Strategy for staff rotation in a Department Store from the perspective of organizational psychology

Estrategia para la rotación de personal en una Tienda Departamental desde la perspectiva de la psicología organizacional

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Abstract

Since the existence of organized groups to develop paid work, there is staff turnover, considered as the action of the collaborator to leave the organization during a determined period that requires a replacement; This absence in the work environment has significantly influenced the development, operation and functioning of organizations. Currently, the private initiative pays more attention to this organizational phenomenon with a view to achieving roots, stability or retention of personnel to create safe and reliable environments with favorable results in the medium and long term. In this sense, the research, based on the case study methodology, provides the results of the implementation of an intervention strategy from the perspective of organizational psychology, to study the rotation of the sales position of a commercial store and indicate its impact. on retention and organizational commitment. For this purpose, a theoretical journey on the topics under study is presented, the situational characteristics of the position are described, the methodological strategy applied, the results and the conclusion on the case under study that allow to make evident the participation of organizational psychology and its contribution to social welfare in the organization.

Rotation, Retention, Environments

Resumen

Desde la existencia de los grupos organizados para desarrollar un trabajo remunerado hay rotación de personal, considerada como la acción del colaborador de abandonar la organización durante un período determinado que requiere un reemplazo; esta ausencia en el entorno laboral ha influido de manera significativa en el desarrollo, la operatividad y el funcionamiento de las organizaciones. Actualmente, la iniciativa privada, presta más atención a este fenómeno organizacional con miras a lograr arraigo, estabilidad o retención del personal para conformar ambientes seguros y confiables con resultados favorables a mediano y largo plazo. En este sentido, la investigación, sustentada en la metodología del estudio de caso, brinda los resultados de la implementación de una estrategia de intervención con perspectiva de la psicología organizacional, para estudiar la rotación del puesto de vendedor de una tienda comercial e indicar su impacto en la retención y el compromiso organizacional. Para tal fin, se presenta un recorrido teórico sobre los tópicos en estudio, se describen las características situacionales del puesto, la estrategia metodológica aplicada, los resultados y la conclusión sobre el caso en estudio que permiten hacer evidente la participación de la psicología organizacional y su contribución en el bienestar social en la organización.

Rotación, Retención, Ambientes

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Introduction

Organisational psychology can be defined as the discipline that studies the elements of people's behaviour in one of its social spheres, which is also representative of contemporary society: the organisation (Zepeda, 2017). The most important functions or tasks performed by a psychologist within an organisation, in accordance with the topic of research interest, are: personnel selection, job analysis and staff retention, since turnover requires a recruitment process to cover vacancies caused by the abandonment of the job, analysing the elements and conditions of the vacant position and seeking new ways, in the personnel selection process, to reduce the behaviour of abandonment of the responsibilities and commitment established by the collaborator in the working relationship with the organisation.

Undoubtedly, the staff or human capital is the great engine of the organisation, and an effective selection of collaborators is decisive to achieve the objectives and goals set, therefore, the organisational psychologist can recommend policies and actions to compensate the work of the collaborators, as well as to ensure their well-being, safety and occupational health as part of a motivational or incentive programme; in the same way, he can contribute to the continuous improvement of the working environment with retention strategies that provide stability in the workforce. In this sense, one of the main challenges faced by the organisation is staff turnover, which is defined as the voluntary or involuntary permanent withdrawal from an organisation that can be a problem due to the increased costs of recruitment, selection and training (Robbins, 2017).

One of the focuses of interest for the Human Resources department is to keep employees in the organisation for a considerable time in order to gain stability and provide job security, staff retention according to Chiavenato (2020), for which it is of utmost importance to know the satisfaction of the staff in their stay and participation in the organisation. On the other hand, staff turnover is involved with primary and secondary costs; primary costs are the investments made by the organisation to hire staff and fill vacancies; secondary costs are the costs incurred by the organisation during the time in which the vacancy is filled (Chiavenato, 2020).

In this sense, human resource replacement costs or staff turnover refer to the costs of recruitment, selection, hiring, training, education and separation (Chiavenato, 2020).

