



# INFLUENCE OF THE SIZE ORGANIZATIONS ON RECOGNITION EXPECTATIONS IN SMALL ORGANIZATIONS

Alexis Roche

## ► To cite this version:

Alexis Roche. INFLUENCE OF THE SIZE ORGANIZATIONS ON RECOGNITION EXPECTATIONS IN SMALL ORGANIZATIONS. Congrès AOM Anaheim 2016 - Division MC, Aug 2016, Anaheim, United States. hal-01357036

**HAL Id: hal-01357036**

**<https://univ-lyon3.hal.science/hal-01357036>**

Submitted on 22 Oct 2018

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

## INFLUENCE OF THE SIZE ORGANIZATIONS ON RECOGNITION EXPECTATIONS IN SMALL ORGANIZATIONS

---

Author : Alexis Roche. Maître de conférences. Iseor. Magellan. Iaelyon. Université Jean Moulin.

To quote this paper : Roche A. (2016), Influence of the Size Organizations on Recognition Expectations in Small Organizations, Actes du Colloque Academy of Management (AOM), août, Anaheim (États-Unis).

Abstract: Recognition becomes a key concept that actors in organizations require increasingly. Moreover, the concept of recognition is increasingly sought by managers and HR specialists to analyze the overall desires of people in organizations in order to lever the performance of human resources management. In this paper, beyond a more comprehensive definition of recognition, we present an analysis of the influence of the size of organizations size on the recognition expectation. The scientific observation draws on 17 diagnoses and 12 cases in small organization various sizes 1 employee to 700 employees. It leads to particularly discuss the proximity factor. Indeed, the variation of the proximity factor appears to be strongly correlated with the size of small organizations and the metamorphosis of actor's expectations.

Keywords: Recognition, intervention-research, Socio-Economic Approach to Management (SEAM), small organizations

## INFLUENCE OF THE SIZE ORGANIZATIONS ON RECOGNITION EXPECTATIONS IN SMALL ORGANIZATIONS

---

### INTRODUCTION

Recognition is a polysemous word and an object of interdisciplinary research: it feeds philosophical, psychological, sociological, anthropological and economic and even biological reflections. Management sciences can profit from eliciting the link between these approaches to recognition and management practices, as it is a key issue in Human Resource Management (Malherbe & Saulquin, 2003). Indeed, there are many challenges connected to the different types of recognition : ethical issues related to the predominance of economic rationality on social rationality (Meda, 1995; Chanlat 1998; Heller, 2009), social issues as recognition impacts individuals , including mental health (Enriquez, 1997 ; Brown & al., 2003 ; Morin, 2010) and community life associated with well-being at work (Brun & Dugas, 2005, 2008). Recognition also contributes to identity through a "constitutive temporality" (Ricoeur, 2004) and psychological stability. This requires that organization build a social relationship over time (Stone, 2002). And finally, the economic stakes because the relations set up during the recognition process and practices have impacts on diverse economic performance: absenteeism, turnover, productivity, quality, responsiveness, innovation and cooperation among others. In this perspective, Human is the only factor of sustainable performance and therefore there is a need to work

on human potential (Savall, 1975; Savall & Zardet, 1987). This concept is right at the junction between the social dimension and the economic dimension in organizations. These relationships were analyzed by Roche (2013, 2014, 2015) through the concept of "activating-recognition". We first discuss the problem, the theoretical foundations and research methodology. Then we present and discuss the results and the contribution of proxemics before concluding.

## 1. PROBLEMS

Recognition is thus a key concept that company actors increasingly require their vows (Lazzeri and Caillé, 2004; Caillé, 2007) especially when they experiencing times of existential crisis. Work in particular is a key issue for self-recognition (Dubar, 2000) because it would have become the central place of social ties (Carpentier-Roy, 2000). Awareness of interest in this research topic is becoming more significant to both the side of researchers (Bourcier & Palobart 1997; Saulquin & Malherbe, 2003; Brun & Dugas, 2005, 2008; St Onge & al., 2005; Peretti, 2005; Gavrancic & al., 2007; Terramorsi, 2010) as the professionals. Recognition definition that we hold is: "Confirmation by others of belief acquired by a person of his/her own value, after various identification processes" (Renault, 2004, p. 181).

