



One-Person-Companies Changing the Economic Order

Friedrich Kofler

Scope

- About three quarters of Austrian IT and consultancy companies are one-person-companies
- 25 % of Vienna 's IT-professionals are self employed
- Is self-employment an adequate form of occupation?
- Is it a conscious choice or seen as a temporary solution?
- How relevant is it for a knowledge society?

The Working Environment for Employees

- Less than 30 % of IT professionals thought they could continue their work until retirement – due to it's stress level
- 53 % of employees expect further decline of their working conditions
- Unresolvable conflict of interest between expectations of management, self and customer
- Salaried employees feel a lack of appreciation for their work and efforts

The Hacker Attitude

- The world is full of fascinating problems waiting to be solved
 - Nobody should ever have to solve a problem twice
 - Boredom and drudgery are evil
 - Freedom is good
 - Attitude is no substitute for competence
- There is an inherent conflict between the attitude of knowledge workers and the organisational principles of companies.

The Employer's Point of View

- Concentration on core business with just on time acquisition of services
- For most companies it became impossible to maintain all required knowledge in house
- Knowledge work does not require the organizational infrastructure of a company
- Traditional management methods are not adequate for knowledge workers (career path, training, time management, payment schemes,....)

Main Motivators for Self Employed IT Professionals

- Independence, being one's own boss: 42 %
- Challenge by the content of work: 40 %
- Time autonomy: 38 %
- Income: 17 %

Demotivators are:

- Time pressure: 22 %
- Economical pressure: 20 %

Values: Family (36 %), self-realisation (36 %), image (13 %), ... prosperity (5%)

Satisfaction of Self Employed IT Professionals

- Income: 61 % (all employees: 64 %)
 - Professional activity: 91 % (81 %)
 - Social security: 49 % (n.a.)
 - Time pressure: 45 % (48 %)
 - Changing work load: 42 % (n.a.)
 - Financial steadiness: 29 % (n.a.)
 - About 90 % want to stay self-employed, only about 4 % want a salaried job
- A positive picture but the lack of social security is considered problematic

Conclusions

- For knowledge workers (at least in IT and consultancy) being self employed is an adequate and legitimate form of income generating work
- It guarantees more autonomy in work content and work organisation than traditional working environments
- It is in line with the increasing virtualisation of big companies
- Social security, legal framework and institutions for professional representation are inadequate

References

Studies and surveys used:

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<http://www.diwa-it.de>
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- Arbeiten am IT-Standort Wien (IFES, 2007)
beide unter http://portal.wko.at/wk/format_detail.wk?AngID=1&StID=505049&DstID=5344
- Zufriedenheit, Einkommenssituation und Berufsperspektiven bei neuen Erwerbsformen in Wien (Stadt Wien MA 27, SORA 2006)

„The Hacker Attitude“ cited from Eric S. Raymond: „The Cathedral & The Bazaar“, O'Reilly