There are many causes that can generate staff turnover, one of the main causes is related to the content of the job; that is, the activities of the position and the salaries, when in this relationship there is no correspondence, the collaborator will try to seek a solution to this situation of non-conformity by taking actions or behavioural positions both inside and outside the organisation (Arias, 1990). Another cause of staff turnover is absenteeism, i.e. the employee's action of being absent from some act or function in the organisation, which implies delays in the working day; however, it is not only related to unjustified absences and delays, it also refers to justified absences, i.e. when the employee communicates with the organisation and apologises or argues for his or her delay or absence. However, when the number of absences is high, not only the organisation's revenue may be compromised, but the whole team may be affected. Therefore, it is important to know the possible causes of the behaviour of the employee or group of employees in relation to absenteeism, both internally and externally.

Similarly, working conditions are important in this issue, when the working environment where the employee works does not meet the minimum expectations or requirements of the job, it generates low levels of satisfaction and, in specific cases, leads to staff turnover.

The most frequent personal reasons for staff turnover are housing problems, lack of childcare facilities, care for sick family members, leaving the country, distance from the workplace and transport problems.

The Department Store under study is an organisation that sells clothes and other articles of clothing; it has an organisational philosophy based on the mission described as "to offer customers products and services of the highest quality, at the right price, in the right environment, seeking their fullest satisfaction through a careful personalised service, where the customer is the reason for its work". In addition to the vision described as "consolidate and maintain the leadership of the business in the competitive market, integrating the objectives of its customers, staff, suppliers and shareholders".

Finally, there are the values: Work, Growth, Social Responsibility and Efficiency.

Regarding the research interest, in 2019, the Department Store had a staff of 230 employees, where it presented a turnover of 40.4% with a total of 137 employees who left the organisation, of which 70 were women and 64 men, with a high school level, single marital status, with a seniority of 1 to 3 months, average age between 24 and 26 years and the three main reasons for leaving were: the search for better income, leaving the job and termination of contract. It is worth noting that, according to Schultz (1994), most of the dissatisfied employees are young single people without family and financial obligations, as they have more freedom to leave their jobs than employees in their 50s with debts and mortgages.

In this sense, in order to be truly motivated and to satisfy their diverse needs, subordinates ask for recognition of their work, constructive and unbiased criticism, personal interest in their daily practices, spaces to present ideas, information about changes before they are implemented, confidence in performance and use of communications (Fernández, 2009). In addition, depending on the employee's performance, incentives can be offered such as: participation in the organisation's profits, earnings and capital, creating an environment that is perceived as rewarding and motivating, treating them as partners and paying good salaries (Garfield, 1992 in Flores et al, 2008).

Finally, for the purposes of the research, organisational commitment is a key element for the social well-being of the organisation and, therefore, for structuring the organisational strategy to deal with staff turnover since, according to Meyer and Allen's (1991) model, organisational commitment has three components: the affective component, which refers to the employee's emotional attachment to the organisation and makes him/her feel proud to be part of it; the permanence component, which refers to the material component, i.e., he/she continues in the organisation because he/she expects to be rewarded and recognised for his/her work; and the normative component, which refers to the feeling of remaining in the organisation because of all the benefits he/she has obtained throughout his/her work.

On the other hand, according to Robbins (1996), organisational commitment is the employee's personal identification with the organisation, with its goals and desires. According to Jericho (2001), commitment should be understood as the motivation to remain and contribute to an organisation, and he emphasises the difference between satisfaction and commitment, since a satisfied employee is not necessarily committed, and when he/she grows in the workplace, he/she can achieve a high level of organisational commitment.

Finally, in the study conducted by Hewitt, Aon in 2012, they found that committed employees have a tendency to speak up, express themselves positively about the organisation in which they participate; to stay, have a desire to be part of the organisation, and to contribute, are motivated and strive for success in their work and the organisation. Therefore, the main purpose of this research is to identify the possible risks of turnover in the floor salesperson position in the Department Store under study; subsequently, the aim is to demonstrate, through the implementation of an organisational strategy, the retention of staff in the position in question, as well as the organisational commitment established in the employee-organisation relationship that influences job stability in the sales area.