A regional director in a security company reflects very well the issue of the concept of recognition in the interface between social performance and economic performance with these words: "There is a need for social change in the business and not only in the economy. If we only give figures, any employee cares. What is it in for him? Training, money, employability? You need to link economic and social performance. Economic performance, the employees do not care if it does not change anything in their lives. For

more information about links and impacts of the recognition performance see the "activating recognition" concept (Roche, 2010, 2013).

In fact, managers and HR professionals better integrate the requirement to understand the processes and systems of recognition because they are faced with the stakeholders needs, wants and requirements that they no longer control. Also, the recognition approach gives the possibility to obtain levers for Human Resource Management. There is therefore company responsibility in terms of management recognition (Brun & Dugas, 2008). Indeed, "institutions do not produce themselves recognition or denial of recognition, but constitute the conditions which can stabilize recognition relations between individuals or perpetuate barriers to their development" (Renault, 2004, p.193). Some authors denounce the managerial disability to provide adequate forms of recognition (Dubar, 2000). It is therefore interesting for practitioners to have the tools and knowledge to improve their practices.

The organizations growth associated with globalization and internationalization, through the development of communication tools and multiculturalism, allows other individuals comparisons. These comparisons and the increase of people with whom employees are connected, developed application on some recognition forms especially with the increase of organizations size. Geographical dispersion and time constraints also lower the ability to communicate and to recognize (Townsend & *al.*, 1998; Kayworth & Leidner, 2000). These various elements are linked to a proximity factor impacting recognition (Torres, 2002; Roche, 2013). The research field we met in our intervention-research highlight the importance of the size of the organization and the proximity between actors to explain the metamorphosis of some actor's expectations. This paper aims to shed light on these

relations through an analysis of professional recognition expectations in different small organizations sizes. Our core hypothesis is that: "The small organization size impacts the expectations of recognition especially as it affects the proximity factor."

## 2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Recognition concept is increasingly mobilized by the management authors and is found in the background of many management science theories. The issue of recognition impacts the emergence of humans desires by recognition need and challenges social and economic issues. Thus, theories are interested in recognition concept by three main types of approaches that we have identified: an approach by recognition needs, an approach by recognition process and an approach based on recognition practices (Figure 1).

-----  
Insert Figure 1 about here.  
-----

The approach by needs can be found in line with the needs theories, including the famous author Maslow (1943). The approach by recognition process is found in sociological perspectives and management and the school of human relations, and translated by many authors into the motivation theories. One of the key authors in connection with recognition is Herzberg (1966) with the two factors theory. Finally, a number of previous theories and some others have a behavioral approach, focusing on practices stimulation, related to the recognition, for a type of performance. This is the case of so-called classical theories that are more focused on practices in connection with the performance but also many motivation theories. Some transversal studies, focusing on the recognition concept, emerged contemporaneously in several disciplines, starting with philosophy (Hegel, 1802; Honneth, 1995; Ricoeur, 2004). Honneth defines three modes of recognition from

the tripartite theoretical of Hegel (1976) on the ethical life division: loving recognition, legal recognition and cultural recognition. In organizations coexist these three type of recognition. In sociology, currents, such as the work psychodynamic (Dejours, 1993, 1998), are generally interested in the recognition under its impact on the health of individuals. The socio-economic management theory (Savall, 1975), which draws on other theories and currents such as job enrichment, provides a backdrop vision about recognition. Furthermore, the recognition concept itself is becoming more significant. It was driven by management authors such as Bourcier & Palobart (1997) and more recently Brun & Dugas (2005, 2008) for a more detailed review of literature see Roche (2013). We classify the recognition, according to our works (2013), in three modes based on those of Honneth (1995):

