**Participant 2 Transcript**

| Demographic Information | |
| --- | --- |
| Age Group | (2) 19 - 25 |
| Gender | (1) Male |
| Organisational Level | (1) Employee in non-managerial role |
| Familiar with retrenchments | (2) Yes |
| Currently a survivor of retrenchments | (2) Yes – Initially impacted but found company helped to secure a job internally. |
| Aware of company wellness programme | (2) Yes |

| Time | Interviewer/Participant | Question/Response |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 0:0:2.100 --> 0:0:3.240 | Interviewer | Hi there. How are you? |
| 0:0:4.390 --> 0:0:5.790 | Participant | Good thanks and you? |
| 0:0:6.560 --> 0:1:57.90 | Interviewer | I'm good. Thank you. Alright. So I just wanna start off with saying thank you so much for being willing to participate in my study. Just to give you a very brief overview of my study is it's basically looking at the recent retrenchments. That the company that you work at is just recently undergone. So basically the study is about the implications of retrenchments of those people who specifically remain behind in the company because what we find is usually when you know. When these retrenchments happen, a lot of focus and attention is given to, you know, those people who actually exit the company. So those people we refer to as the victims but little attention is often given to the people who remain within the company. And those are the survivors. So yeah, you are obviously on the list of one of the survivors, so hence why I nominated you to uh, potentially, you know, obviously participate in the study. So yeah, I think just to you know, for formalities, I just want you to know that the your participation will obviously be anonymous, so your name will obviously be excluded. The name of the company will also be excluded. From my research paper, but your name will also be excluded from transcripts, so no one will actually know that you know this is exactly what you said. But the interview is going to probably take about 30 to 45 minutes. It depends on how much information you obviously provide. So yeah. And then just one more thing. I've obviously shared the informed consent letter with you. So yeah, if you could just please send that back. |
| 0:1:59.890 --> 0:2:5.160 | Participant | I'll send that. I'll send that to you. I've done it. I'll send that to you. I just haven't sent it to you. |
| 0:2:5.820 --> 0:2:18.90 | Interviewer | Absolutely awesome. Thank you so much. And then I think just one more thing to confirm that before we carry on into the the questions is that you are you still willing to participate in the study? |
| 0:2:19.740 --> 0:2:21.40 | Participant | Yes. Absolutely. |
| 0:2:21.710 --> 0:2:25.890 | Interviewer | Sure. And then are you OK for me to record this interview? |
| 0:2:26.750 --> 0:2:27.170 | Participant | Yes. |
| 0:2:27.820 --> 0:3:2.560 | Interviewer | Great. Thank you so much, alright. And then, let me quickly go to my questions. Alright, so just one more thing. You are more than welcome to withdraw from the study at any given point. You are also welcome to not answer one of the questions obviously given you know the sensitive nature of the topic. So you are welcome to withdraw. You are welcome to not answer a question. You just let me know when you're ready to either leave or you don't feel comfortable, alright? |
| 0:3:2.970 --> 0:3:3.450 | Participant | Okay. |
| 0:3:4.20 --> 0:3:10.810 | Interviewer | Alright, so we're going to start off with the questions. So first and foremost, are you familiar with retrenchments? |
| 0:3:12.160 --> 0:3:12.620 | Participant | Yes. |
| 0:3:13.650 --> 0:3:17.450 | Interviewer | Alright. And are you currently a survivor of retrenchments? |
| 0:3:18.320 --> 0:3:18.750 | Participant | Yes. |
| 0:3:19.790 --> 0:3:28.310 | Interviewer | Alright, uh, now tell me, are you aware of the employee Wellness program that the company offers you? And from my understanding, there would be ICAS. |
| 0:3:29.280 --> 0:3:41.460 | Participant | Yes, that is ICAS and I have personally used ICAS not during the period of retrenchment. But I have used it on a more personal basis. |
| 0:3:42.420 --> 0:3:56.880 | Interviewer | Alright, great. Have you ever actually been a victim to retrenchments? Obviously, you know, at a point where in your career where you've ever been retrenched. |
| 0:3:59.30 → 0:4:36.760 | Participant | I'm not per se, but it was something that was going to happen. Previous company that I joined upon, knowing that BASF is going to be retrenching, I'm I was headhunted by different company but when I went there. And it was the same process. They were going to go through the same process, but in the following year, which is 2022, if I'm not mistaken. And then I went back to BASF to obviously know that this is obviously ongoing retrenchments. So I kind of sort of kind of, yeah. |
| 0:4:38.160 --> 0:4:57.450 | Interviewer | All right. So then just for clarification, were you on a, were you on the retrenchment that was currently happening at the company? And then you maybe found another opportunity inside the company or were you just always safe from the retrenchments that we're going on? |
| 0:4:58.300 --> 0:5:8.110 | Participant | So I was not safe. So I found an alternative I could say internally and externally. I found opportunities. |
| 0:5:8.870 --> 0:6:16.220 | Interviewer | Okay. Right. And then tell me from your understanding or to your knowledge what did the company do to actually alleviate the impact of the retrenchments? So would that be, you know, that they maybe? OK. Well, as you said, you found something internally and externally, but is there something that the company perhaps did for you or for the other people who remained within the company to you and Arledge? |
