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# Creating Serendipity

A qualitative study of extrinsic motivations and consequences of working in a coworking space

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## Foreword

We would like to express our gratitude for our wonderful supervisor, Hans Landström, who has contributed with valuable feedback and guidance throughout the writing of this bachelor thesis. Further, we would like to thank all of the respondents for taking valuable time out of their day to be a part of this study. We would also like to thank the coworking managers for their invaluable help in introducing us to relevant study subjects.

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# Abstract

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- Key words:** *coworking space, extrinsic motivation, social resourcing*
- Aim:** Describe and analyse the extrinsic motivations, as well as describe and analyse both positive and negative consequences for entrepreneurs to work in coworking spaces.
- Methodology:** Qualitative study in the form of semi-structured interviews.
- Empirical foundation:** Interviews with 13 representatives with executive positions in businesses working at different coworking spaces.
- Conclusion:** The extrinsic motivations for and consequences of working in a coworking space are diverse but can be summarised under the following themes: community, convenience, networking, price and productivity.

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# Introduction

*This section will provide a background for the research topic. Further, it will discuss the problem that the study will address. Thereafter, the aim and research questions will be formulated, followed by delimitations that outline the study.*

## Background

Since the early days of the internet, people have projected and envisioned the opportunity to move the office out from the physical workplace and instead work from anywhere. Alvin Toffler (1980) described in 1980 *the electronic cottage*, a phenomenon where a shift in the work environment would drive millions of people from the office back to their homes. On the same topic, following the rapid technological development in the late 1980s, Peter Drucker (2011) stated as early as 1989 that commuting to work would be rendered obsolete by this new form of work arrangement. 30 years ago, in 1990, former Apple CEO Steve Jobs spoke about the digital organisation and how it enables organisations to keep up with the rapid pace of the changing business conditions (Hone & Palfreman, 1990). Since then, technological development has moved forward and enabled work in the knowledge economy to be executed remotely, as proved by the social distancing practices put in place during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. On the contrary, according to a recent article published in the New York Times, Steve Jobs later had a different attitude towards working in isolation (Roose, 2020). Jobs then implied that the best ideas derive from accidentally bumping into each other and that such spontaneous meetings could spark the best kind of creativity (Roose, 2020).

Coworking spaces are workspaces where a diverse group of professionals share office space (Fuzi, 2015). The phenomenon of coworking spaces took off almost two decades ago (Spinuzzi, 2012) and perhaps the lack of creativity in isolation was a leading cause. Perhaps it was because of the modest price of a desk at a coworking space compared to the expensive investment of a traditional office. Perhaps the continued popularity of coworking spaces is based on the opportunity to network and to establish business relationships. Coworking spaces are still on the rise but why do entrepreneurs join coworking spaces and what do they believe they will gain from it?

## Problem statement

Previous research suggests that entrepreneurs should engage in social activities to grow their business. Entrepreneurship theory describes that entrepreneurs operate in a resource scarce environment (Baker & Nelson, 2005). To overcome this issue entrepreneurs can use a variety of bootstrapping methods (Winborg & Landström, 2001), some of which are embedded in social practices. Entrepreneurs will make use and combine the resources in their environment which can be both material (Baker & Nelson, 2005) and social (Keating, Geiger & McLoughlin, 2013). Because of the resource scarcity entrepreneurs need to rely on external sources to fill the gaps, which is why social connections are important for entrepreneurs when growing their business (Keating, Geiger & McLoughlin, 2013). However during the last decade technology has progressed quickly, to the point where entrepreneurs often can have a mobile office and work from anywhere. This freedom could reduce the barriers of starting a business, since it enables entrepreneurs to work from their own home, and are not required to rent an expensive office, but

it can also lead to isolation. By isolating themselves, they are not able to engage in such social activities that previous research suggests can benefit their business.

Coworking spaces are shared spaces where a diverse group of professionals share an office (Fuzi, 2015). Previous research on coworking spaces has shown that coworking spaces have a social aspect to them (Spinuzzi, 2012; Kojo & Nenonen, 2016). This could be a solution to the risk of isolation and would at the same be a good place to engage in social activities to establish strong social connections and reap the benefits that entrepreneurship theory suggests. This study will be explorative and look at why entrepreneurs work in a coworking space.

## Aim of the study

The aim of the study is to describe and analyse the extrinsic motivations, meaning the desired outcomes, for entrepreneurs to operate in coworking spaces compared to other office solutions. The study will also describe and analyse both positive and negative consequences for entrepreneurs to work in coworking spaces. Conclusively, we will discuss both the extrinsic motivations and the consequences of working in a coworking space. This report also aims to contribute to the already existing research on the topic of coworking spaces in business contexts and provide insights to what motivates coworkers. The two following research questions have been formulated in order to help fulfill the aim of the study:

*Q1: What extrinsic motivations are there for entrepreneurs to work in a coworking space?*

*Q2: What are the consequences for entrepreneurs to work in a coworking space?*

## Delimitations

The coworking spaces in our sample have been delimited. In this study, a coworking space is considered a shared office space where tenants rent a spot in the space. These coworking spaces can work both actively or passively in stimulating both social interactions and networking opportunities between its members. These coworking spaces may also house diverse companies or choose to only accept a specific niche of businesses. Kojo and Nenonen (2016) defines *public spaces* (e.g. libraries) and *third places* (public spaces that require the purchase of goods sold in that particular place, such as cafées) as coworking spaces. However, in these types of spaces entrepreneurs do not rent office space nor do they have assigned seats. Because of this, they do not fit the description and are excluded. Incubators were also excluded since those spaces often offer coaching by business advisors and funding. Therefore, ventures in incubators may have different extrinsic motivations than office tenants in other coworking spaces.

## Narrative

This study will start by giving an overview on research on the topics of entrepreneurship, motivation and coworking spaces. Further, the method used to conduct the study will be motivated and discussed critically. The findings of the study will be presented by identified subgroups and summarized in tables. Further, the results will be analysed thematically, leading to two tables based on the found extrinsic motivations and consequences of working in a coworking space. Conclusions will be drawn from the thematic analysis and are thereafter discussed using previous research. Finally, implications are discussed and future research questions are proposed.

# Theory

*In order to understand the extrinsic motivations for and consequences of entrepreneurs to work in a coworking space, the concepts of entrepreneurship, motivations and coworking spaces have to be explained. First, the struggle of resource scarcity that an entrepreneur faces is explained, followed by social resourcing as a theoretical solution. Second, motivation is defined and divided into intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, which will be used as a tool for analysing the findings. Third, coworking spaces will be described and further understood through identifying common categorisations which are used to distinguish subgroups of coworkers. Finally, previous research on the topic of motivations for, and consequences of, working in coworking spaces is summarized, which is used to relate the conclusions of this study.*

## Resource scarcity and acquiring resources

Most entrepreneurs operate in an environment characterized by resource scarcity (Baker & Nelson, 2005). Winborg and Landström (2001) acknowledges an assumption in research that small business managers turn to institutional financiers (e.g. banks and venture capitalists) to handle the need for resources. However, from their point of view, entrepreneurs use alternative methods to acquire resources which do not rely on institutional financiers, defined as financial bootstrapping methods.

Baker and Nelson (2005, p.5) defines bricolage in entrepreneurship as “making do by applying combinations of the resources on hand”. The concept helps to explain how entrepreneurs can create value and opportunities despite acting in a resource scarce environment. Theoretical

researchers often make the conclusion about resources that “Resources remain objective and definable independent of the specific organizations embedded in a resource environment. Resources are what they are, and organizations either have the resources they need or they do not.” (Baker & Nelson, 2005, p.3). They observed an approach that the entrepreneurs had, of ignoring and pushing through limitations of resources.

## Social resourcing

Keating, Geiger and McLoughlin (2013) investigates how the development of a new venture is affected by and can be leveraged through the entrepreneurs’ engagement in social resourcing practices. They take ground in two concepts of *social capital* and *network bricolage*.

Keating, Geiger and McLoughlin (2013) draw upon earlier research emphasising the importance of social connections in the early stage of a venture. Since most businesses start with few assets, they need to rely on external sources to gain access to, for example, expertise or equipment, and to enable that access, social connections are often seen as an important tool (Keating, Geiger & McLoughlin, 2013). Furthermore, they state how this process is captured in the term *social capital*.

Nahapiet & Ghoshal (1998, p. 243 cited in Keating, Geiger & McLoughlin, 2013) defines social capital as “... the sum total of economic and other benefits that can be derived from an individual’s or a collective’s relationships as situated within a field of practice”. Keating, Geiger and McLoughlin (2013) further explain that, traditionally, the research put emphasis on “whom” one connects with, but during their study, they chose to instead put emphasis on how

entrepreneurs' engage in these contexts. Baker, Miner and Eesley (2003, p.265) define network bricolage as "... dependence on pre-existing contact networks as the means at hand ...". When discussing their findings, Keating, Geiger and McLoughlin (2013) preconceived strong ties as resources at hand to comply with the theory of network bricolage. They also discussed the linkages between social connections and its significance for social resourcing in the early stages of a venture's development. For example, close personal relationships represent a strong form of social capital (Keating, Geiger & McLoughlin, 2013).

Keating, Geiger and McLoughlin (2013) found that entrepreneurs' frequently utilizes and repurposes resources at hand to speed up the commercialization process. They also found that there is a risk of a lock-in effect when entrepreneurs mainly use the resources at hand and do not engage in other contexts than the entrepreneurs immediate network. Therefore, the authors suggest that entrepreneurs should engage in a multitude of contexts to accelerate the commercialization process.

## Motivation

According to Nationalencyklopedin (n.d.), motivation is a psychological term that awakens, shapes and aims the individual's behaviour towards different goals. According to psychology theory, motivation can be divided into intrinsic and extrinsic (Benabou & Tirole, 2003; Legault, 2016; Gagné & Deci, 2005). Intrinsic motivation is the behaviour of engaging in activities based on the satisfaction that can be derived from that activity (Legault, 2016; Gagné & Deci, 2005). Extrinsic motivation requires an incentive, a link between an activity and an outcome that is a consequence of the activity (Gagné & Deci, 2005). That consequence is where the satisfaction

lies, as opposed to intrinsic motivation where the satisfaction is embedded within the activity itself (Gagné & Deci, 2005). An example of intrinsic motivation would be a child's desire to play outdoors because it is fun, while extrinsic motivation could be a teenagers motivation to do chores in order to get pocket money (Gagné & Deci, 2005). This study will conduct an analysis focusing mainly on extrinsic motivation.

## Coworking spaces

Several researchers recognise the first coworking space as Spiral Muse, opening in San Francisco in 2005 by Brad Neuberg (Spinuzzi, 2012; Capdevila, 2015). Kojo and Nenonen (2014) believe that coworking spaces have become more popular with the rise of information and communication technology. They mean that it has come with new ways of working, meaning flexible and mobile working habits.