Development

The research is of a mixed nature; on the qualitative side, a focused interview was carried out, according to Fiske and collaborators (2002), to find out the personal elements of abandonment or absenteeism and, on the quantitative side, a measurement scale was applied to find out the organisational commitment of the collaborators under study. Subsequently, by processing the data, a comparative analysis of the results was carried out in order to reach concrete conclusions about the causes of turnover in the sales area of the Department Store and, finally, an organisational strategy was designed to reduce turnover and establish a favourable organisational commitment to the objectives of the operational area.

Methodological procedure

Composed of three phases and adjusted to the work dynamics of the definitive entry of the salesperson position, since the selected applicants go through a trial period where they are trained and evaluated practically with three indicators: attendance, customer complaints and performance in terms of mastery of the position, to make the decision to hire for a specific time; the trial period lasts 5 weeks so a sequence of weekly interviews was established to know the impression, expectations, interests and, to a certain extent, the satisfaction of the collaborator in the position and in the organisation. The phases of the methodological procedure were:

a)   Organisation

The five interviews with four employees who were selected during the research period as applicants for the position of salesperson were monitored by means of an interview booklet (appendix 1). In addition, the interview guide (appendix 2) and the scheduling of the employees under study were defined in accordance with a timetable established in agreement with the human resources and sales area of the department stores'; it was also determined that in the fourth interview the scale of organisational commitment would be applied (appendix 3).

b)   Implementation

The organisational strategy consisted of the development of the interviews and the application of the measurement scale, where the interviews were conducted with the four employees under study in the human resources office, with the necessary privacy measures and respecting the criteria of confidentiality and protection of information, as well as the consent of the interviewee. The maximum duration of the interviews was 20 minutes. In the fourth interview, the organisational commitment survey was applied to the four employees under study during the time established for the interview and respecting the application criteria to guarantee the reliability of the results.

c)   Results

A comparative analysis of the data obtained through the interview was carried out in order to find points of convergence as evidence of the possible causes of absenteeism of the previous employees that contributed to the turnover rate or the behavioural tendency of current probationary employees to leave the company. With the findings identified in the comparative analysis, both from the interviews and the measurement scale, suggestions were made to the human resources area of the Department Store to follow up on the research results.

Measuring instruments

Two instruments were used to measure the employees' responses regarding their feelings about their work experience during the trial period:

Focused interview, a guide based on the working conditions of the position under study, made up of four sections of research interest: impression, expectations, interests and satisfaction, where each section has an average of 6 questions to enable the employee to express, based on their experience acquired in each of the weeks of the trial period, their feelings regarding the possibility of staying or leaving the job.

Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES). Organisational engagement is assumed to be the sense of energetic and affective connection to work activities and the perception of themselves as being able to cope with the demands or requirements of their work activity and the organisational environment. This scale is a Likert-type scale with seven response options from 0 (never) to 6 (always); it consists of 17 items distributed in three factors: Vigour (6 items), Dedication (6 items) and Absorption (5 items) according to Schaufeli and Bakker (2003).

This scale takes an important value in the field of organisations because it considers three elements as pillars of organisational commitment: the first is vigour, conceived as the willingness to devote effort to work; the second is dedication, considered as the action of being strongly involved with the work; and the third is absorption, understood as being completely focused on what one is doing (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá and Bakker, 2002).

Vigour assesses energy levels and resilience, dedication assesses the sense or meaning of the work, feeling enthusiastic and proud of one's work, and finally, absorption assesses being immersed in the work, so that time passes quickly and one forgets everything that is going on around (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2003). The organisational commitment scale allows us to quantitatively assess the attitude or behaviour of employees towards the organisation based on the three main factors mentioned above.

Participants

The collaborators participating in the research were the four selected for the testing process during the development of the research, the collaborators were determined in common agreement with the human resources area of the Department Store and the researchers; it should be noted that the time was determined by the school period of the student researcher who collaborated directly with the work. The socio-demographic data of the employees under study of interest for the research were: gender, age, marital status, schooling, time of entry, distance from home and the organisation, number of children, which were determined after knowing the salient aspects taken into account by the human resources area for the selection of employees who start the trial period and are shown in table 1.