- “Relationship-recognition” appears in through practical recognition confirming the value of individuals through the encounter of a "similar" giving value to individual characteristics in an exchange.
- “Reward-recognition” takes the form of an object, service or symbolic status valued by a part of the community and who is generally given after a result. It may thus be more formalized and thus disconnected from relationship but recoverable out of the relationship when it was acquired. This is the case, for example, of salary which was automatically reset at the month end.
- “Achievement-recognition” brings an awareness of the existence and individual usefulness that causes a sense of achievement, social usefulness and completion giving meaning to the individual existence. This mode seems powered by the two previous.

Representation of recognition varies according to the people and moments, takes many forms (see Table 2: Mapping of the recognition system) because "confirmation by others of belief acquired by a person of his own value, following different processes of identification" (Renault, 2004, p. 181) can be done in many ways in social relations. We present some examples to link abstract concept and managerial practices: the money giving, object giving, congratulations, the granting of time to the person, to thank, to shake hands, to improve the living environment at work, give a title valued, to bring the person in a socially valued group, to give the opportunity to create, assign an area of responsibility, etc.

Recognition being placed in social relationships that can only be done by interaction between individuals and proximity (Mahé de Boislandelle, 1996; Torres, 2002) both physical, mental and social, which plays a major role. It therefore deserves particular interest in relation to the organizations size which scattered actors in a geographical point of view and increases the number of individuals with whom to interact. However, these physical, mental and social interactions are limited in this particular geographical dispersion and the necessarily limited time given to each relationship. We will focus on these elements in the Results and Discussion section.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study of recognition management is recent, which justifies and motivates the exploratory focus of this research. Our goal is to throw light on all aspects connected with recognition in the system aspects related to it. In addition, further studies are often limited to psychological, sociological and philosophical level.



We will use some the qualimetric intervention research methodology (Savall & Zardet, 2004). The qualimetric intervention research is part of a constructivist orientation favorable to the questions connected with the field of human resource management (Martinet, 1990; Brabet, 1993) while allowing the production of generic knowledge with a certain degree of validity according to the generic contingency principle. Constructivism assumes the relativity of "real" and the subjectivity of the concept of "truth." In this, it goes well with the intervention research and methods residing in the subjectivities actors confrontation to create a "intersubjective representation of reality." This methodology alternates inductive and deductive periods. In inductive periods, researcher observes and extracts field material for creating hypotheses. In deductive periods, the researcher creates hypotheses from his thoughts and bibliography, and then he/she will test in organizations.

We will here state on the qualitative methodological section whose concerns diagnosis interviews and quantitative evaluation because the analysis is built on content. This quantitative section seeks to illustrate the qualitative case studies and not to make a quantitative demonstration. Other devices (training meetings, project meetings, observations, non-formal individual interviews) came to power this analysis, but will not be detailed in this paper. This paper thus focuses on a static analysis through study of 17 diagnoses from 12 research fields treated in an expert database, SEGESE. These 12 cases were selected based on a variety of criteria in terms of size, type of population and business sector. Characteristics of the sample are shown in Table 1 below.

-----  
Insert Table 1 about here.  
-----

We constitute three categories of small organizations size with the sample we have: “1 to 20 employees”, “300 to 450 employees” and “700 employees”. The number 1b, 1c and 1d belong to the same company 1a and have been included as all entity in “300 to 450 employees” size in the following tables. The number 2b belong to the same company 2a and have been included as all entity in “700 employees” size in the following tables. The number 12b belong to the same company 12a and have been included as all entity in “300 to 450 employees” size in the following tables.

