5 we know how motivation is defined as a movement made through different personal characteristics and affections. In the next quote, I will argue for a match in motivation and affiliation as main characteristics through Ola’s description of what motivates him, as it resonates with both Christensen’s TURPAS model (2007) and Deci and Ryan’s (1985) STD theory.

**Quote 1**

“I: Let’s see, can you say something about your motivations, please do rank them, three things that make you come to work and makes you think this is a fun place to work. 

Ola: three things? Hmm. Ok. Yes, when I have something to contribute with. The fact that I am a resource for others, so not only when I am appreciated but to help others go forward is important for me, a kind of team spirit. Number two, is to be I associated with like-minded people, well, all are not like-minded but at least, people who are working towards the same goal. It’s important to be amongst other people. Number three, as it must be to earn your daily bread. It’s a necessity.” (page 18)

Above the quote, I started with a description of how the STD theory was relevant for the intrinsic motivation of Ola, as he describes his wish to contribute and be appreciated as a knowledge-intensive worker in the organisation. The authors of the STD theory, Ryan and Deci, describe the theory about intrinsic motivation for knowledge-intensive workers through the need for appreciation from co-workers, and it is here that affiliation and development of competences come into the mix. The same intrinsic motivation can be seen in Karl’s quote (quote 3), where the ‘incredibly talented people’ he works with are a big part of his motivational stance. The development of a knowledge-intensive identity through affiliation has a large significance for motivation according to Alvesson (2001), Casey (1995) and McClelland (1990). I would also like to
highlight Ola’s focus on a form of teamwork, or culturally embedded focus on working towards the same goal. One could argue that there is a post-bureaucratic tendency in this part of the quote as it represents a high-knowledge teamwork situation which benefits the subject at his workplace.

In the next quote, Loki exemplifies the hunger for knowledge with the intention of pointing out what is his number one motivational factor. The second motivational factor is also based on identity and affiliation but highlights the opposite of what the previous quote from Ola highlights, where the focus was on the affiliation at work. Furthermore one should take McClellands (1990) motivational factor of power towards others, here seen through the part quote “the influence it gives me on others” (quote 2), hereby stating that power is an important motivational factor for himself. Loki also exemplifies social affiliation outside of work, both with his colleagues and his external network outside of the workplace. Though the theories of Alvesson (2001), Casey (1995) and McClelland (1990) supports the affiliation with colleagues, their argumentation ends at the workplace, while in Loki’s case the most important arena is outside his workplace but still with his colleagues. This situation, where there is motivation through affiliation with work but primarily executed socially outside of the workplace, is unique for my subject as I have found no record of similar descriptions in my theory review.

**Quote 2**

“I: Then we are beginning to come to the closing stages, can you rank the motivating factors for this job, and which things is it that drives you?

Loki: It is, first and foremost for my own learning. What and what I can use it for. This is definitely point number one. Number two must surely be the feeling of accomplishing something, and the influence it gives me on others. The salaries are definitely important. After all, you should know it is expensive to stay in this town (Stavanger). Social needs are also important, my network is definitely in this town, and it revolves around people from work. We have gone on trips several times, a kind of as team building, but we pay it

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ourselves. We travel in gangs from work, and this is because the social environment is so good.” (Page 56)

The implications of the focus on the importance of affiliation with work but outside of work can be related to retention of employees and the trending topic of work-balance and the need for harmony in the subject’s life.

The third motivational factor, which Loki mentions, is the issue of economic safety. This is a common point throughout my interviews, ranked as the third most-valued factor of motivation. The focus on economic safety is even better explained through Ola’s quote, when he states that it is a necessity to ‘earn your daily bread’. One can argue that this is a step on Maslow’s needs hierarchy, as the second category of the hierarchy is safety (2.1.5). I will go deeper into the discussion of financial motivation and the need to veil financial motivation because of culturally embedded factors in the section on tensions and ambiguity (see 4.3).

**Quote 3**

“I: Can you rank the motivational factors for you at work. When considering this position can you name three examples that simply make this a good work place?
Karl: I find it motivating to be pushed by the challenging environment, and to deliver on what is expected. The workplace expects it, but it is also greatly appreciated. That is motivating. Educative. There are incredibly talented people to work with, good training, etc. Furthermore it’s nice to have job opportunities later in life, for example overseas or other jobs. Yes, international job opportunities are motivating.” (page 35)

As Karl explains, his need for a ‘challenging environment’ inspires him to be the best at what he does. The need for a challenge and striving to develop is explained by Senge(1999) as a way of gaining control over one’s own life, thereby getting more comfortable and motivated at work.
This positive individual identity creation is as Alvesson (2001) argues, a large part of knowledge-intensive workers’ life, creating a positive self-identity and enhancing motivation at work through affiliation and development. In fact, ‘development’ is the most-used term by the subjects throughout all of the interviews.

The next quote summarises the stereotype which Christensen (2007), Alvesson (2001) and Hein (2009) depict of the knowledge worker where the focus on development and specialisation is indeed very much in focus for the subject’s motivation.

**Quote 4**

“I: Can you tell me what makes you happy at work? What motivates you to get the work?  
John: What motivates me is the desire to develop my skills, and in a few years, I can say that this I what I am capable of. So I can do what is required, rather than being a generalist, who has a broader surface. I would prefer to specialize with inn a topic, in relation to my education, the profession is very inspiring. (Page 21)”

A self-actualizer, or self-realizer in my context, is a person who is living creatively and fully using his potentials, hereby being motivated by self-development (Maslow.1954), but with the next quote I will argue that you can be motivated by fear of ranking low in the societal work hierarchy. The link between fear and self-realization is seen in the need to be among the best at what the person does. The next quote represents a challenge to the self-realization theory because the focus lies on what the subject does not want to be, instead of what he wants to be.