Results

After integrating the data obtained through the interviews and the measurement scale into analysis tables, a comparison was made to detect the outstanding findings according to the elements of interest for the research, which are presented in two tables, one for the socio-demographic characteristics as possible deciding elements, on the part of the employee, to opt for permanence or absenteeism; and another table to identify the recurring findings in the way of feeling and thinking of the employee under study, as well as the level of organisational commitment.

| Socio-economic data Demographics | Contributor-Participant | | | |
	1	2	3	4
Gender	Female	Male	Female	Female
Age	48	23	25	45
Marital status	Single (divorced)	Single	Single	Single
Date of entry	02/10/2021	13/10/2021	12/10/2021	12/10/2021
Schooling	Bachelor's Degree in Communication	Truncated degree in Administration	Degree in Biology	Completed baccalaureate
Experience in the position	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Children	2 (11 and 18 years)	0	0	1 (10 years)
Home-work distance	Fence	Away	Fence	Fence

Table 1 Socio-demographic data of the employees in the job under study
Source: Own elaboration.

As Table 1 shows, the predominant gender is female, being single, and the proximity between home and the workplace; the average age is 35 years old in a wide range of ages with a minimum of 23 and a maximum of 48 years old. On the other hand, 2 of the 4 have completed a bachelor's degree, only 2 employees have children, one of them has 2 children. Finally, all of them have experience in a similar position, they have been accepted for the probationary period with approximately 10 days difference between the first employee and the rest.

This indicates that, for the Department Store, the experience in the position, the proximity to the workplace and, relatively speaking, the role of mother are important, the latter being relevant in the decision to leave the employee-participant A, which can be seen in the following table 2.

| | Contributors-Participants | | | | Findings |
	A	B	C	D	
1	The working group she joined received her in a good way, they explained to her the way of working, they solved any doubts she had, the courses they gave her were pleasant, she mentions that at one point she felt oversaturated with information..	He mentions that the working group he joined received him in a good way, his colleagues solved any doubts that arose during the first days, the courses he was given were pleasant and he had no problems in understanding the subjects.	She mentions that she was well received by the working group she joined, her colleagues resolved her doubts she had in the first few days, the courses she was given were pleasant; however, she mentions that she lacked training focused on cash handling.	She mentions that the working group she joined received her in a pleasant way, her colleagues solved her doubts that arose in the first days and in the first activities, the courses she was given were pleasant She had no problems in understanding the subjects.	The introduction to the team is pleasant. Colleagues in the team are friendly to newcomers. Not everyone is given the same training. There is a level of commitment of 80%.
2	On the other hand, he says that his work group became indifferent because he had a misunderstanding with one of his colleagues; however, he likes the activities he does.	His discourse was the same, the relationship with his area manager is good as well as the relationship with his colleagues, he mentions that he likes the tasks he performs and learns things in practice.	He mentions that he has already received the training he was missing, he likes his job and the tasks he performs, the relationship with his area manager is good.	When asked about his feelings on the departures that have taken place in the shop, he mentions that it is a difficult situation, because everyone needs the work, but the organisation has to have stability to be able to offer it to its collaborators.	Misunderstandings can lead to problems in living together. Missing training is provided. There is a 70% commitment level.