We used semi-structured interviews as data collecting method. Semi-structured interviews are in line with clinical research which is based on listening people (Gaulejac, 2002; Levy, 1997; Giust-Desprairies, 2001). We use comprehensive notes to capture data. In the case of this communication, interviews are covered by a questioning of the "dysfunctions" perceived by the actors. These are presented as differences between daily practices and observations and implicit individuals norms. These implicit norms constructed through social representations are elements that the individual judges "abnormal" or "desirable" and that would be "*a priori*" for him a basis for progress. This can be seen as a recognition and satisfaction way if the gap was reduced by others. Thus, these perceived differences are interpreted by researcher as "expectations of recognition" standardized, if that they were filled, would potentially be perceived as recognition given to actor. Individual may then feel recognized because somebody took into account these concerns and / or aspirations. To illustrate, we take two examples from 5150 verbatim witnesses present in the appendices of our thesis (Roche, 2013), the staff of a trading company of building materials evokes: "*The computer program is too complicated for deliveries, and it is not clear. It is written too small and it greatly complicates things*" and

the frame of a security company said: "*There is too little positive feedback on what we do. It is very rare and informal. By cons, negative returns are common*". In both cases, if a member of the organization, including the manager, decides to solve the software problem, there is a good chance that the individual sees the inclusion of its suggestions and thus develops a feeling of gratitude for the individual confirmed that he existed. This approach by recognition dysfunction has also the advantage of avoiding biases of recognition word in interviews. In fact, this word, when pronounced, has a variety of definitions and representations that depend on their expectations at the moment and of their history but is not representative of its most general definition. Knowledge collected in different interviews are then aggregated to obtain an intersubjective representation of reality.

The data collected for this analysis of 403 interviews, which allowed each extraction 10-15 verbatim illustrating a control malfunction, were made directly to a hundred of them by the researcher. The other part being derived from interviews conducted by other researchers in the research center. All researchers in the research center use the same methodology for diagnosis of malfunctions, which makes possible the use of data collected by other researchers.

Categorization of the content of interviews is conducted through a expert system called Segese. It breaks down verbatim semantically into a list of ideas that we developed specifically for this research subject: recognition. It is therefore not ranked by importance but by category across the list. Each verbatim is thus distributed according to its semantics in a theme, sub-theme, sub-subtheme and a key idea to gather verbatim by

forms and issues of recognition. This tree distribution allows to make an analysis at different level of detail. We have uploaded more than 5,000 verbatim in our diagnosis nomenclature with regard to their lexical register and their meaning. This categorization by themes, subthemes, sub-subthemes and key ideas which were charged verbatim allows, by consolidation, to observe changes in recognition expectations expressed by stakeholders as sets which constitute a analysis grid. The latter is certainly necessarily conventional and illustrative but meaningful. It was built by successive back and forth between a literature review of representative major thematic sets mentioned by the authors and a semantic consolidation of verbatim by using keywords and ideas can be successively gathered near key ideas, sub-themes, sub-subthemes and themes.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Our first result is the creation of a recognition mapping that we present in Table 2 below.

-----  
Insert Table 2 about here.  
-----

We now present the results of this research. To improve reading and considering our sample, we resort to three categories of small organization according to their size: the first from 1 to 20 employees, the second from 300 to 450 employees and third from 700 employees. These sizes were developed under our sample and allows a gradual reunification. The tables contained in this chapter include rounding unit and are illustrative. The results presented in bold are the most significant. Percentages correspond to the total count of the number of verbatim for each theme, sub-themes and sub-subthemes. They allow us to illustrate trends we observed on the ground in our case studies. We first present a table (Table 3) to observe the distribution patterns between the three major themes we have used (conditions of working life, status and achievement) in

relation to the organization size. Trends show the evolution of the distribution as organizational size decreases. Percentages are made on the basis of a total of approximately 5150 verbatim. The average is calculated per item as the total of all the themes for all tables.