**Quote 5**

“I: What can you say about why you chose this sector? And maybe a little bit about that ideals were behind your choices?”
John: Well, I have to be honest and say that it is of course, in addition to an exciting field, I am also financially motivated. No doubt about it. Because there are a lot of people nowadays who educate themselves in “clown arts”, and do what you want to work. Self-realization and what not. As I am a bit contrary, because people do not think about what they should be, then it becomes too many NAV system people (Government unemployment agency). So this has always been a part of my choice. That’s a good job with a good salary. It has always been a motivation, but mostly it because I think it’s an exciting field. I like it.”

John’s life-world experience of what society does not need, and what he does not want to be, is interesting. From one perspective, you can argue for a traditional self-realization motivation where John wants to be the best he can be for society and thus himself. On the other hand, he states that he does not want to sponsor a society where people ‘leech’ off of the social welfare system. ‘Clown arts’ is used as a term describing the jobs that he does not like or value, as they only do what they want to do, and not what is needed in society, according to John. According to McClelland’s (1990) motivational theory, avoidance motives are among the main arousal-based and socially developed motives. One could argue that John wants to be seen as a productive worker for society, avoiding a self-developed stamp of uselessness for society. On the other side this theory, one could argue for a unique situation for the engineers of Norway, as according to them, they seem to be highly valued contributors to the Norwegian economic system.

The quote also represents a self-image, which is constructed through the feeling of being a part of productive Norwegian society. The idea about being a part of wealth creation for Norway was noticed throughout many of my interviews with the subjects. A good example can be seen in the quote below from Peter, in which the subject takes pride in being a part of Norwegian wealth creation and recognises the importance of oil in a Norwegian context. It is also interesting that the subject mentions it as one of his first examples of what makes him feel good at work. The recognition of a contribution to society can be seen from two perspectives: one of self-realization as a contributor to
society, and the other one in a more strained tension-related context, where the subject feels the need to defend his position in the industry. I would also like to add that McClellands motivational theory plays it role as he mentions one of four arousal-based motives is affiliation, in this case, affiliation to Norway and the contribution the oil business has. From Hughes (1962), the term ‘dirty work’ referred to certain professions due to their physical, social or moral character (see 2.1.6). Hughes mentions moral character in the example of massage therapists because of the sexual connotation that some people erroneously associate with the profession. This might be somewhat far from an engineer's self-image or situation, but according to Hughes, the term ‘dirty work’ can be applied in an engineer's case as well as they face the issue of environmentalism and the connection to non-renewable energy sources, catastrophic pollution accidents, global warming etc.

**Quote 6**

“I: Can you talk a little about what makes you feel good at work? And what are your success factors works?

Peter: Yes, I can name a few, to be a part of a project, were communication works, which is very important to me. It feels rewarding. Furthermore I would like to go in depth with inn my speciality field. Also I would like to mention that it is also nice to feel that you are part of wealth creation in the country, because the oil is very important for Norway as an AS(company). It's nice to be a part of it.” (page 3)

The need to defend their position in the industry, as seen in Peters quote, can be related to it being a 'dirty' industry, where the tension of trying to be a part of the green environmental trend and still working in an oil company is hard to process. This mental strategy will be discussed in the section on tensions and ambiguity (4.3)
In the next quote you will see that there is no rule as to where self-realization should take place, as the next subject (Loki) uses a metaphor to explain how he sees work as a means to self-realise outside of the workplace.

**Quote 7**

“I: I am done with my questions, do you have any thoughts that you want to vent?
Loki: Well in terms of my life, I want to make a point out of the fact that my hobby is to be financed with my job. That is why I need the money. I will do my hobby at the place I have chosen, which is here in town. Self-realization is the most important thing, it is that which is the sun and everything else spins around it to get it to work. Then all the other auxiliary systems into planets around, which will make me happy in my world. It works very well in my world. But I always look for opportunities to develop myself and see if there are other opportunities to support my life.” (Page 57)

Loki sees work as a way of providing for his own project at home – the creative description of an auxiliary system of planets. His personal project at home is at the centre while all other activities simply support and enable his own self-realization project. The motivational factors are based on the most common answers in this thesis, namely self-development and opportunities to support their lives. But as Loki so creatively states, his own projects at home are always at the centre of his thought processes. Christensen (2007) argues that knowledge-intensive workers’ need for self-realization can generate negative outcomes from the organisational perspective, explaining how the need for self-realization can create extreme egocentric workers who do not value loyalty as they always strive to pursue their own agendas. Loki explains how the workplace is just a support function for his own project. Christensen’s argument for negative outcomes from dedication to self-realization can be seen as valid point in this case. Although the idea of loyalty is not mentioned in Loki’s quote, the description of his own project as the focus point of his self-realization can be seen as an indication of less loyalty and more egocentric focus. If one looks at quotes 2 and 7, they both represent the importance of focus on what happens outside of work, one with self-
realization and the other one with affiliation outside of work. One could argue for a trend in self-realization outside of the workplace, and the implications of not focusing on it from an organisational perspective could be negative for the organisation. It is worth researching.

Kent (quote 8) reflects on a life-world problem related to work tasks and lack of challenges, which is common for knowledge-intensive workers, as Hein (2009) argues with his use of the term “primadonna”. The subject complains about the lack of engineering-related work, where development has stalled because of the lack of focus on what he considers to be ‘correct’ work assignments.

**Quote 8**
“*I: Are you satisfied in your job?*
*Kent: No.*

*I: No? Can you tell what makes you unhappy?*
*Kent: professionally it is not challenging enough, it’s just not technical enough. There is too much work that I would not call engineering related.*” (page 35)

(Continued from last quote)

“I: is this because of your specific department that you are inn? Or is it a bad organizational structure.
*Kent: Well, I would say that there should be enough engineering work in the department. But it is not a priority, because the daily operations of the products and projects have priority. So the tasks that I call engineering are abandoned for urgent daily work.” (Page 35)

Wong and Pang (2003) argue that motivation is absolutely necessary to get good, creative performance from the knowledge-intensive worker. The lack of motivation in Kent’s case derives from his need to work with what he finds intrinsically motivating according to his professional ideals and aspirations. In this section, I would also like to highlight Hein’s (2009) term “primadonna”(see 2.1.5) which he uses to describe
knowledge-intensive workers’ personalities at work. Hein describes the typical work profiles of primadonas with terms such as temperamental, demanding, self-important and not wanting to be directly led. In Kent's case, one could argue that he is not happy at work by not getting to do the things he wants, thereby letting it out that he is not happy at work, which could fit well with Hein’s ‘prima donna’ description.