| 0:6:17.390 --> 0:8:29.840 | Participant | Okay, so I would say I was offered and this was done during the I would say the consultation phases. It wasn't done obviously in depth and the process was not actually really followed per se, but there was some meetings where you got insights about what you need to do going forward, you know. And fortunately for me, I was headhunted. But some people had to go out and look for jobs in the market. The company did also offer opportunities, but those opportunities were mainly for people to relocate. So to uproot and go and stay in Germany and work in a particular hub, looking after Africa, but in your same position. So there were alternatives that the company did provide, even though the communication and the forums, which was supposed to be formed such as. And the consultation phase was not, it was not done thoroughly and it could have been, I think a lot of people would have got more insights and information if those sessions were available. But they're very much limited and it was for, I don't think it was for everyone. It was dependent on which spaces are you involved in within the company itself. So yeah, but the company did provide alternatives if anything. And there were sort of plans, people looking at other departments also locally in different provinces, for instance. So I looked at, I got an opportunity to move to Port Elizabeth, which was an alternative option for me at the time because I was on contract and I came back and the retrenchments was still going on, there was an opportunity to go to Germany. But the cost of living was not going to be sufficient for me, well in my working out. So I would say there was so many alternatives, but it was also dependent on the person as to what spaces do they find themselves in, so information, I would say was not shared thoroughly, or maybe in the manner that it was supposed to be. So yeah. |
| 0:8:32.220 --> 0:8:46.870 | Interviewer | And then tell me from your personal perspective, you know, what was your experience with these retrenchments? So you know, just how did you cope with your experiences and their emotions and the feelings that you went through during that period? |
| 0:8:48.920 --> 0:10:29.440 | Participant | So obviously there was a lot of anxiety about what's going to happen next. There was a lot of muttering here and there. Corridor talks and all of that, and that would naturally give you a negative energy. So to say, the entire company, you know, it was, you could literally feel it as you walk in the building that you know, it's like people are walking on eggshells. You know, we're going to go anytime soon, you know, so. It was. It was very frustrating to know that obviously you're not going to be earning an income to survive. But ICAS came into play for most people from what I believe and some of the statistics that I read regarding reports and monkey surveys which are which were done internally. So yeah, there was a lot of anxiety, there was a lot of frustration, there was a lot of excitement for some people as well I would say because they got opportunities in other business units like for myself I would say for me it was interesting moving into a different space and you know, but. Obviously it's very dependent by person so. Yeah, I would say frustration, excitement, opportunities, frustration. I could go on. It was different energies from different people as well. But for me personally, there was a lot of anxiety. I could even say it was very mixed feelings. Melancholy is the one that I think. Yeah, a lot of mixed feelings about what's going to happen and. I had to take it in my stride as aswell yeah. |
| 0:10:30.780 --> 0:10:46.810 | Interviewer | Okay, so you took it in your stride, but how would you say, you know, what did you actually do, would you say to actually cope with that or did you just see it as an opportunity to, you know, tap into other parts of the business? |
| 0:10:44.370 --> 0:13:31.560 | Participant | Yeah, It's exactly that. Fortunately for me, I was exposed to other businesses and based on the role that I have, where I got to interact or interact with other business units and a lot of companies within, I would say I would go so far as by saying Africa, you know. So. You know, I think what I did was I just used my knowledge to understand where other gaps and that goes with understanding the organisation itself. You know, anyone can do this. Anyone can go on a careers page and find opportunities and apply which is what some people did and they got the opportunities they moved to different countries and regions in the world. So I think I was very proactive in my sourcing and yes there was a bit of. A bit of luck in my favour, I would say as well because. There were just movements within that particular business unit and opportunity was literally just there for me. You know, like it was for the taking. So I just, you know, I just moved into the position. Yes, I did not have certain skills, but it's something that I've worked towards in the past year since joining that business unit. So for me it was an opportunity for me to develop. It worked in my favour. I would say since being in the role I've learned so much, I've taken so much. And yeah, for me it was a development sort of an unplanned development, you know, and it worked in my favour. And I think it's done the same for certain people. And I say this because obviously I'm in human resources and I do a lot of recruitment and I saw certain individuals move from business units such as finance and moving into more business function, business analyst, so to say so using some of the skills that they have or found in finance but moved into different space. So I think it kind of sort of shifted most people's mindset that actually you can find opportunities anywhere in the organisation which is what the company actually offers that. You can move into any department at any point in your life as long as you are capable and you are ready and you want to learn will make that opportunity for you. So in human resources, person can move into supply chain vice versa. So. Yeah, I would say for me basically it was very aligned to my development and getting a generic overview in terms of what happens in my space of function. |
| 0:13:34.70 --> 0:14:7.490 | Interviewer | That's good. And then you mentioned that you know it was that you had a lot of mixed feelings during the period where these retrenchments were actually happening. So I know you mentioned that you didn't use ICAS during that period, but did you at all have discussions with someone else in human resources or a manager, or did you, by any chance even do an employee survey where you could actually voice your concerns or your anxiety or stress or whatever you were feeling during that period? |