-----  
Insert Table 3 about here.  
-----

We observe that expectations regarding the conditions of work at life were relatively stable across the themes, even if small businesses seem to be more affected by this item. In contrast, we observe, on status, lower expectations on the part of small businesses while levels are nearly equivalent across companies and those of 700 employees 300 to 450 employees. One explanation is that the titles, functions and career opportunities offer less potential for small organizations. Directly on the achievements mentioned by the actors, we observe a progressive increase as the size decreases. We suggest that, on the one hand, small organizations can probably better appropriate some creations and achievements working in the field of achievement, and secondly, we must take into account the fact that the category of leaders companies, compared to the number of interviews, is proportionally represented in smaller organizations. However, they almost all evoke the notion of fulfillment through the development of their organization. We will analyze more thoroughly the sub-themes and sub-subthemes for each theme.

#### 4.1. Conditions of work life and organizational size

Table 4 below summarizes the sub-themes of the working conditions with regard to the organization size, and Table 5 is focused on the sub-themes.

-----  
Insert Table 4 about here.  
-----

-----  
Insert Table 5 about here.  
-----

These tables suggest lower expectations on earnings, particularly in terms of regular salary in the small organizations as compared to other sizes of organization. The most limited means of small structures can explain this trend. As opposed to mundane belief, the compensation is far from being the first recognition issue. Indeed, it represents between 1% and 4% of the recognition expectations of staff according to the organizations sizes.

Applications for improving the physical working conditions increase relatively proportionally as we approach small organizations, from 12 % to 25 %. We suggest that these are the expectations that weigh most heavily on employees of small businesses and they consider most likely to evolve. Indeed, we observed that the actors evoke as recognition expectations during the interviews those that are more stringent but also those that seem, according to them, the more likely to evolve. Another explanation may contribute to this result: it is the most important investment opportunity for large organizations that can bridge some of the expectations in terms of equipment and work environment. In this respect, it is interesting to note that in-kind benefits are fringe more and more requested in smaller organizations, probably because without having possibility of salary increases, it is a cheaper and easier form of recognition to implement.

Intangible working conditions is the larger sub-theme in terms of expression of actors for all sizes of organization with 48 % to 58 % of the total expression. However, these expectations seem to decrease when organization size decreases. We suggest as an explanation, a stronger proximity between individuals who are most rarely geographically scattered. They better know and are forced to help each other because of

this proximity. Thus, according to the data, bibliography (Torres, 2002) and our field observations, recognition expectations and acts provided are reduced due to a stronger interaction between the actors who favors in particular information transmission, involvement, support and proximity. An additional suggestion is that the low financial resources of small organizations may limit some "reasonable expectations for actors" to obtain some recognition types as training and therefore they do not mention it in interviews. This item also decreases sharply and linearly with size. In addition, some expectations of this sub-subtheme may be absent in small organizations because of their apparent uselessness. For example, financial resources will mostly be of interest to the leader than other actors in small businesses.

Another interesting feature of our sample is the lower expectations concerning employment stability which seems to correlate with the size decrease. We suggest that small organizations are less likely to downsize because of the higher relative importance of relationships within staff. Indeed, the observation shows that the staff is more polyvalent and more difficult to replace because the function is generally based on conventions and informal modes of operation built through the relationship between individuals. This explanation is consistent with the effect of proportion mentioned by Mahé de Boislandelle (1996), "the individuals importance is (often) inversely proportional to the structure size." This informal operation of small organizations is impossible for large organizations which have to formalize and register in "depersonalization" contexts of work through many rules and procedures. However, it should be noted that expectations about the rules and procedures appear to be very similar, regardless of the organization size. This is probably explained by the diversity of

key ideas, the last generalization link between verbatim and sub-themes, which do not appear in the table (see Appendix, Roche, 2013). They often concern the lack of formalization for small organizations while for larger organizations, the key ideas deal with the rules and too cumbersome procedures, plentiful, inappropriate, unfulfilled, but also missing.