Fuzi (2015) described coworking spaces as workspaces where a diverse group of professionals share office space. While Spinuzzi (2012), and Kejo and Nenonen (2016) imply that there is no universally accepted definition of a coworking space. However, researchers tend to agree that the phenomena includes a social aspect, being more than merely a physical space (Butcher et. al, 2016, 2018; Bouncken & Reuschl, 2016). Coworking spaces are community-oriented workspaces, designed to enhance collaboration, networking, socializing and idea sharing (Fuzi, 2015). Coworking spaces offer flexible leasing contracts compared to traditional office space, a concept that appeals to freelancers, start-ups, small businesses and permanent employees (Kojo & Nenonen, 2014).

Spinuzzi (2012) discovered three distinct types of coworking spaces. Firstly, the *community working space*, implicating a space serving local communities where users work alongside, not together, with each other. Secondly, the *unoffice space* works to encourage discussions, having a target audience of those who otherwise would work alone and those who are without a designated working space. More emphasis is put on the value of shared knowledge and community. Thirdly, the purpose of *federated working spaces* is to foster professional relationships, serving as a community of like-minded people to share ideas. It focuses on entrepreneurship and is sometimes industry specific.

## Dimensions of coworking spaces

Researchers use different dimensions to categorize coworking spaces in order to further understand the concept. For example, Kojo and Nenonen (2016) makes sense of coworking spaces by categorising into non-profit or for-profit business models. Several other researchers made classifications concerning the activities in coworking spaces. For example, several studies observed the managers' role in stimulating interaction among coworkers (Bueno, Rodríguez-Baltanás & Gallego, 2018; Fuzi, 2015; Ivaldi, Pais & Scaratti, 2017; Parrino, 2015). Similar to previous studies, this study will also categorise coworking spaces. The reason for this, in this study, is to capture a wide variety of different spaces. This study will use the dimensions of *facilitated vs. organic* and *diverse vs. niched*.

### Facilitated vs. organic operating mode

The first dimension in this study regards how much the coworking space stimulates and encourages interaction between their tenants. Coworking spaces differ in the level of involvement from the management of the space (Bueno et. al, 2018; Fuzi, 2015; Ivaldi, Pais &

Scaratti, 2017; Parrino, 2015). Fuzi (2015) examines two coworking spaces in an entrepreneurship scarce region that differ because of the operating mode, *facilitated* or *organic*. Either the coworking space actively works on stimulating social interactions between office tenants or it operates organically as a self-managed community where social interactions are solely created on the members' initiatives (Fuzi, 2015). An organic coworking space simply offers office space and does not provide any added value such as collaborative events between tenants, inspiring lectures or actively stimulates relationships (Fuzi, 2015). On the contrary, a facilitated coworking space often forms a sense of a community between ventures, encouraging interaction by hosting collaborative events for networking and inspiration (Fuzi, 2015; Parrino, 2015; Pearce-Neudorf, 2014). While planned events contribute to networking and new social resources, simply by being surrounded by entrepreneurs, coworkers constantly grow and develop (Fuzi, 2015). This dimension adds depth as there is a possibility that the motivation of the entrepreneur differs whether they are in an organic or facilitative operated space.

### Diverse vs. niched user group

The second dimension in this study focuses on whether the coworking space offers their services to either a specific user group or to everyone. Pearce-Neudorf (2014) identified different types of coworking spaces and how they target different audiences. He acknowledged how some spaces were focused on gathering people with the same interest (e.g. technology) while others focused on hosting a certain type of business form (e.g. startups).

Ivaldi, Pais and Scaratti (2017) presented four different types of coworking spaces with a varying degree of involvement from the managers. These were the *welfare coworking*, *networking coworking*, *infrastructure coworking space*, *relational coworking space*. Ivaldi, Pais and

Scaratti's (2017) described that the welfare coworking space and the network coworking space are both characterized by having niched user groups. They also described how the welfare coworking space is designed around a specific social issue and the role of managers is to enhance collaboration around this issue and connect the coworkers to relevant organizations. They also described the network coworking space and how the manager arranges a selection process in order to gather coworkers who operate in a specific sector. Further, Ivaldi, Pais and Scaratti (2017) describes the infrastructure coworking space as centered around offering a fully equipped physical workspace at a competitive price and the relational coworking space as centered around the process of exchanging knowledge between the tenants. The infrastructure coworking space and relational coworking space do not have the same selection process and they are not designed in relation to a specific issue or idea (Ivaldi, Pais & Scaratti, 2017).

## Coworking space matrix

In this study, a coworking space is considered a shared office space where tenants rent a spot in the space. These coworking spaces can work both actively or passively in stimulating social interactions and networking opportunities between its members. These coworking spaces may also house diverse companies or choose to only accept a specific niche of businesses.

A matrix (see figure 1) was constructed by combining the two dimensions of organic vs. facilitated operating mode and diverse vs. niched user group, making up four different subgroups. The first subgroup (A) contains coworking spaces that are organic and diverse. The second subgroup (B) contains coworking spaces that are organic and niched. The third subgroup

(C) contains coworking spaces that are facilitated and diverse. The fourth subgroup (D) contains coworking spaces that are facilitated and niched.

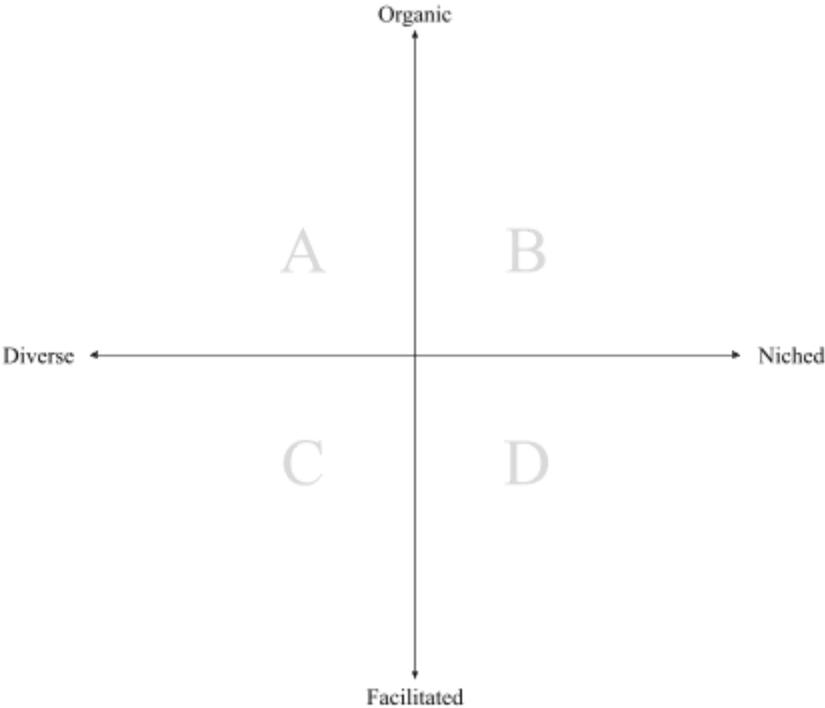


Figure 1: Matrix showing the four subgroups of coworking spaces

## Motivations for working in a coworking space

*In this section, motivations found in previous research are thematically summarized and compiled in table 1.*

### Networking

Previous research discusses the theme of networking. Fuzi (2015) found during her research that a motivation for settling in a coworking space was the opportunities to find investors. One of the spaces that she looked at had the option to apply for funding via a separate organization. She also found that at a different coworking space, a motivation to be in a coworking space was to network through interacting with others. She described how this space offered opportunities and events for connecting with other coworkers and how these events ensured that there was an inflow of external knowledge. She found that 44% of the members collaborated with other coworkers. Spinuzzi (2012) found that a potential motivation to be in a coworking space was the ability to gain referrals and establish partnerships. As part of his study, he looked at a coworking space that had targeted entrepreneurs who work online and who could establish relationships in the space. He found that several coworkers had hired others in the coworking space to carry out work for them.

### Practical necessities

Practical necessities have been discussed in previous research. Fuzi (2015) saw that the motivation for being in a specific coworking space was their good office infrastructure, while Weijs-Perrée et. al, (2018) found that the interior of the space played a role in choosing a coworking space. Coworkers with a higher educational level tend to prefer coworking spaces

with a modern and professional interior, while respondents with a low educational level leaned more toward a homelike interior (Weijts-Perrée et. al, 2018).

## Community

The theme of community is diverse and has repeatedly been discussed in previous research. Several studies found the motivation of combating loneliness (Spinuzzi, 2012; Weijts-Perrée et. al, 2018). Businesses that are able to work from anywhere often leads to isolation (Spinuzzi, 2012). Spinuzzi (2012) found that coworkers who had previously worked at home or at coffee shops experienced feelings of isolation. Another aspect is the benefits of a vibrant community. Fuzi (2015) described that coworkers were motivated by the social and enjoyable atmosphere they found at the coworking space. Spinuzzi (2012) saw that there were motivations for receiving feedback from coworkers but also social interactions purely for satisfaction. Similarly, Weijts-Perrée et. al, (2018) found that a strong motivation was the social interactions with other coworkers. The community also brought positive effects for coworkers receiving feedback from other coworkers (Spinuzzi, 2012).

## Price

Kojo and Nenonen (2014) saw that there was a demand for flexible contracts which potentially was a motivation for choosing a coworking space. On the same topic, Spinuzzi (2012) explained how the coworking space was described as a place where someone can get their work done in an affordable and flexible environment.

## Location

Weijs-Perrée et. al, (2018) found that the strongest motivation for a coworking space was the desire to work away from home. Bacevice et. al (2019) showed that more than half of their respondents thought that the location of their coworking space was a benefit. They also found that some respondents felt a sense of pride if the space was located in a prestigious location.

## Productivity

Staying motivated and getting rid of distractions were two motivations for working in a coworking space (Spinuzzi, 2012). Spinuzzi (2012) found that many that previously worked from home, chose a coworking space because they could not focus and got easily distracted while being at home. He explained how these themes carryover to what the coworkers wanted from a coworking space.