From the interview, we also know that the subject had to quit his job right before this interview as a result of the unhappiness he described. Fitz-enz (1997) finds that the average American company loses approx $1 million for every ten professional employees who leave the organisation. Thus, the importance of motivation should not be underestimated.

4.1.1 Conclusions on motivation and self-realization

In this section on motivation and self-realization, I have walked you through the relation between motivation and self-realization using examples from the subjects and linking them according to theories by Senge (1999), Casey (1995), McClelland (1990) and Maslow (1959). The most common denominator of motivational factors for young, newly hired engineers in the Norwegian oil industry was personal development in a high-knowledge field. Here, every one of the interviewed subjects mentioned words such as development, knowledge and challenging environment as descriptive terms.

Compensation was also a reoccurring aspect, though often given as an afterthought at the end of the answer regarding motivational factors at work. As I explained in the argumentation above quote 3, I believe this is a form of humility which can be found almost exclusively in Norway or other Scandinavian countries as it is a social norm not to be driven by purely economic factors, as I will discuss further in the section on tensions and ambiguity (4.3). The third aspect from the motivational factors I want to highlight is the affiliation and identity part, as they are important components of motivation and self-realization according both to my interviews and to theorists such as Alvesson (2001), Christensen (2007) and Hein (2009). Both the feeling of being a part of
a team that is working in the same direction and the social environment were recognised as important motivational factors in the interviews.

Explained in the most precise way, intrinsic motivation for becoming the best that a person can be is seen throughout all the interviews. Hence, even though the subjects rarely mentioned self-realization explicitly, there was a sense of hunger for self-development that is translated into self-realization. The strive to develop themselves at work must be seen in relation to their relatively short careers, where they have spent a long time on education and are now ready to develop themselves as engineers in the oil industry.

But as seen in Loki’s (quote 7) statement, self-realization is not always connected to work. Loki describes his workplace as an auxiliary place of self-realization, as he uses the workplace as an economic support function for his own project at home. Hence, his focus is not what goes on at work but at home.

Contrary to motivation is de-motivation. Kent (quote 8) tells a story of a workplace with too little time to do the job he wants to do. In other words, the workplace is swamped with day-to-day work, while Kent wants to do the large projects that he thought he would do. The end story here was that he quit his job because of the lack of the creative environment that he desired.

This section was dedicated to the motivation and self-realization of newly hired engineers in the Norwegian oil industry. My findings involve three important motivational factors for newly hired engineers, with self-development, affiliation and financial motivation as main ingredients. Self-realization is discussed both in and out of the office, with contributions to society, personal development and status as important terms.
4.2 New work life order

"Which ideals and dreams does the employee have in relation to work? “

“How is motivation and self-realization affecting the new work life order?”

This section is dedicated to exploring a post-bureaucratic perspective on motivation and self-realization. In this section, I will scrutinise the terms that are coded as relevant to post-bureaucracy, organisational culture and other nuanced work-life theories and trends. As mentioned at the beginning of chapter five, it was a strategic choice to combine the terms as I believe they all are linked together through a trend-exploring perspective where both topics are trends related to the modern work life of knowledge-intensive workers.

In the first part of the section, I will show the increased individualisation and the ensuing intensification of HR in this kind of industry. Then I will elaborate on knowledge-intensive workers’ need for autonomy, responsibility and visibility while looking at how HR can influence the topic. At the end of this section, there will be a focus on work-life balance and how the subject relates to and handles the topic.

Bovbjerg (2001) and Senge (1999) both argue that there is an increasing individualisation among knowledge-intense workers, and this statement can be supported through the analysis of the interviews as well. Individualisation can take multiple forms in the workspace, and for knowledge-intensive workers, the individualisation process is closely linked to self-realization. Senge (1999) describes the individualisation process as a way of gaining a faith in a person’s own skills, thereby gaining success and more control of their own life. Furthermore, the confidence gained by being successful and in control of their lives is related to being the best that he can be, hence giving an indirect motivation towards self-realization. This process of self-development, making the person more secure and stable at work, is beneficial both for the workplace and for the subject’s own self-feeling.
Bovbjerg states that HRM uses human resources from two perspectives. One is based on the person’s goal in life is to realise themselves. This means to use all their resources to become their best possible self. The other perspective of Bovbjerg (2001) is critical to the view on how HR’s self-development is not for everyone as it pushes the values of the company upon the employee, and the effect can be de-motivating as not all employees have the same values as the company. Furthermore, a lot of time and resources are invested in these self-development programs, which, for a person who is not interested in self-development through work, can be a waste of time.

The HR department has the role of coordinator and support for getting the most out of employees. The next quote contains an example of how Kent believes the HR department can influence employees through coordination and proper knowledge placement.

**Quote 9**

“I: Does being allowed to choose tasks motivate you?

Kent: Yes it does motivate, because you can see people doing tasks that they are not so good at, so you get a worse result. And it is quite important to have the right people in the right places.” (Page 39)

**Quote 10**

“I: When I think that I have gone through my questions, you have something special you want to say, any thoughts that you may have missed out.

Peter: No not really, I thought you had very good questions, but it is very important to have a good HR function. Both in terms of whom they employ, and how to make a salary review. Where should the different individuals be in the organization? In all large corporations, there will be lazy people, and it is not necessarily wrong. But sometimes it’s said that leisurely takes a little over. That they could get virtually the same compensation and
development that they really stand for, I think it is a counter-motivating. (Page 10)”

In quote 9, Kent states that he believes in a system where the right people are at the right positions, according to their own interests. HR’s role as an organiser of employees is in focus, and he strongly supports the notion of freedom of choice at work, for both the organisation’s and the workers’ benefit.