Level of human pressure seems relatively stable since the work, through the management and / or customers, always involve a form of pressure, which needs to be reduced or legitimized, and so calls for recognition. However, small differences are observed: 3 % in large organizations can be linked, according to our field observations, to more pressure on productivity, a lack of proximity, attitudes more lax, sources of inequity. A higher percentage observed in small organizations, with 4 %, could be explained by the increased opportunities of visible conflicts, because of the proximity which reinforces "mandatory" interaction between actors. In this case, the question of territory has undoubtedly also plays a role. Indeed, the need for a self territory co-exists with the need for proximity with others. A territory is defined as a physical, mental or social area which is perceived as belonging to the individual, to feel alive and have a sense of autonomy. There is thus a threshold that limits the spatial proximity because of dissatisfaction generated from a certain degree of proximity. These elements are connected with work on the intimate sphere, the personal sphere, the social sphere, the public sphere, etc. (Hall, 1963) where proxemics varies across cultures, places, time and registrants in the interaction. Finally, time management issues and work organization result in significant claims around 10% for all organizations. Time is, we believe, a major constraint and it is



crow-cutting the other elements in all organization sizes. Now we will analyze the "status" theme.

#### 4.2. Status and organization sizes

We present below in Table 6 summarizes the sub-themes and on sub-subthemes related to the status in Table 7.

-----  
Insert Table 6 about here.  
-----

-----  
Insert Table 7 about here.  
-----

We observe both a decrease of role definitions problems but also in terms of status requests on some items in approaching small organizations. Titles and promotions are less required, probably because the number of bonuses and promotion prospects decrease. Expectations regarding the responsibilities are relatively consistent, with an average of 9% which is the sub-subcategory most in demand regardless of the organization size. The key ideas in organizations ranging from 300 to 450 people, with 11 % of expectations concern especially challenged by other employees of the statutes, of autonomy or organizations decisions. Instead, these expectations in small organizations represent 7 % of the total. Field observations and bibliography (Torres, 2002) suggest lower demands on certain aspects of multi-skill responsibilities of smaller prospects of small organizations and sense responsibilities were less diluted by the number of persons. Concerning the assessment of the value of work, we suggest that varied and low formalized roles involve sharing tasks considered as unattractive most important and / or most accepted in small organizations where they are very few mentioned.

There seems to be differences regarding the assessment of working practices and skills with a stable 3% for larger companies, but a difference of 4 points, with 7 % for small businesses. We suggest several explanations to account for it. First, critics and mutual expectations on skills appear in the field, enforced by proximity and frequency of interactions as well as, in small organizations, the slightest lack of skills is immediately noticed because it is more difficult embedded in collective responsibility. Another explanation is that in the absence of other form of recognition (pay, status), the need that skills be recognized becomes important to differentiate and is therefore a major challenge to claim in interviews. The assessment by others of the results of work will be a constant demand, at around 2% for individuals of all organizations. This item is constituted by the lack of feedback, especially positive but also negative, on the job. We also note that the smallness of organizations seems to bring more significant demands on the pro-activity of others where it should be more valued and expected, particularly by managers, by the requirement for this company size to be very reactive because flexibility is one of its benefits (Torres 2002). The assessment by others of individuals' characteristics appears slightly stronger in large organizations. According to our field observations, different cultures, numerically more important, and distance make it easier to criticize other people, through ignorance and / or no risk return and therefore intensify the necessity to be considered in this register. Indeed, the physical, psychological and / or social distance, allows to increase denial of individuals, even contempt, of each other because they do not face each other daily. Indeed, it helps to keep misunderstandings and remote representations of the reality of others.

We also observe that expectations regarding relationships with recognized individuals for obtaining recognition and free pass by the mere fact of attending, are much criticized in large organizations, especially the feudal practices and favoritism. Expectations regarding membership appreciation of the group, like the membership of organization, also seem slightly more significant in larger organizations. We offer several explanations to account for it. First, the number of relationships and therefore sub-groups (functional, geographic, etc.) which can be created mechanically decreases as the organization size is reduced. Second, the name and reputation of organizations is less symbolic value, because of a smaller internal and external marketing, in small organizations.