| 0:14:9.210 --> 0:15:12.990 | Participant | So. I had a very good manager at the time because he would obviously sit in a in meetings or senior or management meetings and the information will naturally trickle down to us as people that are actually supporting the business and servicing the business and in in my space particularly it became I became more active in this in this space or in this period, because I had to do a lot of recruiting, I had to find opportunities for people in different organisations. So my manager was very informative in terms of what's going on, what's management thinking? Who's getting saved? Where the opportunities? Who's willing to move where? etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. So yeah, the second part of the question, sorry. |
| 0:15:4.90 --> 0:15:19.510 | Interviewer | So yeah, it was more or less like did you at least have a point of contact where you could actually go to someone and say, look, I'm feeling really overwhelmed or I'm feeling very stressed out or whether it was or if an employee survey was distributed? |
| 0:15:19.880 --> 0:17:48.700 | Participant | Yeah. So obviously the human resource business partners were very active at the time as well or very involved in terms of inquiries. And so they were very much involved in terms of answering questions to various people in the organisation. There was also a survey which came out called employee voices at the time and naturally the statistics, they didn't look really. And I say that because it was, there was a lot of negativity and there was a lot of being puzzled and confused and not knowing what's going to happen next or which department is to follow, you know? So that's what we got from that survey which was actually, ran from a global level and it went down to the business units and country regions and all of that country clusters. Yeah. So yeah, there was a survey that went out. There was also a survey that went out regarding managers. And I think at the time you could actually mention some of I there was a question around has you manager been informative in terms of what's going on with the whole, it was called the GB restructure at the time and yeah there was a whole lot of you know questions around that, you know, just to get the feel and how your manager has been involved in that process. So I also think my manager obviously as a manager he had to actually follow that to say that guys, this is what's happening. These are the opportunities. This is where we're going as an organisation, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. So yeah, it was. It was pretty much balanced. There was a lot of, I think there was also another survey which was called feedback forward or something along those lines, which was just responses between employee-manager, which I've mentioned as well as employee voices which kind of function in that same element. So there was a lot of feedback forward back and forth. So it was very to that extent I would say the company did try in terms of communicating but I feel like there had to be a more of a human touch element to it, as much as human resources business partners are there to facilitate that. Some people are not comfortable in coming and sharing such information. They'd rather do it anonymously, you know, so yeah. |
| 0:17:48.260 --> 0:18:24.950 | Interviewer | Great. So now tell me about, you know, those colleagues that have been retrenched. How do you feel about those individuals? And in the sense of just like the emotions and the feelings that you went through when you had those colleagues who got retrenched because, I mean, these are obviously some individuals that you would work with at some point in your career or you would establish relationships with these individuals at some point. So what were you feeling when you found out, look, these people are going to be leaving the company? |
| 0:18:26.970 --> 0:21:50.350 | Participant | It was quite daunting for me actually in the company, this is my second time. It was actually my second time. I am witnessing a retrenchment to restructure going on. You know, when I did, at first I was a graduate, so I was not affected. At the time I was on contract, but this time I was affected and you know it was. It was different to be on the other side for me. So I kind of know how it feels like to be, I kind of saw different reactions and different feelings and energies and how people have like sort of shifted their minds to not being here and looking for the next best thing, you know, but they still have to function in their positions. So a lot of people were very, very sort of sad at the fact that the opportunities and the alternatives were then provided by the company, but it wasn't easy for everyone to say. I'm just going to uproot and go and live in Germany for the next, I don't know how many years, you know. So some people are quite stable. Some people are quite, well, quite senior in terms of being citizens in the country also. So they've got families and they stable and they, you know, I could given guns was saying they comfortable and you know working for a big organization such as such as this one and being a multinational you become comfortable and people have so many years of service that have they've given to the company but now it's coming to this you know and it's mainly based on what's going on in the world today and the transformation that's ongoing which is. Being more virtual and being more automated and being more, what is this efficient and being more innovative and it's part of the company, this is where the company is moving. People understood that, but at the same time it's hard for them to understand and I don't feel a lot of pain for them. And there was a lot of disheartens from them during the time when everything was on going. But at the same time there were people that actually thought like, okay, maybe this is what I needed to see happen for me to actually get off my comfortable seat and look at the next opportunity, what's out there for me. Some people have moved into managerial positions due to the fact that there was this retrenchment period. It worked out in so many different ways for different people, but ultimately there were people that were affected and drastically that are still looking for jobs that as we speak and it's quite saddening to know that you know these people with so much experience that are in the market and looking for jobs and you know. And as the recruiter, it's even more painful. And I tried as much as I could at the time to ensure that I find opportunities for people. But some opportunities were just not a match and they're never going to work. So it was just sad to see everyone go and seeing empty chairs and walking into a very empty and cold environment where you've built good connections with people that have actually taken you through your period of being a graduate, you know, and seeing them leave the organisation was very sad. |