Peter, in quote 10, argues for different levels of compensation and development according to commitment and work rate. Bovbjerg (2001) discusses the need for development for employees who are not interested in being developed, and this kind of scenario is confirmed here, where Peter believes it’s a waste of time and resources to give people who are not as committed as him the same kind of attention etc. One could argue for a system where there is a differentiation of resources based on commitment and will, which would be a consistent solution with Bovbjerg’s and Kent’s belief in HR’s wrongdoings.

Knowledge-intensive workers are motivated by a certain set of factors, according to Christensen (2007). One of the elements of the TURPAS model is fairness, and I argue that the quote above by Peter (quote 10) represents a life-world view into a situation where the knowledge-intensive worker thinks that people around him are not contributing enough. Peter uses both the salary review and the focus on key personnel with regard to development as variables of fairness.

In the next interview quote from Karl, we can see the same problem: a feeling of not being seen, and hence not being appreciated, at work. Karl also focuses on how the organisation could flatten their hierarchy so the knowledge-intensive worker could have larger influence and more autonomy.
Quote 11
“I: In relation to the workplace, are there things that they could have done that you should have been more motivated?

Karl: hmm, yes ... It's a cumbersome organization. It is so very large. Everything has to be set in the system, we have x number of thousands of employees, and thereby it is easy to get lost in the crowd. It can be easy to get lost in the crowd, so that the employees do not see their role in the organization. Perhaps they could work a little with the work culture, if you feel sometimes that people start kissing up in position instead of doing a good job. To make good power point instead of hard work. A little frustrating from a distance.

I: Is there anything the organization could have done to change this? Do you?
Karl: well, it is hard to say. They could have made an flatter organization. I have X number of bosses above me. But I have no basis to say what is right and wrong.”(page35)

Karl’s focus on the problem of being ‘lost in the crowd’ can be a significant issue throughout the oil industry, as the companies within the segment all have to be enormously large to operate on an international scale, competing and accumulating in a multi-billion-dollar market. According to Maravelias (2009), they strive to be seen as trustworthy and genuine members of the company if they are given the opportunities to take initiatives, but when there is a lack of such possibilities, the risk of being left behind is de-motivating and makes employees conform to the organisation’s culture and behaviour so that they have a chance of being seen as equals with their peers.

Another one of Christensen’s (2007) TURPAS concepts is autonomy, and in the next quote from Kent (quote 12), there is a clear link between independence, responsibility and motivation, as well as the wish for an organisation and a HR-department who could influence how he was motivated towards his work through autonomy.

Quote 12
“I: Again on the question of motivation, what do you think the workplace could have done to motivate you? To make you feel good, what could they have done differently?
Kent: Yes there have been some one had gotten a little more responsibility, and felt a little more ownership of what I was doing.” (Page 43)

Kent’s need for responsibility and influence can also be linked to Maravelias’s (2009) theory about visibility and trustworthiness, as the motivation derives from both Christensen’s (2007) need for autonomy while being visible to the organisation.

Bovbjerg (2001) argues that today’s work life could not be done without teamwork, though there is a tendency for a higher degree of individualisation among the workers. This might seem contradictory, but these two ideas should be distinct as they do not represent the same function: teamwork is a collaborative task among individuals, while individualisation gives strength to the individual and his identity instead of getting the workers closer together, for example, in teams. Another reason to differentiate the trends of teamwork and individualisation is related to post-bureaucracy and the knowledge-intensive worker, where teamwork is a result of new organisational methods that are connected to discipline and knowledge transfers within an organisation. In contrast, the individualisation trend is a result of a larger degree of knowledge-intensive workers who are specialised within their topic; hence, they become more individualised as workers on a specific topic.

Quote 13
“I: Could you say something about motivational factors, specifically on three points that motivate you at work in your current position. You can rank them after the importance for you.
Peter: Yes, I would say, good co-workers. Then i would say, my professional and personal development. This might be two things at once, so I choose professional development. (....)”

In this quote, Peter argues that the co-workers are one of the most important motivational factors in his current position. There are several quotes throughout the interviews that focus on good co-workers; therefore, I would argue that my segment of
workers especially, namely the newly hired, are extra sensitive towards having a social workplace as they are used to the student life, which is known as a very social and free setting. The transition from student life to working life can be rough, and thus the social aspect is important for the newly hired engineers.

Catherine Casey (1995) refers to a change of character in the workplace happening along with the technological, organisational and socioeconomic changes in the age of post-bureaucracy. The primary impact is the different relations knowledge-intensive workers have to their workplace as now they do not necessarily need to have physical presence at the office but can use different technological mediums to do work from home or other places. The effect is seen in the mindset of the employees as they can be subjected to work-related matters at home, making it harder to distinguish between office hours and after-work time. In the knowledge-intensive workers’ case, their affection for work and intrinsic motivation can make it more difficult to distinguish. In the next quote from Peter, there is an example of how he has issues leaving intriguing questions at work, and how he thinks about them at home after working hours. One of the interviewees mentioned that the company had a good commitment to stress-management programs and similar helpful programs for letting go of work while at home.

**Quote 14**

“I: So you make a clear distinction between private life and work?

_Peter: Yes, I try to._

_I: How often do you feel that you leave your job at work. Do you think a lot about your job in your private time?