#### 4.3. Achievement and organization sizes

Table 8 summarizes the sub-themes and Table 9 the sub-subthemes related to achievement.

-----  
Insert Table 8 about here.  
-----

-----  
Insert Table 9 about here.  
-----

We emphasize that direct requests concerning achievements are cross-cutting with the two other themes. This implies that we can indirectly see the concept of accomplishment in all other themes. For example, training can be seen as a request for completion at the skills development. These indirect requests for achievements drastically reduce percentage of direct expectations suggested in the theme of "achievement". On the sub-themes and sub-subthemes of achievement, we see stronger "expectations" about the meaning of work and about the possibility to create something, particularly at the

direction of smaller companies. Recognition makes it possible to give meaning to the work (Autissier, 2008; Fender & al., 2011).

Thus, it appears that employees of small businesses are slightly more sensitive to the direct search for personal fulfillment in creation terms. This is the case in the personal assessment of the creation / evolution of the group and especially for leaders of organizations. These are, we recall, proportionally more represented in the sample when we do interviews with less than 20 people in organizations compared of larger organizations. We also see this trend in the impact to evolution in individual personal skills. However, the need of a clear strategy, of goals set by others and of work meaning remains particularly represented in all organization, around 2 %.

According to our results, it seems that the differences between organizations of 700 employees and organizations ranging from 300 to 450 employees are much slighter between the latter and those of 1-20 employees. One explanation is that the proximity - in geographical, physical and mental terms - to a certain population threshold becomes much more difficult. We establish this threshold at a few dozen employees. It refers to cognitive and temporal boundaries to set up the relationships we have already mentioned. Proximity is a prominent criterion seems explanatory the changes in expectations of recognition compared to the organizations size (Roche, 2013). It also plays a role with the autonomy factor, who is another factor affecting perceptions of recognition. This factor is more difficult to manage as the organization size increase and therefore it generates more requests. Equity, another factor affecting perceptions of recognition, also tends to evolve towards iniquity with the size because it generates a multiplication of relations between

individuals and increases the complexity of maintaining a fair system. We return hereinafter in more detail on the proximity factor.

## 5. THE CONTRIBUTION OF PROXEMICS

First, we emphasize that the lack of recognition was an origin of research on proximity management (Thevenet, 1992). In fact, close relations are essential elements of psychological needs satisfaction and are considered as symbolic recognition practices (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1997; Brun & Dugas, 2005, 2008; St-Onge & Thériault, 2006; El Akremi & *al.*, 2009). Thus, proximity is seen as a sign of interest and appreciation for individual. Conversely, the distance is a recognition lack who can be seen as a sign of denial, that ignore other, even contempt, that underestimate other.

Human being is by nature self-centered. Moles & Rohmer (1978) explained the importance of people, things and events falls with distance as their perception decreases, what they call proxemics law. We translate this by the fact that is distant thing can more easily be denied. Denial is the failure to consider a part of reality. It also seems important to state that there is a maximum physical and mental threshold who was limiting by the individual body and ego (Figure 2) which results in a threshold of "territory" (Hall, 1963). Figure 2 below is purely illustrative.

-----  
Insert Figure 2 about here.  
-----

There are also events wall (Moles & Rohmer, 1972), which are a separation between an interior and an exterior. They be seen as an element which decreases the phenomena importance beyond of a singular point (Torres, 2002). For example, a wall phenomenon can be social across between organizational subgroups (service, peer group) or physical

as a partition in an office, a building, site, etc. We suggest that the number of physical, mental and social walls grow as organizational size grows.

Proximity is thus not only physical but takes many forms in terms of temporality, physical and geographical space, economic space, symbolic and emotional space, mental space and social space through groups. Across the board, all these types of proximities is rather promoted by the small organizations size. Indeed, the size of the structure reduces the number of interaction territories, in terms of individuals' number, and the time allocated to the interaction between each individual constituting the group. Proximity allows to better understand language and common representations that facilitate dialogue, mutual listening and helping others. The organizations smallness facilitates the development of a harmonized regulatory framework by the intensity of trade (Lepley, 2002, cited by Torres, 2002) causing recognition expectations partly different as large organizations.