| 0:21:52.140 --> 0:22:10.950 | Interviewer | So I was actually asking you about those connections and how strong your relationships were with some of these colleagues that have or are considered the victims and those people that have left the company and were retrenched. So you would say that you had some really solid strong relationships with some of these people? |
| 0:22:12.380 --> 0:24:19.330 | Participant | Absolutely. Me being in human resources is very good as well. Well, good and bad at times. But I would say that the space specifically that I was in human resources made me connect with almost everyone in the organisation. And maybe if I did not interact with you in terms of a business transaction but maybe on a you know regular basis. I would pay attention to the people that I see in organisation and you know it starts with the little greeting and next thing, how you? What are you doing here? Understanding what people actually do and you know, I think as human resources as well you are kind of compelled to actually know everyone in the organisation. So the connections are with everyone and they were so unique with everyone. It was just short lived and with my changes as well on a personal basis and career wise, you know they were broken, you know some are still there, some obviously are going to just fade away eventually, but they are still there. I would say I still got connections with some of the colleagues that were affected but found alternatives and moved to Germany, still have connections with those and those that are actually in the market and looking for opportunities. And I could even go as far as going back as the first retrenchment period that I witnessed and some of those people, I still have connections with some who have found opportunities, some are actually still looking since I think 2019, 2018, 2019 with retrenchments, so it's something that's in the organisation. It's something that we know being a multinational that you know the company will obviously look at downsizing to some degree and some positions have become redundant, and some positions overlap so much that you know why not bundle them or why not impede certain positions and that's what we know in the organisation but yeah. I would say that. |
| 0:24:20.150 --> 0:24:48.360 | Interviewer | Yeah. Thank you for that. And you touched on something I wanted to tap into again was around whether you still have contact with some of these employees that have been retrenched. But would you say, you know, given the nature of your job, obviously as you mentioned that being in human resources, you almost pretty much need to know everyone in the company. Do you think that by any chance it made saying goodbye to some of these people even harder? |
| 0:24:50.140 --> 0:28:28.760 | Participant | Yep it did. Because I would say, sometimes, as human resources person, you need to sort of be double headed. You need to be personalised and you also need to be a person that carries out the business acumen and some people would come and talk to you on a very personal basis, which is the personalised side of things. But at the same time, naturally, the person would think they are talking to you as a human resources person, but you have to differentiate the two when you're a human resources person. That is this person speaking of their function and what they do and carry out for the business strategy, or are they talking from a personal basis where they just need someone to just listen? So, the connections are very strong. It was very difficult to let go of some people. That's why there were so many alternatives, and somehow could, I think there's a few people that have actually stayed but on a contract basis because it is so hard to see these people go because they have so much knowledge and they have in the organisation for such a long, long time. I'm talking about plus 15 years and to let them go, it's very emotional for the company as well but at the same time you know the companies conflicted, you are conflicted, you can't move, you have a family, you are stable you find. So you know what's going to happen? So there's no other way, but maybe to let you go. And that's the sad reality of it. But it is so difficult to let such people go because they've lived the lifestyle of the company. I would say all the culture of the company. And those are the people that welcomed us. Those are the people that brought us into their hands and showed us how to live this lifestyle of this company and the culture. How do we carry it out? How do we carry ourselves in public. We've got very tight and neat processes I would say and say procedures as well. And they are basic but they play such a very great value because it's things that you actually take to your life for instance. I'm not taking pictures in the organisation. I'm not taking pictures in public with the company logo. So with that said, you also in your mind have this thing of I have to carry myself in a certain way. I don't have to carry the badge of the company, but I, in a way carry it, because I'm always going to be associated to the company. So you know, when you have people like that, that welcome you to the organisation and for you to find them there and now you're seeing them exit the organisation, It is just, very hard to break away. Hence I can fully say that I've kept most of the connections that I have, and that's also by virtue of my position, and I also look at opportunities for people in my organisation. I also look at my networks and my connections that I have to say, hey, maybe there's a friend that's looking for a financial manager and I know a certain individual that was recently retrained at the company I work for and they are sitting at home. So I would probably refer a person so. Yeah. So we do human resources in the company and outside of the company in a way. So well recruiting that is.  So yeah, very hard to break those connections. Very hard and you still have them. |