_Peter: Yes, I do actually. But that’s because I find it exciting, and if there are things that I have seen and thought about. So can I use the time to think about it. For example, after an offshore visits, then I thought about what makes something acts this way rather than that way. Intriguing questions are difficult things to put away, results are that I think about it I
**4.2.1 Conclusions on the New Work-Life Order**

In this section, I discussed the motivational factors with a focus on trends in working life, starting with how HR can and does influence self-realization and motivation, both on the positive and negative sides. Furthermore, we saw how a young engineer has problems with the feeling of other people free-riding in the organisation while he was doing quality work which was not as appreciated as he wished it to be. The same subject wanted HR to look into methods of creating fairness after his standards, according to parameters of workload and salary. On the same topic of fairness and autonomy, there was a wish for a flatter hierarchy, or a clearer understanding of the subject's position in the organisation as it is 'cumbersome' and easy to get lost in the crowd. He also explains his humility towards the task of creating such an organisation, as he knew too little about the topic of organisational structures. Furthermore, Kent (quote 12) believes the organisation should give him more responsibility, thereby giving him a better connection to his own work. This supports both Christensen’s (2007) TURPAS model and Maravelias’s (2009) visibility theories.

In quote 13, there is an example of affiliation and the social setting being among the most important parts of motivation, as the social side of work is Peter's largest motivational factor. I believe this is related to the transition from being a full-time student to becoming a full-time worker. Whereas student life is known for its unique social environment where there are few boundaries towards socialising, the workplace can be somewhat of a contradiction to social freedom, where the focus is supposed to be on working. The experience gained through these interviews tells me that the focus on a good social environment is enormously important to newly graduated and hired workers. The concluding point of this section is related to the connection that a knowledge worker has to his work in the modern high-knowledge workspace. In quote 14, Peter focuses on how it can be an issue to separate work and private life, as he
describes the work as too interesting to let go at home. Though he states that he does not see it as a problem now, he acknowledges that it can be a problem for some. He also insists that there is a focus on stress management and work-life balance at the workplace. In this section, we learned the effect that post-bureaucratic trends have and how they represent different perspectives of engineers’ work life, starting with the subject’s belief on how HR can and does affect daily work life, and how autonomy and visibility are possibilities to change in order to gain motivation of the newly hired, newly graduated engineers in the Norwegian oil industry.

4.3 Tensions and ambiguity

“Which ideals create tensions or ambiguity for the employee?”

“How do they handle these tensions?”

In this section, I will explore the contradictions, tensions and problem areas for motivation and self-realization for newly hired engineers in the oil sector of Norway and look into the different mental strategies the subjects use to handle these tensions.

These are tensions between political ideals, such as environmentalism, and financial motivations, such as salary. All of the tensions are related to some sort of moral perspective, where the subject feels strained between the correct societal moral code and culturally embedded factors such as modesty and contributions to the welfare model. Personal development and identity will be discussed as they are factors influencing the engineers’ mental strategies to handle tensions.

As the newly graduated engineers enter a strong job market for engineers in Norway, they gain a range of possibilities for their future career. Aside from these opportunities, the engineers are also influenced by the trend of environmental issues throughout
society. Quote 15 addresses just this issue when Tom explains his introduction to the Norwegian job market.

**Quote 15**

“I: Can you say something about why you started working in the sector you started with?
Tom: It was random.
I: But for example in high school, were there any particular ideals or ideas that made you followed the path you did.
Tom: Yes, like that sector. The Oil industry. There was a bit of family help, a father who pushed me into the oil industry and said it was so good. There I was initially opposed, because I would have liked to work with inn green energy. But then I came home from studies in Australia. And since I had not planned for a special job. I really just applied on something, because there were so many jobs in the oil companies.
I: You mentioned green energy, does it affects you I a degree in your workplace?
Tom: Well, it has probably faded a bit away, when I see consumption. It does not so much matter what I do and I feel. But I certainly can help make it safer, and important.”

There are contradictions concerning the ideal of working for a green industry because while making his choice, Tom was influenced by the safety of several offers from oil companies. Tom’s immediate reaction was to listen for the ‘safer solutions’ as he discovered that the oil companies were in need of his competencies. The need for financial safety was prioritised ahead of his green ideals. There are no final career paths set because of his job choice, as it is always good to start somewhere. But his ideal of starting at a more environmentally friendly job was put aside as the safety of a well-paying job came first. At the end of the quote, you can see the subject relating to his affection for the environmental issue but still declaring that he feels somewhat powerless to affect the issue.
The mental strategy to handle this trade-off between ideal dream job versus financial safety is based on a defensive stance, where Tom defends himself and his choices by reflecting on how he makes the industry a better place. Usually the ideal of following your dream job and being driven by a certain set of almost noble ideals is the correct path, according to society, as both popular culture and common advice for self-realization imply that one should follow one’s dreams. But in this instance, the need for financial safety is prioritised as the newly graduated subject searches for a livelihood and is mainly concerned with settling into the newly opened job market.

In quote 16, Peter is asked a direct question on how the environmental issue should be handled and how he relates to it. The quote is reflection on how he sees the industry through his relative short career, and there are some clear tensions regarding how the industry is supposed to do something but does not follow the path that the government has set. Furthermore, he reflects on how this affects the way he thinks about working in the oil industry, while also taking partial responsibility for the oil industry works. The inner struggle he reflects on, and the way he explains how it defines him as a person, is interesting. I interpret his answers as well thought through and insightful towards how he sees himself in the industry, acting on environmentalism within the industry and externally while representing the industry.

**Quote 16**

*I: You mentioned the oil business and the environment, some people have strong feeling about how the environment should be handled, does this affect your choices for when you chose the oil industry?*

*Peter: yes, it diffidently did. I think it’s very important to be aware. And you do not get less aware when you work with inn the system. In my last job I saw a lot that could be characterised as bad. It was most about the drilling, and when you witness the governmental regulations in connection to the pollutions, its not followed on a basic level. Then see how badly companies follow the law and the regulations, you might be more*
aware of working in the field and thereby even more aware of it. (Page 5)

I: Yes, and thereby it’s interesting to know how a person handles this for of tension.

Peter: Yes, because it is affecting the way I talk, the way I discuss with others, what I’m saying. And it is affecting which political party I vote for. As an individual, I feel that I take a great deal of responsibility. (Page 6)

As we can see, Peter’s self-image and personality are influenced by a combination of his ideals about environmentalism and his connection to the line of work he is involved in. This inner conflict seems to be at peace as he reflects on how he believes he influences the industry and society.