3	El However, she mentioned that the relationship is no longer the same as it was at the beginning, the relationship with her area manager is good, the salary is variable, but she is happy with what she receives, she feels committed to the organisation and to the work she does.	His speech does not vary, he is happy with his salary, he met the shop manager and mentions that he was nice..	Her speech does not vary, she mentions that her salary is good and meets her expectations, she feels committed to her job..	Her speech has not changed, her relationship with her co-workers and her boss is very good, her salary has increased and she feels satisfied.	Problems are dealt with through daily co-existence. The working environment in most of the work areas is pleasant. The benefits offered are acceptable to people. There is a level of commitment of 80%.
4	It was no longer presented due to the dismissal due to personnel adjustment in response to an instruction from the corporate human resources area; the decision was taken taking into account the age of the employees.	His speech was unchanged, he mentions that his salary has been high for the season and he likes that, the relationship with his colleagues is getting better and better and he has even formed friendships. He was asked how he felt about the departures that have taken place in the shop, and he mentioned that there is a bit of uncertainty and insecurity around his job, but he also understands that these are decisions that the organisation has to take in view of the current situation.	The discourse does not vary, the relationship with her area manager and co-workers is getting better and better, she feels at ease in the work area, she does not consider that there are reasons for her to leave the organisation. She was questioned about her feelings regarding the movements that have taken place in the shop, and she mentioned that sometimes she has felt paranoid that she might leave the organisation, which is why her commitment to the organisation is greater and she carries out her tasks in the best way possible so as not to leave.	Her speech is favourable, she has not presented any discomfort with her work area, at the moment she has no reason to leave the organisation, she likes what she does, the relationship with her area manager is good. She was questioned about her feelings about the movements that have taken place in the shop, she mentions that it is difficult to know that the organisation is making movements and it is alarming but these actions cannot be prevented, she can only carry out her tasks in the best way possible.	The working environment is pleasant and suitable for work. Changes in work organisation cause uncertainty and job insecurity. There is a level of commitment of 75%.
5	Idem	His discourse does not vary, he feels committed to the organisation, he mentions that he feels satisfied with the benefits he is offered, he likes the work he does, the relationship with his colleagues, area manager and shop manager is good, he has no problems that would prevent him from continuing to work in the organisation..	Her speech does not vary, she feels committed to the activities she carries out and to the organisation, she feels satisfied with the salary, the relationship with her colleagues, the head of the area and the shop manager is pleasant, she mentions that she has no problems to leave the organisation.	Her speech does not vary, she mentions that she feels committed to the organisation because she likes the treatment she has received, she is satisfied with the benefits she is offered, she likes the work she does, the relationship with her colleagues, the area manager and the shop manager is good, she has no problems that prevent her from continuing to work in the organisation.	The working environment is pleasant, the assigned tasks are performed correctly, the benefits are pleasant for the people. There is a commitment level of 90%.
Result of the measurement scale	Vigour:	High	High	Average	A high level of energy prevails
	Dedication:	Average	Average	High	A common level of dedication prevails
	Absorption:	Average	High	Average	A common level of investment of personal resources prevails.
	Organisational commitment	Average	High	Average	There is a favourable level of established commitment to the organisation.

Table 2 Findings from the results of the interviews and the scale of measurement
Source: Own elaboration

The findings shown in table 2 allow us to identify, from the perception of the employees under study, aspects that increase the possibility of absenteeism or job instability in the salesperson position and aspects that favour job stability or staff retention, these aspects are included in table 3 and are called potentialising aspects of job retention and absenteeism.

| For the retention Staff retention	For absenteeism Of staff
The introduction to the team is pleasant, there is acceptance.	Not everyone is given the same training.
Colleagues in the team are friendly to newcomers.	Problems are dealt with on a day-to-day basis.
There is a commitment level of 80% on average.	Changes in work organisation cause uncertainty and job insecurity.
For the most part, the working atmosphere is pleasant.	Misunderstandings can lead to problems in coexistence.
A high level of energy, common level of dedication and concentration at work prevails.	

Table 3 Potentiating aspects of retention and absenteeism for the Department Store salesperson position
Source: Own elaboration

Table 3 shows that there is a balance between the aspects that can increase both absenteeism and retention of staff in the sales position, i.e., there is a 50-50 probability that the employee's behaviour or attitude will be towards permanence or separation from the organisation.

Finally, the results of the organisational commitment scale in terms of the factor analysis show that Table 3 shows that there is a balance between the aspects that can increase both absenteeism and retention of staff in the sales position, i.e., there is a 50-50 probability that the employee's behaviour or attitude will be towards permanence or separation from the organisation.

Finally, the results of the organisational commitment scale in terms of the factor analysis show that:
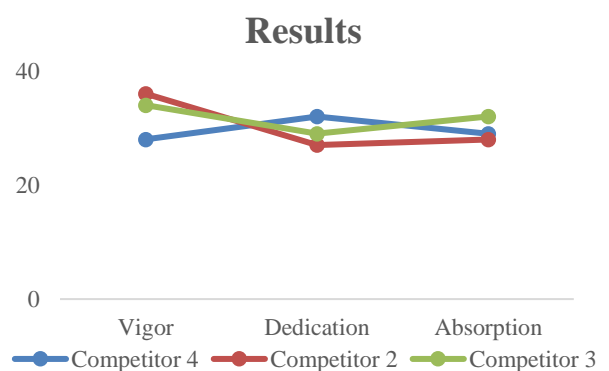
Graphic 1 Factor analysis of the organisational commitment scale
Source: Own elaboration

Graphic 1 shows the widest gap in the vigour factor, between the results of each participant, which indicates that the employee feels energised with the execution of their daily activities in the workplace, referring to perceiving positive energy in the fulfilment of their tasks, objectives or goals; the smallest gap is located in the absorption factor, which expresses that the feeling of the employees is similar and refers to the concentration used in daily practices regardless of the time spent on the job.