*Table 1: Motivations for working in a coworking space*

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Motivation</b>	<b>Source</b>
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interactions with others</li> <li>- Opportunities to meet investors</li> <li>- Referrals</li> <li>- Partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fuzi (2015)</li> <li>- Spinuzzi (2012)</li> </ul>
Practical necessities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good office infrastructure</li> <li>- Homelike or professional interior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fuzi (2015)</li> <li>- Weijs-Perrée et. al, (2018)</li> </ul>
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vibrant community</li> <li>- Social and enjoyable atmosphere</li> <li>- Achieve a work-life balance</li> <li>- Socialise with other coworkers</li> <li>- Feel less lonely</li> <li>- Feel less socially isolated</li> <li>- Social interaction for satisfaction</li> <li>- Feedback from coworkers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fuzi (2015)</li> <li>- Kojo &amp; Nenonen (2014)</li> <li>- Weijs-Perrée et. al, (2018)</li> <li>- Spinuzzi (2012)</li> </ul>
Price	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flexible contracts</li> <li>- Affordable contracts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kojo &amp; Nenonen (2014)</li> <li>- Spinuzzi (2012)</li> </ul>
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Working away from home</li> <li>- Prestigious location</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weijs-Perrée et al, (2018)</li> <li>- Bacevice et. al (2019)</li> </ul>
Productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stay motivated</li> <li>- Get rid of distractions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spinuzzi (2012)</li> </ul>

## Consequences for working in a coworking space

*In this section, motivations found in previous research are thematically summarized and compiled in table 2.*

### Networking

Castilho and Quandt (2017) explains how coworking spaces have collaboration opportunities and how it brings the option to build relationships and trust. They further explain how organizations

can through collaboration quickly adapt to changing economic environments. Bouncken and Reuschl (2016) found that coworking spaces enable organizations to find team members. They state that coworking spaces allow projects to form and teams to be established, and that it was an incentive for coworking spaces.

## Community

Castilho & Quandt (2017) highlighted a negative consequence of the networking community. They point out a barrier for collaboration in spaces where a “stolen idea” culture has emerged. This can happen if the coworkers do not believe in the sharing community and the role of the manager as a stimulator of social interaction is emphasised (Castilho & Quandt, 2017). The balance between sense of belonging and sense of diversity can be difficult to control (Castilho & Quandt, 2017). Coworking spaces in which there is a sense of common ground and relationship building is formal, Castilho and Quandt (2017) found that the shared values and beliefs lead to more sharing of resources and contacts. They describe that without the community feeling, coworkers are more occupied by self-interests. Fuzi (2015) found that coworkers highlighted the importance of factors such as mentoring from other coworkers and hosts, which can be related to having a positive community. In her definition of a coworking space she highlights that coworking spaces are community-oriented.

## Knowledge exchange

Bouncken and Reuschl (2016) states that coworking spaces allow the exchange of views as well as learning from others. Similarly, Weijs-Perrée et. al, (2018) found that coworkers shared their knowledge. They also saw that the coworkers preferred a diversity of tenants in order to complement each other with their expertise.

## Professional identity

Bacevice et. al, (2019) explains how being at a coworking space, as opposed to being at home, can signal that the organization is serious about what they do. Compared to other remote working arrangements, coworking spaces offer their members an increased level of professionalism and a sense of credibility (Bacevice et. al, 2019). Bacevice et. al, (2019) explains how being at a coworking space, as opposed to being at home, can signal that the organization is serious about what they do. In their study they said that respondents identified with other businesses at the coworking space and explained how it helped them to build an identity and legitimize the organization.

## Business development

Bouncken and Reuschl (2016) concluded that coworking spaces can allow for social interactions that can inspire and lead to exchange, creation and development of ideas. They state that coworking spaces can act as a pool for, for instance, innovation, ideas and skills.

Table 2: Consequences for working in a coworking space

Theme	Consequence	Source
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishing relationships and building trust</li> <li>- Find team members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Castilho &amp; Quandt (2017)</li> <li>- Bouncken &amp; Reuschl (2016)</li> </ul>
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stolen idea culture</li> <li>- Mentoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Castilho &amp; Quandt (2017)</li> <li>- Fuzi (2015)</li> </ul>
Knowledge exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gain new knowledge</li> <li>- Knowledge gains</li> <li>- Ask for help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weijs-Pierrée et. al, (2018)</li> <li>- Bouncken &amp; Reuschl (2016)</li> <li>- Spinuzzi (2012)</li> </ul>
Professional identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Credibility and legitimacy</li> <li>- Build business identity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bacevice et. al (2019)</li> </ul>
Business development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Idea creation</li> <li>- Innovation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bouncken &amp; Reuschl (2016)</li> </ul>

# Method

*The method is the foundation of how the study has been conducted. The following section describes and motivates decisions that have been made in the order of research design, research approach, data collection method, sample selection, interview process and data analysis. Further, the validity and reliability of the study's conclusions will be discussed. Finally, the limitations of the study and their influence will be discussed.*

## Research design

In order to provide an answer to the research questions, the research method chosen is of a qualitative nature. Bell, Bryman and Harley (2019) emphasises the difference between a quantitative and a qualitative research approach, saying that the most notable difference is that the quantitative approach heavily relies on numbers while qualitative research is more concerned with words. A qualitative approach often takes ground in understanding a specific social context by examining its members and gaining insights on how they perceive their reality (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2019). This study aims to provide an insight into the motivations and consequences for entrepreneurs in coworking spaces. Since this will be done through interviewing the perceived reality of the tenants of coworking spaces, a qualitative approach is more appropriate.

## Research approach

Bell, Bryman and Harley (2019) suggests that most qualitative research studies take on an inductive approach. However, as the study progressed, the line between an inductive and deductive approach became faint. The inductive study is designed to let the findings dictate the

theory and a deductive approach is about coining hypotheses based on theory and then using empirical evidence to prove or disprove these hypotheses (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2019). This study was designed based on previous research and on the authors' previous knowledge. There was no formulated hypothesis as the aim was not to prove or disprove a theory or concept, but to learn more about the motivations and consequences related to coworking spaces. Both inductive and deductive characteristics can be identified, which would in turn suggest an abductive research approach (Bell, Bryman & Harely, 2019). Therefore, the abductive research approach is the one to best describe this study.

## Data collection method

To examine the complex nature of a business, it is necessary to look at the core essence of an organization; the people behind it. Businesses are socially constructed phenomenons, the decisions made internally have to come from people which is why it is relevant to collect data from respondents (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). To do so, this study took the approach of conducting several interviews in order to further understand the tacit knowledge embedded in the coworking space environment. These interviews were partly based on an interview guide and were considered semi-structured by nature. Bell, Bryman and Harley (2019) defines semi-structured interviews as based on an interview guide, consisting of both open and closed questions where the interviewer has the ability to alter the order of the questions and ask further questions based on the conversation. An open question that was asked was for example: "What is your strongest motivation to stay in a coworking space?", while an example of a closed question asked is: "Were you a part of the decision to join a coworking space?". Follow up questions were asked to let the interviewee elaborate further on interesting topics and examples. All interviews

were conducted using the video conference software “Zoom”. This way, the authors got a picture of the person but could not to clearly interpret body language or identification of the sensory environment.

The choice of interview method was based on the aim of describing and analysing extrinsic motivations and consequences for entrepreneurs working in coworking spaces. On one hand, a structured interview method is based on a predetermined set of questions, designed in a way so that all respondents will receive the exact same questions (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2019). On the other hand, an unstructured interview method is based on an interview guide in which the interviewer has prepared different topics, as opposed to strictly formulated questions (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2019). These types of interviews are usually informal and the questions would not be consistent for every interview (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2019). What was concluded was that due to the nature of the study, it would be beneficial to use a semi-structured interview method as opposed to a structured or an unstructured interview. The semi-structured interview format offered more flexibility and allowed the respondents to add to the conversation and spin-off into topics not thought about beforehand. This was beneficial for the study because the respondents were able to describe their reality using their own words and not being restricted by a set of predetermined questions.

## Sample selection

The targeted businesses were chosen using the purposive sampling method of stratified sampling. When using a stratified sampling method, the landscape of interest is divided into subgroups, and then typical samples from these subgroups are approached (Given, 2008). The sample consisted of businesses from each of the different subgroups. This selection was made in an effort to capture all of the dimensions of coworking spaces in order to achieve a nuanced understanding of the motivation behind the phenomenon that is coworking spaces. Coworking spaces were divided into the subgroups previously mentioned in the theory chapter (see figure 1): (A) organic and diverse, (B) organic and niched, (C) facilitated and diverse, and (D) facilitated and niched. As the matrix is a scale, interviewees are placed differently within a subgroup depending on their coworking space's attributes (see figure 2).

The first step was to reach out to the management of the relevant coworking spaces in order to ensure the correct assessment of which subgroup they operate in. In those conversations, open questions about their role as managing team provided information about the facilitated/organic dimension. Further, questions about their target audience and how they were selective or not with their customers, provided information for distinguishing the diverse/specific subgroup. It proved to be difficult to get information about which companies inhabiting the different coworking spaces. Therefore, information about the study, as well as an invitation to participate, was sent to the management which in turn was forwarded to relevant businesses. In one instance, publicly available information from the coworking space websites in conjunction with the businesses' own website was used in order to establish a connection to the relevant businesses, in which they were approached with an offer to take part as a subject for an interview. When reaching out to

the interview subjects, efforts were made to get in contact with someone in a senior position that could provide us with valuable insights of the whole operation. This was done to ensure that the respondent would have extensive knowledge about the operation and the decision process of choosing a coworking space. No distinction was made regarding age, gender or background. The respondents were anonymized due to request.

In total 13 interviews were conducted. However, it later became clear that the 13th interviewee did not fit the scope of the study and had to be filtered out. The interviewee was a member of an incubator. This led to the authors deciding that this person could have experiences different than what a coworking space could offer, and it would decrease the reliability of the study and had to be left out. However, this particular interview was not entirely lost as it gave insights to incubators, closely related to coworking spaces, which added perspective on the phenomenon of coworking spaces.