The next tension, as found in quote 17 by Karl, is also related to a reflection on the industry’s environmental issues. The interesting point here is that there is a balanced reflection on the environment versus revenues for the Norwegian government. The tension seen in representing a company that has a bad reputation on a global scale, a ‘dirty industry’, as he defines it, seems to be tough on him. But as he explains, it is an important job as it contributes to Norwegian revenues, even though he believes it is not appreciated by Norwegian society. The subject also takes a defensive stance on his company as he mentions they have a bad reputation internationally but argues that it is a better organisation in Norway. As for his role in the industry, he takes pride in working at a company that he believes is doing a good job for Norwegian society and on the environmental issue in Norway, thus taking a distant stance towards the bad reputation the company has on a global scale. The subject links the work he does at the company to his own identity, thereby feeling that he has to defend the company in a global setting.

**Quote 17**

“Can I ask you how you think the oil industry relates to Norway, and what role do you play in this vast context?

Karl: No, I feel that it is nice to be able to contribute, we are one of the companies that really contribute to revenues in Norway. It may not be set so very appreciative of the
Going back to quotes 3 and 5 and the discussion about financial motivation at work, it was pointed out that there are several subjects who mention financial motivation as one of their three motivational factors, though it is most commonly ranked as the third motivational factor. The quotes reflect a defensive stance towards the financial aspect of working in the oil industry. A quote such as ‘putting bread on the table’ from Ola (quote 1) is mentioned as a humoristic understatement, but in terms of ideals and motivation, the engineers in the oil industry of Norway have a salary that covers a lot more than bread on the table. According to the Norwegian newspaper Aftenbladet, the average Norwegian engineer's wages top $191,000, or 1,101,000 NOK.  

Even though the subjects I have interviewed are newly hired graduates, thereby probably earning substantially less than these figures, there is no doubt that they earn more than what is needed to “put bread on the table”, or their safety parameter in Maslow's hierarchy. An example of financial motivation is from quote 5, where John's first motivational factor is economic. I assume that this is an example of Norwegian modesty about financial motivation. According to Strage (1996), Norway has a ubiquitous, unwritten social modesty code called Janteloven. Janteloven comes from a novel by Aksel Sandmose, which starts in an imaginary Danish town called Jante in which there was a law that dictated social and moral standards. One of the commandments was ‘Thou shalt not believe thou art something’ (translated by me). This kind of social norm considers extrinsic financial motivation wrong. Furthermore, I believe it is important to state that this is a very Scandinavian social norm, which probably wouldn’t be found in other parts of the world with similar industries. Recognising the idea of Scandinavians being culturally different regarding modesty and morality, one could argue that these strong moral and social norms influence the motivation of my subjects to a stronger degree than in other countries.

4.3.1 CONCLUSIONS ON TENSIONS AND AMBIGUITY

4 http://www.aftenbladet.no/energi/aenergy/Norwegian-engineers-best-paid-on-planet-3023106.html#.UjrG_uDA1Fs
In this section, I discussed tensions and ambiguities towards working in Norwegian oil companies. The first tension, and the one most frequently seen throughout the interviews, was the issue of environmentalism. An example is quote 15, where Tom explains how he joined the oil industry and how his ideals of working within a greener field faded away as the oil industry came with their offers and as he began working at an oil company. There is a sign of defensiveness when he finishes his quote with a stance on how he helps with safety from inside the industry. This kind of argumentation points towards a mental strategy to defend himself from a choice he has made which contradicts his ideals. In the next quote (16) from Peter, there are some of the same signs of defensiveness towards his environmental ideals, though with Peter there is a much larger degree of reflection towards how the industry is working and how he feels he can change it, while also stating clearly that his view of the oil industry clearly impacts him and defines him as a person.

In quote 17, Karl is in a similar situation. When the issue of environmentalism is under debate, Karl chooses to react with an understanding of his company’s bad reputation in a global scale, but still argues that there is a much better situation in Norway, where he is proud to be a part of both the company’s contribution to Norwegian society and its public image regarding environmentalism. The last tension I will discuss is financial motivation. In quotes 3 and 5, there are proclamations for financial motivation, though told in a protective sense where you can see that the focus is not on motivation. The need to defend the focus on money, according to me, is based on a cultural trait in Norway where you should not talk about money or salaries, and where you should work somewhere because you love it. I believe the pattern is clear as the subjects focus on personal development and affiliation instead of the substantial salaries that they receive through their careers. My analysis in this section concludes that the process of identity creation and affiliation through work is seen in all of the tensions mentioned, and that is also why the subjects defend their choices with their respective arguments. The arguments appeal to different moral codes, either with financial, environmental or other ideals concerning moral issues, but the point here is that they are all connected with
self-identification to their workplaces. This individual identity defiantly affects motivation and personality at the office and outside of the office as well when trying to represent the industry, and thus themselves, in the best possible way.

4.4 Discussion on theory

First and foremost, I looked into the main point in my problem statement, where the dissection of factors that motivate the young newly graduated and newly hired engineers in the Norwegian oil industry was in focus. I asked the subjects what their top three motivational factors at work were to find out about the ideals and driving factors in their lives. Here I discovered ideals about self-development, affiliation to co-workers and financial motivation as main points. Whereas both McClelland’s and Maslow’s contributions show the clear link between motivation and self-realization as basic existential facts for human beings, I believe my interviews give insight into a very specific group of people who have just started their careers in a very specific segment of work. My findings contribute to the theory with a small but well-aimed segment of knowledge-intensive workers, who all seem to seek to be the best that they can be at their workplaces, with my main argument being the focus from all of the subjects on self-development as a motivational factor at work.