| 0:28:29.710 --> 0:29:1.290 | Interviewer | Yeah, I can imagine. Especially like as you say, some people have been there for long and you've come a long way as well with some of these people. So I think looking at you specifically now, what would you say or how would you say the the retrenchments impacted you specifically so you know that would be you know whether it was in terms of workload or anything to that extent. How would you say it impacted you specifically? |
| 0:29:3.620 --> 0:30:59.90 | Participant | It obviously did have an impact on that I would say in terms of obviously workload, and I had a colleague I was working with who moved to Germany. So there were periods where he couldn't work because he couldn't connect to anything and he was still in transit, basically trying to set himself up and get going and that lasted for about a good two months, give or take. So in terms of workload, it did pile up obviously. And I had to be accountable for more tasks, so to say, and responsibilities which I obviously didn't mind because it was just part of my work, it was something that I was doing. It wasn't drastically changing into a different space. So for me it was a very easy transition and understanding where or what he was working on at the time. So workload. And I would say it did affect me on a personal basis as well because I found myself working late more. And you know, obviously working late is not something that I would condone. But at the time I had to because we had to still pull weight and we had to actually deliver services to the business. So yeah, I would say it affected my workload. Personally I did put in more hours after hours obviously and anything else I would say everything else is fine. I think the urgency in terms of almost every task that we've had, it is very high and the demand is very high as well at the time. So that was a lot of pressure which I could manage. But you know at some point I couldn't, I've had to work late hours so that I can ensure that we are delivering to the business so yeah. |
| 0:31:1.190 --> 0:31:28.830 | Interviewer | And then tell me, in your opinion, how would you say these retrenchments are actually benefiting the company? So whether that's in terms of processes? So as you mentioned, for example, you know we're going into this whole digitized world, would you say it's benefiting the company in terms of digitization, streamlining its processes, whether it's financially, how would you say it benefits the company? |
| 0:31:30.530 --> 0:34:37.50 | Participant | You say instantly now or in the next year or two, it's not going be beneficial for the company or it hasn't been that beneficial for the company. And I say this because I feel like there was not a lot of risk which is managed or that that could have been sort of like I'm for sure in a way or for sure, there was not a lot of that in terms of certain situations. For example, I would say. When someone migrates to a different country and they find another opportunity while being in the country, you've relocated this person for them to actually leave organisation and join another company. Already, for me that was a red flag that you know, there's going to be a lot of problems when it comes to these processes. The processes themselves, yes, I understand the long term goal of the organisation and that's because I have experienced working in an organisation where there's actually such a way of working where you're using shared services. You know, you're saving a lot of money because you're getting a lot of in-house labour. So I think the company is going to save in the long run and maybe not in the next two to three years. I wouldn't say the company would benefit, but I would say that in the long run, the company will benefit from this process, but it is very difficult at the moment looking at what's going on in the world and there's a recession that's going on in Europe at the moment. So it is kind of going to make that three that two to three years, maybe even the next four to five years. I would say you know and that's and that's merely because of what's just going on right now. You know it. It's a very good idea to have a shared services environment. It's a nice way to streamline. I see the long term goal. I see where the organisation is going. Maybe I’ve also been exposed to such strategic information, and it's going to work in the long run, but instantly it's not going to work and processes have not been so streamlined because there's a lot of disappointment and that’s because it's still in the teething phases, but I think eventually, once everything is understood and and people actually get the idea of actually using a shared services space, maybe then we will see the benefit of actually of this whole strategy that the company has taken. But I think it will work in the long run, just now, it's been a very costly experience. I'm currently going through an experience which is maybe not exactly like that, but very much similar to that because we are actually going through a section 187, I think it's a bit of 187 and 197. Bit of both, but because we're not getting a quiet, you're not being bothered by any organisation. But this is the experience is the same, so to say, I would mention, yeah. |
| 0:34:39.360 --> 0:35:14.280 | Interviewer | And then tell me obviously from your opinion again, what would you say are some of the observable after effects after these retrenchments? So I'm talking now in terms of you know employee morale, commitment, some of the emotional roller coasters that people went through, some of the psychological changes that people had, even tapping into employee well-being, what are some of the the things that you've observed in terms of the culture of the company once these retrenchments finalised? |