*Table 3: Interviewees*

<b>Coworking Space</b>	<b>Industry</b>	<b>Employees at coworking space</b>	<b>Interviewee</b>
Organic, Diverse	Staffing and recruiting	10+	1A
Organic, Niche	Computer programming	2	2B
Organic, Niche	Analytical software	10+	3B
Facilitated, Diverse	Certification software	1	4C
Facilitated, Diverse	Equine products	1	5C
Facilitated, Diverse	Marketing	2	6C
Facilitated, Niche	Artistic activity	2	7D
Facilitated, Niche	Coaching and consulting	1	8D
Facilitated, Niche	Industry organisation	1	9D
Facilitated, Niche	Medical technology	3	10D
Facilitated, Niche	Construction products	2	11D
Facilitated, Niche	Computer programming	1	12D

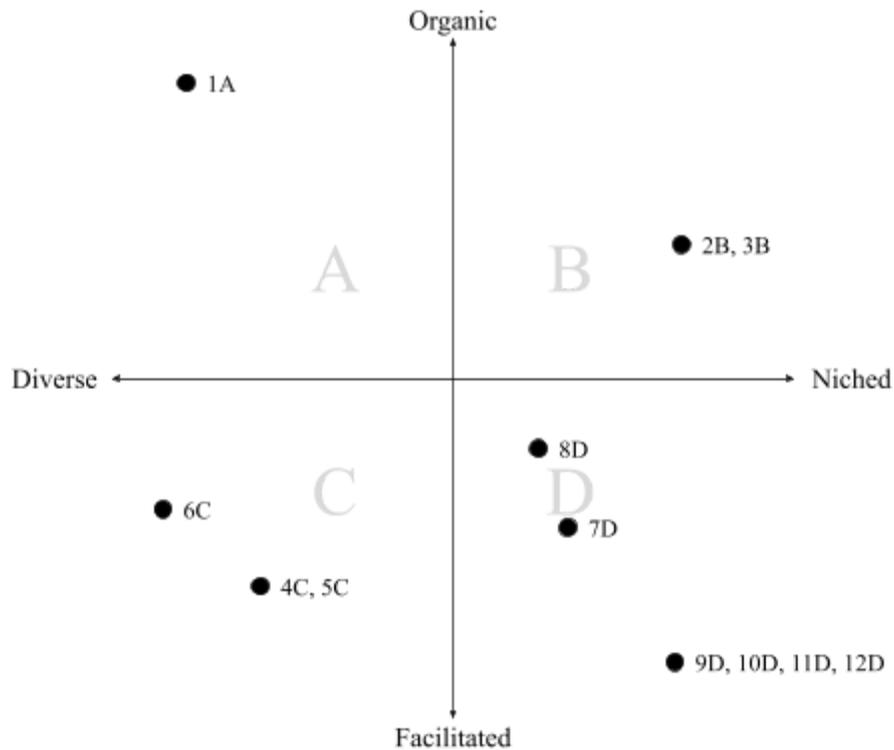


Figure 2. Matrix showing where the interviewees are placed in the different subgroups

## Interview process

The interviews were designed to last for 30 minutes to 45 minutes. During the interviews all of the group members were present and took on different roles. There was one leading the interview, one to ask follow-up questions and finally one transcribing the interview. The material was discussed after each interview in order to ensure that all members got the same impression of the answers. Between one to two interviews were held with each interview subject. The first set of interviews were based on the interview guide and the second one was based on the material from the first interview. As time went on, the interviews got more efficient due to the group's improving ability of interviewing. This may have had an impact on the first few

interviews, as they were not as well conducted as the last ones. However, this is an issue that can not be avoided and should not have an impact on the eligibility of the study.

## Data analysis

The semi-constructed interviews generated a vast amount of data which then had to be reviewed and revised to fit well with the purpose of the study. Using a thematic analysis method (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2019) different themes were distinguished when analysing the findings. These themes were based on similarities and differences in the answers, repetitions and based on the concept of motivations. All respondents within a subgroup were analysed together. This allowed for a structured and continuous discussion in an orderly fashion. By analysing based on subgroups, this generated a clear overview of the similarities and differences in the answers, which turned out to be a facilitating factor when drawing conclusions from the data.

## Validity and reliability

*Reliability* is the degree to which a study can be repeated and *validity* is the correctness of the conclusions produced from the material (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2019). When discussing the validity and reliability of research, Bell, Bryman and Harley (2019) mentions the dimensions of internal and external as key concepts. External reliability revolves around how likely a study will be able to be replicated (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2019). This study was conducted in a qualitative manner based on studying motivation and consequences for coworking spaces from the lens of its inhabitants. Naturally, it therefore becomes difficult to replicate. The study is heavily based on how the respondents interpret their surroundings at the time of the interviews. It focuses on momentarily impressions and would therefore be strenuous to replicate and, if

replicated, would most likely not generate the same result. Internal reliability is concerned with the case of multiple authors of a research project, and if they agree on the observations being made (Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2019). To increase the internal reliability of the study, all of the members were present during the interviews. The interviews were then discussed in detail to establish an agreement of the content before it was transcribed. All of the interviews were recorded through audio, which was then used to transcribe the material and proved useful when discussing and analysing the material.

Validity is associated with measurements, which in a qualitative study becomes somewhat problematic since they are not as concerned with measuring as they are of understanding people (Bryman, Bell & Harley, 2019). However, Bryman, Bell and Harley (2019) brings up internal validity (how well the respondents' descriptions and beliefs can be matched with theoretical concepts) and external validity (generalizability) as criterias to assess qualitative studies as well. This study applied a concept of extrinsic motivation to analyse the respondents observations. This proved to be difficult in the way that sometimes the word "motivation" was used by respondents in a way that could not be applicable to the concept. In order to match their reality with the concept, the study would have benefitted from more interviews and by making observations in the coworking spaces to further understand the context. Further, it proved difficult at times to distinguish whether the motivation was intrinsic or extrinsic as some motivations were satisfying by themselves but also led to desired outcomes. Regarding generalizability, another critique can be directed towards the small sample size and in particular in certain subgroups. The purpose of this study was not to compare the subgroups, however, this affected the specificity of themes that were drawn from each group. For example, in subgroup

(D) there were six respondents and in subgroup (A) only one. Naturally, when analysing the subgroups apart, more themes, similarities and differences were found in subgroup (D), which could all be summarised under an overarching theme found in subgroup (A).

## Limitations

No method of research is perfect. A common critique of the qualitative method is that it is too subjective at times (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2019). The decision of what is significant and what is not, relies too much on the perception of the authors (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2019). This factor could be a limitation for this study. Since all three authors had similar backgrounds and level of knowledge, it could lead to bias and potential misjudgement in what is important and what is not. This study was conducted in the latter part of 2020, the year of the COVID-19 outbreak. This presented itself in both challenges and opportunities. Due to the situation, many tasks had to be carried out remotely. The interviews had to be conducted online rather than in-person. It was limiting to not see the space and sense the environment that the interviewees were operating in. Another difficulty was that many companies were exhausted with online meetings and therefore declined with the reason of not wanting to sit through yet another online meeting. However since the interviews were online, it saved up time that would otherwise be spent on traveling and it offered more flexibility from the authors as well as the interviewees.

Another limitation, tied to the sample collection process, was that most coworking spaces did not have publicly available information on which companies were located in their space. This made it more difficult to come in contact with relevant businesses. In order to gain access to this information, this request had to be cleared by a receptionist or the manager of the space. These

often acted as gatekeepers and decided, indirectly on the behalf of the company, if they wanted to go through with the request or not. If they decided to go through with the request, they were the ones responsible to contact relevant businesses, since they were not able to give out information about their companies.

# Findings

*The findings present relevant results that are extracted from the study's interviews. The results will be presented according to the four separate subgroups that were identified by theoretical dimensions presented in the coworking space matrix. Every subgroup will be presented by a summarizing table of perceived motivations and consequences, followed by detailed explanations which will be the base of the analysis.*

## Organic and diverse

*Table 4: Motivations and consequences of interviewees in the organic and diverse subgroup*

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Motivations</b>	<b>Consequences</b>
1A	Access to network of coworkers, Quickly increase or reduce office space to decrease price	Business opportunities, Wider professional network, Saving money by quickly changing how many rooms and desks they need to rent depending on current market, Competitors try finding out their trade secret, Short notice period, Support and discuss with businesses in same industry

Person 1A, who is working in the staffing industry, considers the networking and the price that coworking spaces offer as the two main motivations. Networking, because they can interact with several new businesses to find new business opportunities or other ways to help each other. For example, other companies often turn to them when they need to find personnel. This networking not only leads to revenue, but is also a way for 1A to “*keep [them] up to date with the market*” (interview, 7 December 2020, own translation). As the market can quickly change, 1A considers the flexibility to be a strong motivation as it helps them cut costs. By being in a coworking space, they can quickly adapt and scale up or decrease in size and employees, depending on the situation. Due to this there is no need for an expensive, long term office lease. Once, the

business' 40 employees were "... almost halved because the Swedish Public Employment Service's money was gone" (interview, 7 December 2020, own translation). By being in a coworking space, they were able to adapt.

While person 1A discussed several consequences the most prominent related to networking, cost reduction, competitiveness and support to, and from, the other tenants. By chance, several of the other tenants operated in the same market which has had both positive and negative effects. They have a unique business strategy that they teach their employees and competitors have tried to get hold of it. The competitors "are very sneaky and want to take our model away from us. It is not something we are really keen on sharing" (interview, 7 December 2020, own translation).

## Organic and niched

Table 5: Motivations and consequences for interviewees in the organic and diverse subgroup

Interviewee	Motivation	Consequences
2B	Networking, Socializing with other coworkers, Increase awareness of business, Affordable office space, Access to events	Inspiring, joyful and motivating workspace, Richer social life, Can get "too social", Coworkers test products and give feedback that resulted in product development, Found and hired an employee, Knowledge exchange, Gained media exposure
3B	Affordable office space, Quickly increase or reduce office space to save money, Short notice period,	Upscaling without moving between offices, Inspiring, genuine and social community, Found and hired an intern, Feedback that resulted in product development, Common areas don't serve a purpose

For person 2B the most important motivations was networking and the social aspect. 2B wanted to be around other professionals and draw benefits from that. It was also important that the other coworkers knew what they were working on, 2B said that it "is easy for them [coworkers] to come into my office after an event so that we can continue talking, for example." (interview, 7

December 2020, own translation). They had previously worked from home and from another shared office space, but had lacked the social aspect. *“I was not that impressed and it [the previous coworking space] got quite awkward and was not that social.”* (interview, 7 December 2020, own translation). Regarding their current coworking space, they say that *“There is a joy of life in being there, both for the social exchange and because it is fun and stimulating in a way that makes it motivating”* (interview, 7 December 2020, own translation).

Person 2B had experienced a lot of consequences being at a coworking space. They said there is *“a joy of life being there, both for social exchange and it is fun and stimulating in a way that might motivate as well”* (interview, 7 December 2020, own translation). It had become ever more clear for 2B how important it was to be surrounded by the community when they came back to work after a period of working from home due to the restrictions due to the covid-19 pandemic. The spirit they regained felt like a motivational boost. However, it could also get too social at times which resulted in lesser productivity. Person 2B also explained how coworkers had tested and given feedback on the product, this ended up in a product development that the coworkers also contributed work to. A final example of consequences is when person 2B needed to hire a new employee. They said that *“it felt like [the coworking space] saved me. Because there was another person in the house who wanted to replace him. Without [the coworking space] it would have taken a much longer time”* (interview, 7 December 2020, own translation).

Person 3B’s main motivations was the affordable office space and the flexibility that coworking spaces offer. The short notice period and the possibility of increasing or decreasing the number of employees quickly was essential. They explained that if renting a traditional office, they

would have to sign up for at least two to three years with a fixed fee. In their current coworking space they had a notice period of three months and paid a monthly fee per employee. Through this contract, they were able to scale their business without having to worry about an increased cost or constantly look for new offices. While the social aspect was important, the community was rather seen as a bonus and not a motivation.