The impact of self-realization can again be seen through the need to be the best that they can be through self-development, and it is this link that makes self-development a key word in my conclusion. It is the word that was most frequently mentioned throughout the interviews, and it creates the link between motivation and self-realization, as I have used Maslow’s phrasing of ‘What a man can be, he must be’ to exemplify the need for self-development. The importance of self-realization is also seen in how the subjects motivate themselves for the everyday workday through training, hence self-realization. It was found that there is especially intrinsic motivation for self-development and therefore evidence that intrinsic motivation may be more helpful than extrinsic motivation when it comes to newly graduated, newly hired engineers in the Norwegian oil business. Furthermore one should not rule out extrinsic motivation, as it plays its
role as well through financial motivation because it is one of the three most-mentioned a motivational factor was financially related. The financial motivation also represents what the worker means to the organization (Hein.2009), hereby one could link both prestige and affiliation as intrinsic motivation which is reflected in extrinsically motivated financial factor.

Furthermore, self-realization has been shown as something that can be achieved outside of work, in which case work is only seen as a means to support one of the subject’s own ideas about self-realization. I will argue that Maslow and McClelland do not mention where the subject’s self-realization should take place but describe it as a source of development for human beings as a characteristic of our species. Furthermore this is a surprise if one looks at post-bureaucracy literature, as the knowledge workers generally wish to self-realize at work, while in this case, work is seen as a means to enjoy and support the leisure time. As for my dissertation, the nuances are clear-cut for a very specific segment of knowledge-intensive workers, instead of on a general level of average work-life, thereby giving new information to the self-realization phenomenon in this segment of workers.

The motivational factors are based on the subjects’ life-world, ideals and personality traits, which both seem to be closely related to their work situation; just as Senge (1999) and Alvesson (2004) describe, the link is clear. In light of Hein's ‘prima donna’ description and the subjects’ complaints about improper work tasks and their need for more autonomy, one can argue that newly hired engineer in the Norwegian oil industry work best in a environment which allows a great deal of freedom. Furthermore, I want to argue that the unique industry and moral aspects in this sector make the subjects’ opinions worth exploring. The moral aspects of working in the oil business and the idea of working for causes that are morally accepted is a challenge, which creates tension for the subjects. They handle it with mental strategies that can be identified as defensive in an interview setting, where they find types of explanations or solutions to why it's okay to do what they believe is somewhat shady on a moral scale. However, it must be said
that this is not a universal explicit solution to the tension as some of the interviewees don’t mention that there is a negative outcome of what they do but instead explain how their work helps to build a better society in Norway with the values they are creating. Though this avoidance can also be understood as a defensive strategy as well, because of the subjects need to bring out the positives, instead of the negative aspects of working in the Norwegian oil industry.

Another form of tension that is interesting is how they formulate financial motivation, usually mentioning it after the ‘politically correct’ answers of self-development, contribution to Norwegian society or affiliation. From Hughes (1962) we know that ‘dirty work’ can be involved when interviewing subjects who feel the need to defend their own definition of moral wrong answers. An example can be financial motivation, which seems to be seen as morally wrong, as they don’t usually mention it as their largest motivation factor and often mention it in a disparaging context. An implication of the financial motivation being seen as morally wrong, could give an indication of how organizations and the HR-department should approach the motivation of newly hired, newly graduated engineers in the Norwegian oil industry.

5. Critique

Under this heading I will review and be self-critical as to what I could have done differently while writing this dissertation, on both a theoretical and practical level.

In this dissertation, I have chosen theories that I found to coordinate well with my problem statement. However, there is no doubt that I could have used other theories to get a better overview of the topics that I chose. Theories such as those put forward by Alderfer (1969) and Frederick Herzberg (1966) could be useful to get a deeper explanation of motivational factors and self-realization. For example one could use the Alderfers view on relatedness and interpersonal relationships, which could give the
point of affiliation a deeper perspective. While I could have used Herzbergs (1959) two-factor theory of job satisfaction demonstrate the motivational factors and the hygiene factors gives job satisfaction for the newly graduated, newly hired engineers in the Norwegian oil industry.

I would also make a note about my choice of subjects. Seven respondents can bee seen a low number, but on the other hand, I believe they gave good answers to my problem statement consistent with the qualitative method chosen, because in general the phenomenological researcher goes for a depth, rather that the scope.

6. Put into context and future research

This thesis has found and described motivational factors for newly hired, newly graduated engineers in the Norwegian oil industry. Its implications can be used in the context of a small but important part of the Norwegian economy as theoretical literature. As mentioned in the introduction, there is a need for engineers in the Norwegian oil sector, and the prognosis states that there will only be more demand in the future. I believe my thesis has helped grant some transparency to the knowledge about newly hired, newly graduated engineers in the Norwegian oil sector. Using Maslow’s and McClelland’s theories about self-realization, and Ryan and Deci’s knowledge about intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, I have discovered the motivational factors for and impact of self-realization for a small segment of important knowledge-intensive workers in the Norwegian society. Furthermore, I have shown which motivational ideals create tensions for the subjects, using Hughes theory about ‘dirty work’, allowing interested parties the possibility to further research these tensions and see what can be done to gain more knowledge about the challenges for engineers. The defensive stance towards financial motivation is one of the interesting results out of these tensions, as they can be reflected in some quantitative numbers, through Tampoes (1993) study of what motivates knowledge workers, where money and financial motivation was only seen as 7,7% importance, and for example personal growth and
operational autonomy gave 33% and 30.51% percent of the motivation at work for the respondents.

Since I am doing a research project on the Norwegian oil industry, I want to point out some of the obvious problems for generalization or similar ideas, the experiences from this study in the Norwegian oil industry may not be applicable in other industries. Though it would be interesting to see if the results could be applicable in borderline industries or a more specific segment within the Norwegian oil industry, such as offshore workers or just within the operational sector.