Conclusion

Staff turnover is an important issue within an organisation, it contributes to the instability of the workforce, the results reflect a favourable level of commitment but slightly above the average level, this situation requires immediate attention to the potential aspects of retention identified in the analysis, as well as the implementation of strategies that contribute to the improvement of social welfare within the sales area and the organisation in general.

Similarly, the results allow us to identify the attitudinal tendency of the employees in the sales position who are in the trial period, which indicates a probability of 66.6% towards a balance in terms of job permanence, i.e. of the 3 employees who conclude the study, 2 will decide to continue in the job and 1 will decide to leave the organisation.

Based on the research experience and the specific conditions of the organisational phenomenon under study, the following suggestions are proposed for the continuous improvement of the Department Store in terms of turnover, retention and organisational commitment:

- Know the turnover rate in the sales area.

- Update the salesperson job profile to socialise specific responsibilities with current and new employees.

- Apply the staff retention interviews on an ongoing basis in the sales area.

- Apply the organisational commitment scale to all staff in the sales area, in this way we will have a broad perception of the employees' feelings.

- Analyse the results of the scale and the interviews in order to implement strategies focused on concrete situations according to real needs.

- Periodically evaluate the work environment in the sales areas to identify the elements that influence the decision to leave or the presence of turnover in the sales position.

Annexes

Annex 1. Interview control card

	New collaborators				
	A	B	C	D	E
Name					
Date of entry					
Departmental division					
Interview 1					
Date					
Interview 2					
Date					
Interview 3					
Date					
Interview 4					
Date					
Interview 5					
Date					

Annex 2. Focused interview guide for the personnel under study.

Interview	Week	Questions
First	1	How have you felt working these days? How do you feel about the training given previously? Do you think you need to reinforce any of them? Why? Are there any problems that prevent you from performing your tasks? Mention which one Did the salary meet your expectations? Can you do anything to improve it?
Second	2	How do you feel about your job? Do you think you can do better? How is the working relationship with your co-workers? Are there any problems that prevent you from performing your tasks? Mention which one Are there any risks that prevent you from continuing to work in the organization? Which ones?

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Third	3	How do you feel about your job? Do you think you can do better? Are there any problems that prevent you from performing your tasks? Mention which one Have you had a problem with a colleague? Mention which one Did the salary meet your expectations? Can you do anything to improve it?
Fourth	4	How do you feel about your job? Do you think you can do better? Are there any problems that prevent you from performing your tasks? Mention which one How has the support from your sales manager been? Have you had a problem with a colleague? Mention which one Did the salary meet your expectations? Can you do anything to improve it? Are there any risks that prevent you from continuing to work in the organization? Which ones? Application of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale Survey
Fifth	5	How do you feel about your job? Do you think you can do better? How is your working relationship with your co-workers? Have you had a problem with a colleague? Mention which one How has the support been from your sales manager? How has the support been from the store manager? Did the salary meet your expectations? Can you do anything to improve it? Are there any problems that prevent you from performing your duties? Mention which Are there any risks that prevent you from continuing to work in the organization? Which ones?

Annex 3. Items of the organizational commitment scale

1. New challenges arise in my work.

2. In my work I feel full of energy.

3. I am immersed and focused in my work.

4. I am persistent in my work.

5. I am enthusiastic about my work.

6. I can continue to work for long periods of time.

7. When I get up in the morning, I look forward to going to work.

8. Even when things are not going well, I continue to work.

9. I am strong and energetic in my work.

10. I learn new and interesting things at work.

11. My work is meaningful.

12. When I am working I forget everything that is going on around me.

13. I "get carried away" by my work.

14. My work is stimulating and inspiring.

15. I am proud of the work I do.

16. When I am absorbed in my work, I feel good.

17. I am dedicated to and in my work.

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