Person 3B's business had been at the coworking space for one and a half years, and had gone from five to eighteen employees and is soon entering a new hiring period. They explain that they have grown steadily during this time and are now moving out of the coworking space as they are becoming too large. Person 3B's business does not have a product that is typical for the coworking space's niche, something they share with around 10% of all tenants. They mention how coworkers with more experience in the niche often help others out on the international market. Because of not sharing the exact same niche, they have been able to incorporate features to their service inspired by the other coworkers. However, they also believe that they would gain more from the other companies' perspective if they were to sit in a coworking space with their industry's niche. 3B explains that having a different niche has also negatively affected their use of the common areas. The coworking space offers rooms with specific purposes (e.g. recording studio) but 3B's company "*[we] have more sales calls, meetings, demonstrations. So we need more physical rooms for that, for example. That no one else needs*" (interview, 10 December 2020, own translation). Despite moving out of the coworking space, 3B mentioned that they will pay a fee for staying in the community. They will be able to continue joining after work and other social events. "*It is a fairly small fee to pay to continue supporting something. We were well taken care of so I think you should give back and continue supporting*" (interview, 10

December 2020, own translation). The strong community feeling had a large effect, 3B explained that there are people who used to work there who still come back just to hang out.

## Facilitated and diverse

*Table 6: Motivations and consequences for interviewees in the organic and diverse subgroup*

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Motivations</b>	<b>Consequences</b>
4C	Increase productivity, Being part of a community, location	Inspiring conversations, Surrounded by professionals that lead to knowledge spillovers, Not feeling lonely, Work productively when surrounded by people, Feel happier
5C	Working away from distractions	Has a proper working desk in peace and quiet, Social and fun working environment, Possibility to discuss business related problems
6C	Affordable and flexible contracts (short notice period), Separating work and private life	Team gathers in the same location, Work more efficiently, Convenience, Surrounded by possible investors, Exclusive feeling, Meeting rooms, Feeling of being a serious startup, Sense of belonging

Person 4C emphasised increased productivity as a strong motivation for working in a coworking space. Being surrounded by professionals was a way to ensure staying productive. Another motivation for person 4C was to be a part of a community. This meant getting to know new people and gaining perspectives or ideas. *“You can get to know new people and you get to open your mind, listen to new ideas, listen to new perspectives and you get to make new friends.”* (interview, 7 December 2020) As a consequence the entrepreneurial journey also seemed less lonely and the importance of socialising was brought up from the point of being happy and staying mentally healthy. Further, a reason for staying in the current coworking space was the location, as it was in the heart of the city.

Person 4C elaborated on an idea that just by surrounding yourself with a diverse group of professionals, they could get access to knowledge spillovers. They described that the social interactions were mostly informal but that a coworking space increases the likelihood of random encounters that could lead to business opportunities. *“You know, you hear something, they tell you something that is priceless. Something that is like a trade secret. You wouldn’t know that if you weren’t here.”* (interview, 7 December 2020).

The main reason for working in the current coworking space for person 5C was being able to work away from distractions. The alternative was working from home which in the times of the COVID-19 pandemic and two kids at home was not an option in the long run. *“There is always something happening at home. ... It really is impossible to try to sit there and get anything done”* (interview, 11 December 2020, own translation). The coworking space was a solution as they claimed that the space had offered a working desk in peace and quiet. The price was also a determining factor when choosing coworking space, 5C said that it *“should be rather affordable but otherwise nothing more than a desk to sit at that was not at home”* (interview, 11 December 2020, own translation).

To be surrounded by pleasant people was seen as a positive bonus for person 5C. The environment was described in terms of being open and the coworkers were pleasant and happy people. The social aspect was not an initial expectation but had turned out to be one of the reasons to stay in the current coworking space. *“I think it is very enjoyable and fun so I would absolutely not want to be without it now that I gave it a try”* (interview, 11 December 2020, own translation). One aspect of it was not working alone anymore. Furthermore, person 5C explained

that they had met people at the coworking space that could potentially help them with various business improvements, but that they had not yet taken advantage of it. These improvements were new perspectives that had become clear first when meeting people at the coworking space.

A reason for joining a coworking space for person 6C was to be able to separate work and private life. The alternative was working from home which also implied that the two founders communicated mostly online. *“It is quite satisfying to get away from [home] and [I have] become more efficient through having a workspace with some type of limit”* (interview, 16 December 2020, own translation). Since the founders now had a common office space they could meet and discuss important matters more easily. *“[The coworking space] creates the opportunity to get in [to town] more easily and that creates a remarkable flexibility”* (interview, 16 December 2020, own translation). However, person 6C pointed out that this aspect was not exclusive for a coworking space but rather a characteristic of any kind of office space compared to working from home. As a consequence, they had experienced working more efficiently in the coworking space. Also, working away from home meant that they met people on a daily basis which otherwise was not that common in the specific industry they operated in.

Person 6C also mentioned that they were intrigued by flexible contracts with short notice periods that coworking spaces offer in comparison to traditional offices. *“Our industry is quite volatile so it is not that fun to be stuck with a leasing contract for too long if the market would fail”* (interview, 16 December 2020, own translation). Person 6C described that since the business was mobile at times, the short notice period of these contracts were a preferred pricing model. *“You*

*do not have to prepare as much before you leave. It is just to leave really*” (interview, 16 December 2020, own translation).

By working in a coworking space, person 6C believes they have worked more efficiently than before. Another reason for joining a coworking space was being surrounded by others to gain a sense of belonging. *“You get a feeling that it is a startup. There are some like-minded in the same space so it becomes more fun to sit in this environment, working with other companies of a similar type.”* (interview, 16 December 2020, own translation). However, they did not believe that there were any synergies between the companies, instead it had to do with socializing. They also believed that socializing affected their general well-being.

Person 6C brought up several practical benefits of their coworking space. They explained that the practical necessities such as office furniture, printers and coffee that the space offered was a benefit in the sense that they did not have to think about it themselves. Further, they mentioned how they enjoyed the exclusive feeling of the current coworking space. *“It is a quite enjoyable environment since it is quite exclusive, in a way, which makes me want to come back”* (interview, 16 December 2020, own translation). Further, the coworking space offered the possibility of having professional meetings. *“If we book a meeting we often use the meeting rooms, which are larger and more exclusive, and enable a good meeting. Also, [the coworking space] works as hosts for guests”* (interview, 16 December 2020, own translation).

## Facilitated and niched

Table 7: Motivations and consequences for interviewees in the organic and diverse subgroup

Interviewee	Motivations	Consequences
7D	Access to storage for inventory, Short notice period, Businesses in the same niche	Community, More professional relationships, Development of the business, Collaborations with other coworkers, Practice their sales pitch, Meeting rooms to invite people
8D	Close to home, Active community, The coworkers, Social interaction	Synergy effects between coworkers, Located with like-minded people, Giving and receiving boosts, Generating collaborations and leads, Feedback and thoughts on issues
9D	Interacting with customers, Interaction with people, Tightly knit community	Getting support and feedback, Talking to (understanding) customers, Networking (gaining relevant business contacts), Gaining useful information, Getting marketing help, Accelerated business processes, Being surrounded by open-minded and helpful people
10D	Interaction with other companies, Practical necessities, “Piggyback” an already existing corporate culture	Relaxed home-away-from-home-feeling, Networking practices, Easy to approach other companies, Separating work and private life, Communicating more efficiently within the company, Free consulting (problem solving with coworkers in an informal matter), Been introduced to clients
11D	Interior that encourages productivity, Social interaction, People in similar situation, Adjustable desks and chairs, Diverse businesses, Stronger collaboration	Synergy effects between companies, The active management, Inspired by other people, Events, Received leads, Been able to work more dedicatedly
12D	Flexible contracts, socialising, to work away from home distractions	Productivity, socializing effortlessly

When Person 7D was offered a spot in their current coworking space, they had a large inventory that they needed to store and the coworking space had options for storage. *“When we got the opportunity to be located in [the current coworking space], [the decision] had a lot to do with that we had a bunch of stuff we needed to store”* (interview, 8 December 2020, own translation).

They also spoke about how the coworking space offered more flexible contracts, in comparison to regular office spaces. “... *office spaces and that is always a matter of money ... Long-term planning is very hard and all [traditional] office spaces offer, like, three year contracts... [the coworking space] offered us then three months of notice period, which is nothing. So, then it was a really easy choice when we had evaluated other options*” (interview, 8 December 2020, own translation). Person 7D is operating in the industry of culture and they described how they were looking for a space with businesses operating in the same industry. They explained that the reason for them to be in a niched coworking space was that they wanted to achieve an exchange in some form. It was very important for them to have a connection to the coworking space.

While at the space Person 7D found that the coworking space helped them to extend their professional network. The community also helped them to develop their business and work on their sales pitch. “*So when we are sitting and talking we also get their point of view on what we are doing... and they ask the same questions that our customers might*” (interview, 8 December 2020, own translation). The community of the coworking space was a strong motivation for Person 7D. They particularly enjoyed the joint lunches and the discussions that occurred during these gatherings. They described how there were both facilitated events as well as more organic and sporadic gatherings happening. Some of these gatherings lead to collaborations with other businesses at the coworking space. “*.. we met a lot of people that were completely new. We got [to meet the company], as they moved in after us, and other [people] we have had nice collaborations with or exchange through the fika opportunities.*” (interview, 8 December 2020, own translation). As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic they explained that the company struggles with survival and had to move out of the coworking space to instead work from home.

*“Covid has hit us pretty hard, I must say”* (interview, 8 December 2020, own translation). However, they explained that they would return if they were offered a really good deal, to gather equipment, meetings and community in one spot.

Person 8D described a motivation to be the active community at the coworking space. They previously had been a part of a different coworking space that were not nearly as active. They describe how their space had arranged different events such as morning meetings and lunch meetings. *“There was 10% activity at the other place and here it is 100%”* (interview, 11 December 2020, own translation). Another motivation was the other coworkers. Person 8D explained how they boost each other and it felt like they were put in a place with people that had the same drive. *“... it felt like I ended up with people that had the same mindset. It was like getting a smorgasbord of people that were heading the same way and wanted to succeed”* (interview, 11 December 2020, own translation). They said that the coworking space had helped them to generate leads and foster collaborations. *“It [the coworking space] has simply generated customers and partnerships and it is doing it now too. Oh my god, we are really helping each other”* (interview, 11 December 2020, own translation).

Person 8D said that synergy effects were a big consequence of being in a coworking space. They described how the coworkers are diverse, working in different fields, and by having a mutual office they can take part of each other's network and competencies. The community at the coworking space actively helped each other with issues. For example, they had occasionally played a game called “mastermind” where the coworker chooses a topic or problem they experience and asks the others how they should handle the situation. The others then discuss the

issue followed by a session of concrete feedback. Person 8D said that they felt it had been very rewarding and it was something they could not have done by themselves.

Person 9D spoke, in terms of motivation, about interactions with customers. They were working for a startup community meaning that by being in the current coworking space, they were surrounded by other founders of startups and entrepreneurs and in turn surrounded by potential customers. *“This is a perfect place to meet other people when you are at an early stage”* (interview, 11 December 2020). It became effortless to get to know their customers and their needs by simply talking to the founders on the spot. *“It is very easy, there is no barrier here in a way. You do not have to write a cold email, introduce yourself, because you randomly encounter each other in the café and you have a chat.”* (interview, 11 December 2020).