I would like to present suggestions towards further research as there are several good ways of building upon my thesis and finding interesting further study questions. The first suggestion is for a case study where the focus would be on how HR could retain newly hired engineers using self-realization as an important aspect. This could contribute to keeping engineers within the organisation and finding practical solutions to a rather theoretical topic, namely self-realization. In this context, this dissertation’s result could provide insight into how employers should think differentiated in relation to motivate their employees. This could be done by the sense that employers should consider that it is not necessarily all employees who need, or want, to realize themselves in the work, but perhaps more motivated by other factors. Furthermore, I would argue that there should be a study about which factors attract the newly graduated to their jobs; both intrinsic motivation and self-realization could be used as powerful tools to obtain these precious employees in the future.
7. Conclusion

The main purpose of this dissertation has been to illuminate the motivational factors of newly hired engineers in the Norwegian oil industry and gain insight into how self-realization impacts their motivation using a phenomenological perspective. My starting point was an independent theoretical assignment where I chose the topic, the method and the nine subjects whom I wanted to interview using semi-structured interviews. Using existing theories from the scientific field and my own data, I had the foundation to answer my problem statement:

**Main question:**
- What motivates newly graduated engineers in the Norwegian oil sector? And to what degree does self-realisation impact and define them?

**Sub-Questions:**
- Which ideals and dreams does the employee have in relation to work?
- Which ideals create tensions or ambiguity for the employee?
- What are the mental strategies to handle tensions?
- How is motivation and self-realisation being affected by the new work life order?

As for the first main question, the answer was closely linked to self-development, both for the motivational factors and for the self-realization. For the motivational factors, I have chosen the terms self-development, affiliation and financial motivation as the important key words. When I say that self-development is the link between self-realization and motivation, my thought is that self-development works both as an important motivator for the subjects while self-realization is a natural result of self-development, as it goes hand in hand with Maslow’s definition of being the best that one can be. Though self-realization it was rarely explicitly mentioned by my
subjects, Maslow's definitions and my empirical findings make intrinsic motivation towards self-development a keystone in my search for the impact of self-realization. Furthermore, there was one interesting response on how self-realization was not achieved at the workplace but how the work just supported the subject's self-realization project at home. This is a concept rarely touched upon by the theories I have found because the literature, such as Maslow or McClelland, uses the term as a description of how humans are naturally built in order to make their world go around, while my thesis focuses on a small segment of people where the focus can be at work or, as I learned in this thesis, outside of work.

As for the tensions, the knowledge-intensive workers had tensions regarding environmentalism, financial motivation and the idea of themselves working in a 'dirty industry'. I used Hughes to point out the fact that they had shielding and defensive mental strategies to compensate for the fact that they are working in a “morally shady industry”, according to themselves using Huges theory. As a result of this mental strategy, one could see that ideals as financial motivation, environmentalism and affiliation to their workplace cratered some tensions for the subjects, for example the subjects linking their job to the contribution the Norwegian oil industry makes to Norwegian society with the resources they pump up from the North Sea, hereby both reflecting on their affiliation and contribution to the Norwegian government, in both negative and positive aspects.

The new work life order with terms such as post-bureaucracy and knowledge-intensive worker contributed with aspects on how the subjects wanted more autonomy and better fairness towards salary and contribution at the workplace. While teamwork and affiliation, which are both related to the post-bureaucracy trend at workplace could also be recognised as important workplace motivational factors.

As some final words, I want to state that I believe this dissertation has provided a transparent view on motivation and self-realization in a small, but important segment of knowledge intense workers, namely the newly hired, newly graduated engineers of the Norwegian oil industry. Furthermore I believe it has given an knowledge foundation for a discussing on how one could attract and retain newly hired, newly graduated
engineers in the Norwegian oil industry, which is an important first step towards limiting the damage done by the lack of engineers in the coming years.
8. References


Motivation and self-realization
A study of newly graduated, newly hired engineers in the Norwegian oil industry

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9. Appendix

9.1 Opening statements

- Thanks for their consideration of my request, for giving me access and for agreeing to the interview.
- Explain the purpose of the research and give an outline of the progress to date.
- Ask if the subject is comfortable with the previously agreed topic of confidentiality, and tell them that no information will be released which was not already agreed upon without seeking and obtaining permission.
- I will tell the participant that they can choose not to answer any questions if they do not want to, and that the interview will be stopped if the subject wishes.
- Offer the subject a transcribed version of their interview if they want to check if everything is correct.
- Repeat the question of permission to record the interview electronically, even though this was agreed upon beforehand.
- I am going to offer the subject a version of the complete thesis if they are interested in the results.

9.2 Interview guide
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Warm up questions:</th>
<th>Getting to know the subject. Also good for making the subjects relax and become comfortable.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name and age?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is you working title and company?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How long have you worked here?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you worked in other similar companies?</td>
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<tr>
<td>If yes, why did you change workplace?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can you give me an overview of your typical day at work? (Looking for a description of their way of life)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are you satisfied with your work?</td>
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<td>What make you feel successful at work?</td>
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<td>What makes you angry or displeased at work?</td>
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<td>What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses at work?</td>
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<td>Can you choose which work assignments you want to do?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is your dream job?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Why did you want to work within your sector? Are there any ideals that you follow?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Where do you see yourself in 20 years? (peak of career)</td>
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<td>Does the term ‘career’ have a meaning for you in the workplace? And what do you use it for?</td>
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<td>Do you think you are developing in your job? And is there pressure to develop?</td>
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<td>Do you feel challenged at your workplace?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are you doing any kind of education on the side?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have opportunities to work at home? Do you use them? And what effect does it have?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How often do you think about work when at home?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can you rank the motivational factors at your workplace?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What do you think you can do to be motivated at your workplace, and what can your workplace do for you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can you give me an example?</td>
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<td>Would you like to do?</td>
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<td>What is about this subject that makes you feel that?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can you give me an example?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Degree of freedom?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is it about this subject that makes you feel that?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can you give me an example?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural information Communication, location etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Descriptive and the questions give answers to personality traits and uncover dislikes at work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ideals, aspirations, hindrances</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development, Challenges and success criteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>What motivates the subject?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-realization.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>View of what works for the person.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
9.3 Transcription

In this dissertation, I have chosen to put the transcription on a separate CD. Please see attached CD.