| 0:35:16.750 --> 0:38:52.260 | Participant | So in terms of culture, going back to the connections, you know, there's people that obviously have worked for the organisation for many years, plus ten years and obviously they've connected with some that have lived in certain departments. Naturally, there's a negative feeling amongst the people that are in the organisation. People are actually more in the market and people are looking for jobs and people were asking me for opportunities and other companies, you know? So people are edgy, people are not really settled to say that, hey, it could be us next. They don't know, so there's still that energy of people wanting to be out of the organisation. But at the same time, they're so conflicted because it's such a great organisation to work for. But it's just businesses moving in a different direction, and if you're affected, it's just unfortunate that it's going to happen for you at that time, which you've seen happen. So I think the morale is very low and people are cold. People have more responsibilities. So people have taken some roles, have been bundled, but you know, job descriptions have not been thoroughly updated to say that, hey, this is your new job description. How about you sign off to this now? But there hasn't been, I think those discussions of since I'm getting more responsibilities, how about I get remunerated more. Those discussions haven’t happened with organisation and that's something that's lacking and that's what people have been sort of saying and complaining about that they've got more duties. They're working after hours and you know the responsibilities are literally insane and people are complaining a lot and I've since seen this with the organisation that I find myself in, I've seen two different spaces function in two different ways, going through transitions of similar caliber, but one being more negative than the other. So it’s really, it's not a great thing to go through, and see as management, because the people that have remained, they're trying to pick it up. They're trying to pick up the morale, they're trying to sort of have more initiatives that are going to ensure that there's an employee dialogue consistently so that people don't feel left out and feel like they're not involved in the organisation. Recently, there was a, I think it was a webinar if I’m not mistaken or it was a… It was a Microsoft Teams meeting where they spoke about it. I think it was international women's day and there was an initiative in the organisation where it got people interacting and these are people aren't Africans, and are people sitting in Germany obviously. So yeah, the company is trying the initiatives, the ideas to sort of bring back that spirit of, guys we are still an organisation that still needs to move forward. And this has happened. We need to move forward. Basically. Yeah. There are initiatives and those initiatives, some of them are being implemented, some are still on paper, some are still ideas in meetings, I think, so, Yep. |
| 0:38:53.110 --> 0:39:26.770 | Interviewer | Great. And then tell me, to what extent are you familiar with the labour legislation pertaining to retrenchments? So, in the Labour Relations Act, they call it the Section 189, which specifically deals with retrenchments and fair procedures that need to be followed. |
| 0:39:20.390 --> 0:40:59.480 | Participant | I am in human resources, so I have to understand most of the processes when it comes to that. And as I alluded before that there were processes which were skipped when it comes to 189, the company did try rectifying them but at the time it was too late because people have already received certain communication and there was a bit of disjoint between human resources, as well as, the business and I can even say it's slash management. So there was a bit of disappointment when it comes to the process and how it was followed. But there were sort of notifications which were put in place to ensure that, you know, there's, we are looking at changing what we've done wrong and we're going to recommend ICAS for what has happened and information will be shared from a central point where consultants had to come in and ensure that the process was there for everyone. So yeah, there were processes which were followed thoroughly and there were processes which were somewhat not followed that really. And that's why they went out to go consult with experts in terms of Labour of which was somewhat helpful, not to extend where we thought it would or as human resources people, we thought it would go as far as you know being involved more intimately with the business but it's very silent as well so. We know how consulting companies do function at time, so yeah. |
| 0:41:1.70 --> 0:41:17.200 | Interviewer | And if you don't mind me asking, and look, as I said earlier on, you do not have to answer specific questions if you do not feel comfortable with doing so, but you know what would you say are some of these processes or some of the procedures that they skipped? |
| 0:41:18.860 --> 0:42:16.950 | Participant | Specifically, I would say around consultations. I think there were no sort of grouped consultations where they were supposed to happen. Discussions are supposed to happen with management. Management is supposed to discuss with the team. Teams are supposed to connect with human resources and have that open door policy to say that we can talk about everything and anything. But there was sort of a break in terms of communication between management or yeah, I would say management as well as the employees. Information wasn't trickling down in the right communication channels, I would say. So the platforms are not created for people to actually voice themselves out before processes actually started because the organisation did or was aware that the process will be starting at a certain time. So timelines are there, but there were steps which were skipped, which was around the consultation, if anything. |
| 0:42:18.50 --> 0:42:32.980 | Interviewer | Okay. Alright. And then tell me from your perspective, do you think that management offered enough support after the retrenchments happened and if so, what do you think that they did well and what do you think that they could have actually done better? |