Person 9D described the community to be very close knit which was important for their working space. The members were very open and happy to help each other. They also explained how the community aspect is especially important to founders as it combats the loneliness that comes with starting a business. *“... it can be a very lonely journey and I think it is very necessary to have people, to surround yourself with likeminded people who understand your problem or the pain that you are going through.”* (interview, 11 December 2020). Networking was also a part of the coworking space. Person 9D talks about how there was a network community where people would introduce other people to their network. *“You have sort of a network community here. People know people and they will introduce you to people.”* (interview, 11 December 2020).

Being able to interact with other companies was a motivation for Person 10D. They described it as the predominant motivation for joining a coworking space. Furthermore, they highlighted how this would naturally lead to networking. *“... you might be able to form your partnerships with other companies in the building, or even get new clients by just talking to other companies.”* (interview, 15 December 2020, own translation). Another motivation was the practical elements that the coworking space came with, such as IT, printers, insurance, desks and chairs. *“All that, I don’t need to take care of myself. I don’t need to spend my time working on, it’s just being taken care of in the package which I am paying for.”* (interview, 15 December 2020).

Person 10D acknowledges that it can be hard for a small company to establish their own corporate culture and how a coworking space enables them to join an already existing culture. *“It’s easier for us to piggyback on a culture which we fancy. So, we are kind of shopping for a nice culture, and selecting the office space where you find what you think is a fit for you.”* (interview, 15 December 2020, own translation). By being in a coworking space they saw consequences for their business. Person 10D described how the predominant exchange between peers is a kind of free consulting. Another consequence was that they had acquired leads from companies at the coworking space. *“... we have actually been referred to new clients from companies at [the coworking space].”* (interview, 15 December 2020).

Person 11D explained that the choice of moving into a coworking space had to do with finding a spot to concentrate on work and that it was a cheaper option than buying a traditional office space and its interiors. They believed they were in need of office necessities such as adjustable desks. However, they believed that the social aspect had to exist as well and searched for people

who experienced similar situations. *“We found a network and environment that was inspiring and where people were pretty much sitting in the same boat as us”* (interview, 15 December 2020, own translation). They described how they expected to learn from other coworkers who also were in the process of growing their firm. *“If one encounters the same types of legal barriers, customer issues, maybe one can inspire each other to new forms of events or exchange of information, thoughts and ideas”* (interview, 15 December 2020, own translation). The social aspect was also described as important because of the founders being social persons by nature. Before they joined the coworking space they worked remotely and wanted to strengthen their communication. *“Really, the main goal [with joining a coworking space] was that the collaboration would be strengthened. Until then, it was a lot of working digitally ... So this has benefited the communication significantly within our company”* (interview, 15 December 2020, own translation).

As a consequence of being in the same maturity phase of a startup as the other coworkers, person 11D explained that they had experienced synergy effects among them. More concretely they also had received leads. *“The first week we were matched with three potential customers, which are big customers. [...] It was through the network here at [the coworking space]”* (interview, 15 December 2020, own translation). They were also matched with venture capitalists and felt the space had been rewarding from start. The coworking space host, who occasionally arranges events with relevant speakers, was also mentioned as a benefit. For example, they mentioned that the host *“invites lawyers so that you can brainstorm and gain information from the market”* (interview, 15 December 2020, own translation).

Person 12D's main motivations are the price and socialising. Regarding the price, 12D explains that they could also get their *“own office but with a company this size you would have to pay quite a lot and sign rather long contracts”* (interview, 16 December 2020, own translation). About working from home, 12D said that *“it is quite nice working from home but it is not that efficient and it gets very lonely in the long run”* (interview, 16 December 2020, own translation).

When working at home it was easy for 12D to get distracted on other things, such as house chores. They said that being able to differ between home and work is *“a very strong thing. Out of pure productivity, you earn the rent quite quickly.”*(interview, 1 December 2020, own translation). 12D continues explaining consequences, saying that there is also an emotional aspect to having an office. Partially because it is nice to have a place to go too, but also due to the *“business becoming more concrete [when there is an office]”*(interview, 16 December 2020, own translation). They describe the community as receiving a *“dose of social contact without having to make an effort”*(interview, 16 December 2020, own translation). An example is how they can *“run into people in the hallway or by the coffee and talk some”*(interview, 16 December 2020, own translation), which was appreciated. Lastly, 12D mentioned having a lot of work and that they did not expect to get any work from networking, but *“despite that there has come up small projects from people you have met here. Which is very fun”* (interview, 16 December 2020, own translation).

# Analysis

*The analysis will per subgroup identify themes of the material in findings based on the concept of extrinsic motivation and consequences. After analysing a subgroup, a summary of the themes touched upon will be presented in a table divided by extrinsic motivation and consequences. The concept of motivation will be used to identify the extrinsic motivations specifically. Finally, the analysis will be summarized in two tables which show the extrinsic motivations, respectively the consequences, of working in a coworking space and through which subgroup they were mentioned, in order to draw conclusions from the full sample.*

This analysis will describe and analyse identified themes of motivations and consequences brought up by the interviewed coworkers. It will be interpreted through the understanding of extrinsic motivation as an incentive that links an activity with an outcome that is a consequence of the activity (Gagné & Deci, 2005). The activity in this sense is “to work in a coworking space” in which the incentive (desired outcome) to do so is the extrinsic motivation.

## Organic and diverse

When analysing the motivations and consequences of the respondent in the organic and diverse subgroup, there were three themes present. The effects that the coworking space had on their businesses was of a professional nature and helped their business to move forward. Firstly, they described the consequences of receiving business opportunities and establishing a wider professional network as well as the motivation of finding new business opportunities through having access to a network of coworkers. All these three points can be related to the broader

theme of networking. Secondly, a prominent theme was the one of price. Person 1A described how they benefited from having flexible contracts and a short notice period which were related to the motivation of price through being able to quickly increase or reduce their office space. This was important since they operated in a volatile industry that could change quickly. Lastly they spoke about two consequences related to the theme of community. They described the benefit of being surrounded by businesses in the same industry as this allowed them to support each other. However, they also described the negative consequence of the other tenants trying to get introduced to their unique business strategy.

For Person 1A, one of the motivations for being in a coworking space was to achieve a lower cost, which they could achieve since the coworking space allows them to quickly scale up and down their organization because of the flexible contracts. The other motivation was to find new businesses opportunities, which they achieved by being in a coworking space, surrounded by people and having access to a network of coworkers. Both of these motivations are extrinsic since they are achieved through working in a coworking space.

After analysing the findings, the analysis had led to the motivations and consequences are summarized in table 8. Noteworthy is that while Person 1A considered flexibility to be a motivation, it is not aligned with the definition of an extrinsic motivation. The incentive, lower cost, is the motivation according to the concept of extrinsic motivation

*Table 8: Summary of analysis of the organic and diverse subgroup*

Motivations	Consequences
Network Price	Community Network Price

## Organic and niched

The organic and niched subgroup had four themes with the first one having to do with price. Both respondents saw benefits in the low monthly cost and the short notice periods that their coworking space offered. It was also beneficial that they paid rent per employee or per desk and could easily increase or decrease the space needed. B2's motivation was extrinsic; by working in a coworking space they could save money. B3's motivations were also extrinsic. Being in a scale-up phase, they wanted a workspace where they could easily increase their number of employees and pay rent according to that current number. Their solution, the activity that would give them that outcome, was a coworking space. Conclusively, price was an important matter, but for different reasons.

The second theme surrounds the community at the coworking space. 2B could have continued working from home but explains they lacked social interactions. Joining a coworking space solved this issue and it brought him much joy. In this instance, the objective was to achieve social interactions through joining a coworking space and the outcome was being a part of a social community. Therefore, this motivation is of extrinsic nature. Though B3 never said the social aspect was a motivation, it has had a large impact on the company. An interesting notion is how 3B did not operate in the exact same niche that the coworking space targeted, yet felt a strong connection to the community. Casual coffee talks inspired the business and made them commit to the community. The genuine and social community helped them develop their product. Getting help with product development applies to B2 as well. They both felt that other coworkers were genuinely interested in their businesses. Overall, the community mattered greatly in this subgroup, especially in the consequences.

Networking is the third theme noted. For B2, the niche of coworking space mattered. There were often media representatives there interviewing coworkers about their work and new products. Media coverage was an unexpected but appreciated consequence. With many successful businesses in the coworking space, 2B also gained important contacts. This was also a result they had hoped for. Networking was an extrinsic motivation for them. 3B did not have networking as a motivation, but was affected by it. Through leads from coworkers they received leads, and more notably they hired an intern they found out about via the community. The intern helped develop the product. 3B also observed how coworkers often helped others regarding leads and getting them out on the international market. The networking in this subgroup often occurred informally.

The last theme is productivity. 2B was easily distracted when working from home, had difficulties finding a desire to work and wanted to become more productive. With a clear incentive, they joined a coworking space. This extrinsic motivation later became a consequence as well. While 3B did not have productivity as a motivation to join a coworking space, it was a consequence of theirs. Without having to look for other offices thanks to the flexibility they were able to succeed with their goals.

*Table 9: Summary of analysis of the organic and niched subgroup*

Motivation	Consequences
Community Networking Price Productivity	Community Networking Price Productivity

## Facilitated and diverse

Respondents in the facilitated and diverse subgroup elaborated on the theme of becoming more productive through working in a coworking space. Person 4C explained that they joined a coworking space to become more productive and that being surrounded by professionals had led to increased productivity. Person 5C described wanting to work without distractions and by joining a coworking space they got a proper working desk in peace and quiet. Person 6C explained that the coworking space provided an opportunity to separate between work and private life which had led to working more efficiently. Also, it created more efficient communication between them and the cofounder. However, person 6C pointed out that separating between work and private life was not a characteristic unique for the coworking space but rather any office space.

Regarding the community, all respondents had had different experiences. 4C was the only respondent in this subgroup that expressed the community in itself as a motivation. 4C believed that socialising resulted in feeling less lonely as an entrepreneur and was positive for well-being. 4C had also received spontaneous knowledge spillovers from other professionals by being in the space. While it was not something they had anticipated, it was an appreciated consequence. On the contrary, 6C believed that the socialising had not created any synergies among coworkers. Coworkers were considered to be colleagues they could talk to during lunch. 6C enjoyed being surrounded by others, in particular like-minded startups, which had contributed with a sense of belonging and affected their well-being positively. Person 5C described the social environment and how the coworkers were a reason for them to stay. The satisfaction was embedded in the activity, making it an intrinsic motivation. Person 5C had also met coworkers and discussed

potential business related relationships. However, they had not proceeded with it yet. For now, the social aspect has mostly led to a fun and enjoyable work environment.

Person 6C brought up the convenience aspect of coworking spaces. As a consequence of working in a coworking space, person 6C had access to office necessities and therefore did not have to gather it themselves. Further, it felt professional with access to meeting rooms and a guest host. The exclusive feeling was described as enjoyable and a reason to come back, which can be interpreted as an intrinsic motivation, meaning satisfying for the individual alone, without a desired and expected outcome. Person 4C and person 5C had not brought up office necessities as a consequence.

Price was mentioned as a motivation by person 5C and 6C. 5C wanted a low monthly cost while 6C was the short notice period as beneficial since they operate in a volatile market. The short notice period minimized the financial risk, compared to having a long-term office lease contract.

For the subgroup facilitated and diverse, the overall themes of motivations and consequences that could be identified are compiled in Table 10.

*Table 10: Summary of analysis of the facilitated and diverse subgroup*

Motivations	Consequences
Convenience Price Productivity	Community Convenience Networking Price Productivity

## Facilitated and niched

When analysing the motivations and consequences of the respondent in the facilitated and niched subgroup, five overarching themes were identified; price, community, networking, comfort and productivity.

The first theme, price, had in this group to do with coworking spaces being the most affordable option. Person 7D and person 12D mentioned the attraction of flexible leasing contracts that a coworking space offers. Person 7D described it as a financial decision, explaining that the notice period was significantly shorter compared to traditional offices. They had to move out of the space when the COVID-19 pandemic hit their company financially. The extrinsic motivation fulfilled through the coworking space compared to traditional offices was to not be stuck to long-term contracts or to bind capital. Similarly, person 12D described the short notice period and comparably cheap contracts as the most appropriate solution as a small company. Person 11D had mainly searched for a place to work dedicatedly but chosen a coworking space since it was the cheapest option compared to a traditional office space. The extrinsic motivation for persons 11D and 12D was lower costs, which was thought could be fulfilled through a coworking space in comparison with other offices.

The second theme was community related. The respondents in this subgroup repeatedly touched upon the topic of social interactions in the coworking space from a personal perspective. The community was explained as important for person 7D because of the enjoyable discussions among coworkers. These discussions mainly took place during joint lunches, without any particular expectations. Person 7D engaged in these activities based on the satisfaction of having

a nice lunch with coworkers. Therefore, this motivation is intrinsic. Person 8D had moved coworking space to be a part of a more active community. Person 11D enjoyed socializing as they were social persons. Person 12D appreciated that socialising could be done effortlessly through the coworking space and as a consequence they did not feel as lonely as working from home. Person 9D posed a similar view, that socialising was effortless and that the community became a solution for not feeling as lonely as an entrepreneur.

Continuing the community theme, some respondents elaborated on the soft topics of positive feelings and corporate culture. Person 8D described the community as boosting since they had the same drive. Being a part of the boosting energy could be interpreted as an intrinsic motivation for person 8D as it was described as satisfying in itself and did not have to lead to something. On the other hand, some activities they had done together had led to rewarding feedback, a consequence. Person 9D described achieving a closely knit community through the coworking space. Person 10D wanted to establish a pleasant corporate culture and believed they could *piggyback* the already existing one in the coworking space. Person 12D explained an emotional aspect where the coworking space had consequently contributed to concretising the business.

The third theme was related to networking. Respondents discussed their relationships with the other coworkers and posed different views on how they contributed for the sake of the company. Person 8D was satisfied with the coworkers in the way that they boosted each other, had initiated collaborations with each other and in other ways helped each other. Person 10D saw other coworkers as potential customers or business partners and had as a consequence collaborated,

describing it as “a kind of free consulting”. Both person 10D and 11D had received leads from networking in the coworking space. Person 10D purposely joined a coworking space for the opportunity of naturally networking. Person 9D acknowledged as a consequence that the coworking space had provided networking opportunities since people enjoy introducing each other to their network. Person 12B did not expect any specific gains from networking but as a consequence had enjoyed being proposed to a few smaller projects, meaning business opportunities

Continuing on the overarching theme of networking, the respondents repeatedly mentioned the importance of similarities among the coworkers for contributions from coworkers. Person 7D expressed a desire of working in a coworking space niched towards their industry in culture. The motivation was to achieve exchanges and strong connections with the other coworkers and as a consequence they extended their professional network and received feedback that developed their sales pitch. Person 9D also worked among similar coworkers, being start-ups. However, the coworkers were seen as customers since they were a start-up community organisation. Therefore they achieved customer insights directly through working in the coworking space. Person 11D described searching to work with people who also were in the maturity phase and encountered similar business problems. The motivation was to learn from others. In contrast, person 8D elaborated on the fact that working in different industries had been useful for networking purposes.

The fourth theme identified was related to convenience. Several respondents elaborated on practical elements as both a motivation and a consequence of working in a coworking space.

Person 11D explained they wanted several necessary practical elements such as an adjustable desks. They could achieve it through a coworking space, among other options, but the underlying extrinsic motivation specific for the coworking space was the convenience of not having to worry about office interiors themselves. For person 7D, storage space was a decisive factor when choosing office space. The current coworking space had storage options and because of it, they could gather equipment and host meetings at the same location, which would be the extrinsic motivation.

Lastly, the fifth theme was related to productivity. Person 10D was a coworking space as an opportunity to strengthen the communication among the founders, who had previously worked remote. They had in fact achieved this through it. Further consequences were mentioned such as a coworking host and events.

For the subgroup facilitated and niched, Table 11 summarises the themes of motivations and consequences identified.

*Table 11: Summary of analysis of the facilitated and niched subgroup*

Motivations	Consequences
Community Convenience Networking Price Productivity	Community Convenience Networking Price Productivity

## Motivations and consequences

The analysis showed that the respondents expressed motivations of both extrinsic and intrinsic nature. For example, Person 6B expressed that they thought the coworking space gave a feeling of exclusivity, and how that posed as a motivation. This motivation is based on their perception and how they interpreted their surroundings as being exclusive, but there was no outcome linked to that feeling of exclusivity. Instead they described a satisfaction of being in that environment. Therefore, that is an intrinsic motivation. Another example was Person 7D and how they enjoyed having joint informal lunches with other coworkers. This activity was based on the satisfaction of socialising over a nice lunch without a desired outcome. This is therefore also an intrinsic motivation. This study acknowledges that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are present in coworking spaces. However, since the focus of the study is on extrinsic motivations, the intrinsic motivations will not be summarised in the table below and will not be present in the conclusions.

## Summary of extrinsic motivations

Table 12 summarizes the extrinsic motivations under the theme identified in the empirical data.

*Table 12: Summary of the extrinsic motivations found in the analysis of the empirical data*

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Extrinsic motivations</b>	<b>Subgroup</b>
Community	Social interaction An active community A closely knit community Piggyback pleasant corporate culture	B, C D D D
Convenience	Not worrying about office necessities Equipment and meetings in one location	D D
Networking	Find new business opportunities Gain important contacts Exchanges and strong connections Learn from others	A B D D
Price	Easily increase/decrease personnel Save money Easily increase personnel Not stuck to long-term contract nor binded capital Lower cost	A B B, D D D
Productivity	To become more productive Working more productively Working without distractions Strengthen communication	B C C D

## Summary of consequences

Below is a table summarizing the consequences under the theme identified in the empirical data.

*Table 13: Summary of the consequences found in the analysis of the empirical data.*

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Consequences</b>	<b>Subgroup</b>
Community	Support from coworkers	A
	Risk of leaking business strategy to competitors	A
	Help with product development	B
	Being part of social community	B
	Strong connections to the community	B
	Knowledge spillovers	C
	Rewarding feedback	D
	Concetisising the business	D
Convenience	Necessary practical elements (adjustable desk)	D
	Storage space	D
	Office necessities	D
Networking	Found new business opportunities	A
	Media coverage	B
	Gained important contacts	B
	Received leads	B
	Found intern	B
	Collaborating with coworkers	D
	Received leads	D
	Introduced to relevant networks	D
	Business opportunities	D
	Extended professional network	D
	Received feedback	D
	Customer insights	D
Price	Lowered cost	A
Productivity	Working without distractions	B
	Working more productively	B
	Working more productively	C
	Proper working desk in peace and quiet	C
	Efficient communication	C
	Strengthened communication	D

# Conclusions

Conclusions that can be drawn from the analysis is that several respondents had similar answers, which reached beyond the specific subgroup of the coworking space. The aim of this study was to describe and analyse the extrinsic motivations and both positive and negative consequences for businesses in coworking spaces and the following questions were formulated in order to help achieve the aim:

*Q1: What extrinsic motivations are there for entrepreneurs to work in a coworking space?*

*Q2: What are the consequences for entrepreneurs to work in a coworking space?*

These questions can be answered through the analysis. The conclusions that can be drawn from the discussion in the analysis is that extrinsic motivations and consequences in the empirical data were diverse in their nature, but they also carried similarities which allowed for a grouping based on themes. The extrinsic motivations and consequences can be divided in five broader themes. These themes are *community, convenience, networking, price and productivity*.

*A1: The extrinsic motivations for entrepreneurs to work in a coworking space are diverse but can be summarised under the following themes; community, convenience, networking, price and productivity.*

*A2: The consequences for entrepreneurs to work in a coworking space are also diverse but can be summarised under the following themes; community, convenience, networking, price and productivity.*

# Discussion

While analysing the data it became clear that the motivations and consequences discussed by respondents were not always unique characteristics of a coworking space. As a matter of fact, some of them could be derived from traditional offices as well, such as *productivity*. It is possible that what was desired and could be fulfilled through their coworking space depended on context and their perceived alternatives. For example, person 6C previously worked remotely from home. As explained by themselves, the (extrinsic) motivation to separate between work and private life, that could be fulfilled through a coworking space, could just as well be fulfilled through any office space. In reality, a sum of different considered factors had affected the decision to achieve that desire specifically through a coworking space before other alternatives. Another possibility is that the respondents had not interpreted the questions in the way we had hoped. Perhaps, when hearing the question: “Could you please elaborate on why you wanted to work in a coworking space?”, they did not think of it as a question that compared coworking spaces to other office solutions. Instead, they simply answered what their motivations were, no matter if it was a feature unique to coworking spaces. If proceeding with the study again, more emphasis could have been placed on the perceived alternative office spaces, since the importance of this particular context became clearer during interviewing.

However, several motivations and consequences that were found through this study were related to unique characteristics of a coworking space. Several researchers agree that the phenomena of coworking spaces include a social aspect, more than just a shared office space (Butcher et. al, 2016, 2018; Bouncken & Reuschl, 2016). Fuzi (2015) means that coworking spaces are designed

to enhance collaboration, networking and social interaction. The themes of community and networking found in this study were often related to the social characteristic of a coworking space. Further, (Kojo & Nenonen, 2014) described that coworking spaces offer flexible leasing contracts compared to traditional office space. The flexible contracts were repeatedly mentioned in this study as the unique characteristic that enabled lowered costs, ability to easily increase personnel and not binding too much capital. As a matter of fact, Kojo and Nenonen (2014) found that these contracts appealed to start-ups and small businesses. Again, however, these motivations were understood further through understanding the respondents' context. For example, the reason for it being appealing could either be operating in a volatile industry or a business who often increased or decreased personnel.