| 0:42:35.130 --> 0:46:18.940 | Participant | I think management was involved and I think they were very much not educated in terms of the process. I think that was also maybe a shortfall in terms of human resources in terms of the output and ensuring that managers know more about the process so that managers are able to communicate with the employees. That's why I would say maybe that was a negative about it or that's something that we could have done better in terms of an organisation where we could have educated managers more in time in terms of the process and what's going to happen. It's nice and well to have policies and have these processes outlined. But if you can't take them to business as human resources then that's actually not fulfilling what she's supposed to be doing, all your functions so to say. So, I think the confusion came about obviously with organisation, when there was a group of consultants which also came in to assist. So it was very confusing for the organisation. And I feel like and that's the second point. That the organisation was very abrupt in terms of actually getting labeled low experts to come in the organisation and such a time where it wasn't a gradual introduction or introductory session with the employees to say that human resources business partners are still going to be functioning. Sharing information and communicating and informing you guys in terms of what's happening, but just to abruptly bring in consultants, and it kind of made, it was very confusing for the business and I think the business could have managed that in a much more better way. I would say in terms of the good, the good about the process itself, I think the company tried as much. Yeah, I could say business tried as much as they could to ensure that everyone was supposed to get a package, was very well compensated, I would say. And I say there's obviously based on the research that I or the knowledge that I have in terms of the organisation and some of the research that I had to do in terms of reporting that and obviously this is confidential, it's a lot of people, got a lot more than what they actually expected, you know, and that was a good thing about the organisation in terms of incentivising people. It's an organisation that looks after the people in terms of remuneration. So the organisation did look after people in that sense. And I think that's something that was communicated. And I think that's something that people had more sort of, I think the door was much more open. And for people to actually walk in and actually sit down and you get a breakdown in terms of what you're going to be walking away with when it comes to this retrenchment process, and if you don't alternatively take an opportunity in Germany, we obviously are not going to be retrenching you. You're not going to be getting this package or whatever the case. So it was, it was different and unique for everyone. But I think the company did try as much as they could to ensure that people are actually walking away with a bit more than what they expected to ensure that during the period of not being employed, people can be covered and obviously people have families to look after and so on. So it was something that the company did look into and I would say that's the upside of what the company did. Can't think of more from the top of my head. But yeah, I think that's the one that stood out for me mostly. |
| 0:46:20.820 --> 0:46:30.310 | Interviewer | Alright. And then I've just got two more questions. So what would you say is your current level of commitment to the company, you know, after all these retrenchments have taken place? |
| 0:46:31.740 --> 0:47:40.490 | Participant | Still 100%. You know during the whole process I was very busy. I had to function. It was very strange knowing that you're finding opportunities for people but you don't know if you are going to have an opportunity to stay in the organisation you know so. I would say my commitment was very much 100% to the organisation. I still carry out my responsibilities. I still ensured that I provide the service that I will provide if circumstances were different. Yeah. So I just really ensured that I perform at my level. I still had key performance indicators at the time to ensure that I fulfill them. I did what I had to do and yeah, I was still committed to the company because I just understood where the company was going as well. I think fortunately for me, I had that information. I think that's why I kept a positive mindset and ensured that I carried out all my responsibilities. |
| 0:47:41.350 --> 0:47:47.680 | Interviewer | Right. And then in terms of your level of trust and management after these retrenchments, where would you say you're sitting at? |
| 0:47:50.90 --> 0:50:21.370 | Participant | If I was to rate it out of 10, I would say 7. And I say this because certain managers were trusted enough with the information, and certain managers were not trusted enough with the information of actually sharing the information. So for me it showed a lot of distrust because as a function, you carry your responsibility out in ensuring that you are informing managers that this is a process that's going to happen because there was a break of communication from what it seems like. But there was no follow-ups as well. I would say management could have done better. I think there could have been more check-ins. I think there could have been more, you know, more information sharing sessions or best practices. But I think it was very limited. You know some managers just didn't do it also, it was also very dependent on what you're doing as a manager you know certain functions, just you don't really have the time to connect with everyone because you know certain functions are in sales, they're working different hours. They're sitting in Nigeria reporting in South Africa. So it was very messy, but at the same time I think there could have been better ways to ensure that people are getting the right information. And management, I think they did not carry that out as much as they should have. And yeah, that's why I would say a 7 for management trust, I would say. But I would commend them on the commitment in terms of finding opportunities for people. Most managers were very much connected to the recruitment space and wanting to know more about certain opportunities. So we had to play a very active role in terms of recruitment and ensuring that we are advertising opportunities to the organisation, and you know frequency in terms of sharing opportunities changed from once a week to what twice or three times a week. Ensure that no one misses the opportunities that they're supposed to get, especially those that were really affected and have no alternatives. |