Related to previous research on motivations to work in a coworking space, this study saw several similar themes. For example, this study distinguished an extrinsic motivation to be: finding new business opportunities. Similarly, Spinuzzi (2012) found that a motivation to be in a coworking space was to be able to gain referrals and establish partnerships. An example under the theme of community was that our study found *social interaction* as an extrinsic motivation. Similarly, Weijs-Perrée et. al, (2018) believed a motivation was the social interactions with other coworkers. Motivations of combating loneliness (Spinuzzi, 2012; Weijs-Perrée et. al, 2018), receiving feedback (Spinuzzi, 2012) and a social atmosphere (Fuzi, 2015) were similarly found in this study but in this study understood as an unexpected consequence or intrinsic motivations and not extrinsic motivations.

Entrepreneurship theory states that entrepreneurs operate in a resource scarce environment (Baker & Nelson, 2005). Entrepreneurs can use a variety of bootstrapping techniques to overcome the issue of limited resources (Winborg & Landström, 2001), one of which is, through social resource practices, obtaining social capital (Keating, Geiger and McLoughlin, 2013). Close personal relationships represent a strong form of social capital (Keating, Geiger and McLoughlin, 2013). Previous research has shown that coworking spaces usually have a social aspect to them (Spinuzzi, 2012; Kojo & Nenonen, 2016) and could therefore be a good place to carry out such social resourcing activities. This study shows tendencies to agree with previous research, that coworking spaces are a social phenomenon. Out of the broader themes, both the theme of community and networking are of a social nature and many respondents highlighted various types of social interactions that they had experienced at the coworking space. The study also shows trends of the respondents' ability to use the social environment of a coworking space in order to grow their businesses. For example, 3B explained how certain coworkers, that were successful internationally, helped others with contacts and practical know-hows to launch products on an international market. 10D also utilized the surroundings. Working for an industry organisation, they were encircled with potential customers and received feedback on important matters. Because of the social environment, they could easily surround themselves with everyone. The study and these examples agree with previous research on the benefit of social resourcing. However, the sample in this study was not large enough to draw any distinctive conclusions on these topics.

This paper shows the extrinsic motivation of twelve coworkers and the consequences that they experience when operating in a coworking space. Worth noticing is that the respondents of this

study could not identify as many negative consequences of working in a coworking space, as positive ones. This might have to do with the respondents being currently working in them or only attracting the most engaged coworkers to be a part of the study. It would be interesting, for future researchers, to add depth to this through analysing entrepreneurs who have purposely left coworking spaces or chosen another alternative that still reaps the effects of social connections.

Like mentioned previously, the social aspect was frequently discussed and this study shows that it is a big part of the coworkers reality. This is something that we would like to pass on to coworking space hosts and managers. Through this study, we hope that they can achieve an impression of what coworkers are looking for and what characteristics they wish a coworking space to have. We would also like to invite further research on the topic. This paper divides the coworkers into four different categories but it does not compare those subgroups. We would therefore like to encourage future researchers to use the same subgroups but instead conduct a quantitative study, with a larger sample size, in order to compare the different subgroups and shed further light on how they are different and how they are similar. This would allow for a more precise understanding of the desires for coworkers that are drawn to different coworking spaces belonging to different subgroups.

After all, in 1990 former Apple CEO Steve Jobs spoke about the digital organisation and how it enables organisations to keep up with the rapid pace of the changing business conditions (Hone & Palfreman, 1990). However, later Steve Jobs had changed his attitude about working in isolation and instead implied that the best ideas derive from accidentally bumping into each other (Roose, 2020). In the beginning of this paper we acknowledged that the coworking space

phenomena is still on the rise and asked why entrepreneurs join coworking spaces. After conducting this study we believe that we have come a few steps closer to answering this question. Entrepreneurs engage in coworking space for various reasons related to community, convenience, networking, price and productivity. However, often what they gain from being in a coworking space is that they find something good without looking for it. By being in a coworking space they are *creating serendipity*.

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# Appendix

## Questionnaire Swedish

### **Innan start:**

1. *Förklara syfte med uppsatsen*

2. *Berätta om intervjuens samtalsämnen*

- *Valprocess*
- *Motivationer för att arbeta i ett coworking space - för individen och organisationen*
- *Deltagande och motivation till att stanna*
- *Networking*

3. *Fråga om vi får spela in intervjun*

### **Intervjun börjar:**

1) Kan du dela med dig av ett par saker om ert företag? Berätta gärna lite sammanfattat om:

- Namn, ålder och företag
- Kan du vänligen berätta om ditt företag?
- Vad är er affärsidé?
- Vilken position du har i företaget?
- När grundades ni?
- Antal anställda?
- Hur länge har ni suttit på detta coworking spacet?

2) Skulle du kortfattat kunna berätta om varför ni vill sitta på ett cws?

### **Samtalsämne 1: Valprocess**

3) Kan du vänligen berätta lite om ert beslut att jobba på coworking space

4) Var du delaktig i beslutet att sitta på CWS? Var det fler?

- Om du inte var med, vad vet du om beslutet?

5) Har ni suttit på ett annat cws?

- Eller annan typ av arbetsplats tidigare?
- Var?

- Varför bytte ni?

6) Vad hade ni för alternativ när ni skulle välja coworking space?

7) Hur gick tankarna när ni skulle välja arbetsplats? (ur företagets perspektiv)

- Vilka attribut hos CWS var viktigast för ert företag?

8) Varför valde ni just detta alternativet?

9) Vilka fördelar såg ni? För företaget

10) Hade ni förhoppningar/tankar om att det skulle vara bra för företaget att sitta här? Vilka?

11) Vad hade ni för förväntningar på att jobba på CWS?

## **Samtalsämne 2: Motivation**

12) Gynnas ert företag av att ni är arbetar på ett CWS?

- Varför/varför inte?

13) Vad strävar ni efter som företag just nu? Vad för mål?

- Hur hjälper CWS er med att uppnå detta?

14) Har miljön på arbetsplatsen förändrat ert företag, arbetssätt eller mål?

15) Har de förväntningar ni hade innan ni gick in i CWS uppfyllts?

16) Var ser ni er i framtiden? Sitta kvar eller på annat kontor?

- Varför/Varför inte?

17) Vad är er starkaste motivation till att sitta kvar på coworking spacet?

18) Hur länge har ni suttit på coworking space?

19) Hade ni valt annorlunda idag?

20) Är det något ni saknar i dagens coworking space?

## **Samtalsämne 3: Networking**

21) Kan du berätta lite om hur sociala relationer fungerar på ert coworking space?

- 22) Hur ser relationerna ut med de andra som sitter på coworking spacet?
- 23) Kan du berätta om en situation där någon av dessa hjälpt er i resan mot era mål? (tillväxt, reach, etc)
- 24) Har den social aspekten av ett cws /nätverkande varit viktigt för er? På vilket sätt?
- 25) Deltar ni aktivt i både event och socialisering med andra?
- 26) Kan du berätta om en situation där andra coworkers hjälpt/bidragit till ert företag?

### **Avslutande fråga**

27) Om vi syftar till att kartlägga motivationer för ett företag att arbeta på ett coworking space, är det något som vi har missat? Vilka ytterligare frågor är relevanta?

### **Efter intervjun:**

- 1) Vad upplever vi var detta företags motivationer?
- 2) Hur beskrivs valprocessen? Vilka var motivationerna?
- 3) Hur såg de på motivationer till att sitta kvar?
- 4) Hur viktigt var networkandet för dem? Var det en motivation?
- 5) Hur gick intervjun? Setting, teknik? Var personen nervös, pratglad, välklädd etc?
- 6) Öppnade intervjun upp för nya intressanta analysfrågor?

## Questionnaire English

### **Before start:**

*1. Explain the study's purpose*

*2. Mention and briefly explain the interview topics*

- *Selection process*
- *Motivations for staying in a coworking space - for the individual and the organisation*
- *Participation and motivation to stay*
- *Networking*

### *3. Ask if we can record the interview*

#### **The interview begins:**

- 1) Can you share a few things about you and your company? Please tell us briefly about:
  - Name, age and business
  - What is your business idea?
  - What is your position within the business?
  - When were you founded?
  - Number of employees?
  - For how long have you been at your current coworking space?
- 2) Could you briefly explain why you wanted to join a coworking space?

#### **Interview Topic 1: Selection process**

- 3) Could you please explain your decision to work at a coworking space?
- 4) Were you a part of the decision to join a coworking space? If not, what do you know about the decision?
- 5) Have you been to another coworking space as well?
  - Other office solutions?
  - Where?
  - Why did you change?
- 6) What were your options when selecting a coworking space?
- 7) What did you think when choosing your workplace? From a company perspective
  - What attributes of a coworking space mattered the most to your business?
- 8) Why did you decide upon your current coworking space?
- 9) What benefits did you see in your decision? From a company perspective
- 10) Did you have any expectations/thoughts about how and why it would be beneficial for the business to work there?
- 11) What were your expectations for working in a coworking space, in general?

#### **Interview Topic 2: Motivation**

- 12) Do you benefit from working in a coworking space? Why/Why not?
- 13) What are you reaching for as a company right now? What are your goals?
  - How is the coworking space helping you fulfill these goals?
- 14) Has the environment of the workspace in any way altered your business, way of working or goals?
- 15) Regarding your expectations of joining your coworking space, have they been met?
- 16) Where do you see yourselves in the future? Stay or change to another office?  
Why/Why not?
- 17) What is your strongest motivation to stay in your coworking space?
- 18) For how long have you been at the coworking space?
- 19) Would you have chosen differently today?
- 20) Is there anything you're missing at your coworking space?

### **Interview Topic 3: Networking**

- 21) Can you elaborate on how social relationships work in your coworking space?
- 22) What do the relationships with the others at the coworking space look like?
- 23) Can you tell us about a situation where someone has helped you in reaching your goals? (e.g growth, reach etc)
- 24) Has the social aspect of a coworking space/networking been important to you? In what way?
- 25) Do you actively participate in both events and socialising with others?
- 26) Can you tell us about a situation where other coworkers helped/aided your business?

### **Ending Question**

- 27) If we aim to map motivations for business to work at a coworking space, is there anything we have missed? What other questions are relevant?

**After the Interview:**

- 1) What do we experience this company's motivations to be?
- 2) How is the selection process described? What were the motivations?
- 3) How did they think about staying? What were their motivations for this?
- 4) How important was networking to them? Was it a motivation?
- 5) Overall impression of interviewee and the interview? Was the respondent nervous? Joyful, well-dressed, etc?
- 6) Did the interview open up to new, interesting analysis questions?