| 0:50:23.50 --> 0:51:8.660 | Interviewer | And just to clarify or you know for confirmation, So what you would say, there was some sort of you know break in the psychological contract and that being obviously the obligations and the expectations between you know employees and managers. So you know that just touches on the trust. So for example, like, you know what employees expect. You know from the company and what the company expects from employees. So it's that whole psychological contract. It's just the obligations and expectations of each party. You would say to some degree it was that psychological contract or that trust was somewhat broken. |
| 0:51:9.530 --> 0:55:18.340 | Participant | Yeah, I could say that to some extent it was in the organisation, about during the retrenching processes, there's some managers who will actually get promoted into different positions. And that was because obviously positions are being bundled or some positions are redundant. So responsibilities were added. So naturally being at a maybe let's say junior management level or I will call. So I am saying semi skilled or skilled level. And you don't understand the moves and what's happening in the background. You know, so certain people had this notion of managers are looking after themselves and they are not going to look after us. So, whenever this process starts with something similar to this, they will always look after themselves. So that was sort of something that was being sort of shared in the different spaces and what people are saying that were much lower positions, that management is looking after themselves. And we can't really trust this manager because this manager has now left our organisation or business unit and has joined a different business unit. We can't trust the person that's just jumping ship or that's going to jump ship, but that's actually jump ship, you know. So you can't really trust managers like that. And it's very much understandable from the employee perspective because I mean, you can't be running an organisation and decide that you're going to be moving to a different organisation, maybe go to Germany. You know, as much as it's selfish and it's very much self preservation. Understandable from the manager, but you know, as a team lead as well. Have you went into conversations with your people to say that guys, this is what I'm looking at. This is where organisation is going. This is where I'm going in terms of my development and not for people to be shocked in a session that a certain individual is leaving the organisation and they are moving to a different country or whatever the case might be. You know. So obviously there was a break of trust. There was a lot of rumours. There was a lot of, I could even go as far as saying there was a lot of jealousy or sort of envy or being envious or something. Yeah, that managers are actually getting opportunities and we're not. But what are you doing? Because the organisation has set up sessions where and set out service for you to actually give feedback and that report was given back to you to say that this is where the organisation is going. Why don't you use that information to actually make it work for you by finding opportunities and different business units etcetera, etcetera. So it was also up to the individual as to how they took the information and whether they relied solely on the manager to ensure that they get the information. You know, some people went as far as coming to human resources people that were not actually involved and were not knowledgeable in terms of the process as such. But during this whole process, some of us were developed to understanding the process and you had to actually do your own research and understand the process so that should colleagues come to you and have questions, you're able to give them information that a manager could not give them, which is where the trust was somewhat broken. That certain people felt like we could not rely on our managers to give us this information. We at least rather go to the experts and get that information from them directly. So I could say, yes, there was to some extent broken trust and there's some aspects where trust was actually more solidified where some people are actually saved and some people are brought into certain teams. Where actually the manager in turn now has a sort of trust or bond with certain individuals. So it worked in both ways. I would say for some, but it's more under current colleagues that are still in the positions where the trust was really broken by certain managers. |
| 0:55:20.860 --> 0:55:53.140 | Interviewer | Okay, I think that's pretty much it for me. The only questions I do have is just around demographic information. So you can maybe just stop me when I get to your age category. So there's 18 or younger 19 to 25, 26 to 35, 36 to 45, 46 to 55, 56 to 65, 66 to 75, or above 76. What age group would you fall into? |
| 0:55:53.500 --> 0:55:54.300 | Participant | Option 2. |
| 0:55:58.340 --> 0:56:8.560 | Interviewer | So, right and then sorry, let me just take down notes. And then what gender do you identify yourself as? |
| 0:56:9.310 --> 0:56:9.810 | Participant | Male. |
| 0:56:10.730 --> 0:56:17.580 | Interviewer | Right. And then in terms of organisational level, are you an employee in a non managerial role or in a managerial role? |
| 0:56:18.970 --> 0:56:20.0 | Participant | Non-manager. |
| 0:56:20.970 --> 0:56:36.420 | Interviewer | OK, great. Perfect. Alright. That's all the questions that I have for you. I just wanna thank you so much for your time. Again. I really do appreciate your responses and it will be highly valuable to my study. So thank you very much. |
| 0:56:37.70 --> 0:56:40.160 | Participant | It's a pleasure. All the best with the research. |