## **CONCLUSION**

As a conclusion, the small organization size, mainly through the proximity factor, appears to be important. Recognition expectations and demands forms differs with the organizations size. Expectations filled more easily proved by small organizations, in relation to proximity, this is the case of : involvement of other individuals, mutual work, sensory stimulation through the frequency of interaction, security of employment or responsibilities that are shared because of the more consistent relative importance of each individual. Other expectations are met more easily by the passage of small to medium organizations, such as: investment in equipment or work in the physical work

environment. These recognition expectations thus appear less in the expression of the actors as they no longer need to be met.

Another issue is the "reasonable expectations", that is to say those which are considered realistic, especially because other people in the organization or area organizations have achieved, but also in relation to the promises made by organization members to other members. Thus, a common example is the promising developments in wages and status when employees are recruited, with the recognition desires in these areas, are claimed later on. Organizational size generates a number of social representations based on actual or displayed trends by the media. Thus, the increase of organizations size correspond to an increase of investment capacity. These elements make more plausible desires in large organizations such as the positive development of remuneration, training expectations, title valued, promotion, membership of organizational subgroups valued, reputation of the organization, etc., then they are less observed and applied in small organizations. Conversely, employees of small organizations consider plausible and tend to wait for fringe benefits, better equipment and working environment considered financially accessible by the organization, use of their abilities by others, good social relations work as well as more structured goals.

Other items of recognition expectations seem not to be much impacted by the organizations size in the analysis of sub-subtopics, although we note differences in key ideas. This is the case of expectations regarding human resources available, the transmission of information, time management and organization of work and the rules and procedures that are expectations rather stable regardless of the organization size. However, if we take the example of rules and procedures, expectations rather relate to

excess, heaviness and lack of respect for rules in large organizations and lack of rules formalization in small organizations.

Dynamic maintenance of proximity through tools and management methods of proximity seems essential for large organizations where the stakes for some forms of recognition are strong. This means creating a dynamic reconciliation who's complicated by the organization size and sometimes by established habit. Reconciliation corresponds to a feeling of being actively listened, more regular meetings with different interfaces and sharing a common project. For small organizations, the issues appear to be from a investment lack in equipment and work skills development. There is also a lack of formalization and organization emphasized by the expectations, in terms of rules and procedures, time management and work organization.

This working paper could be expanded by the analysis of more cases in various activity sectors and to other sizes of organization, which is both a limit and a research perspective. Further quantitative methodology would also draw results beyond an illustrative support of qualitative methodology. We suggest that this study sheds new light on the relationship between the organization size, proximity and recognition expectations that can enrich other research and help find the most appropriate professional recognition practices.



## REFERENCES

- Appelbaum, S.H., & Kamal, R. (2000), An analysis of the utilization and effectiveness of non-financial incentives in small business, *The Journal of Management Development*, vol. 19, no 9-10, 733-763.
- Autissier D. (2008), *Manager par le sens. Les clés de l'implication au travail*, Paris: Eyrolles.
- Bourcier, C., Palobart, Y. (1997), *La reconnaissance : un outil de motivation pour vos salariés*, Paris: Les Éditions d'Organisation.
- Brabet, J. (1993), *Repenser la gestion des ressources humaines*, Paris: Economica.
- Brun J.P. & Dugas N. (2005), La reconnaissance au travail : analyse d'un concept riche de sens, *Gestion*, volume 30, numéro 2, été 2005.
- Brun J.P. & Dugas N. (2008), An analysis of employee recognition: Perspectives on human resources practices, *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, Vol. 19, Issue 4.
- Caillé, A. (dir.) (2007), *La quête de reconnaissance : nouveau phénomène social total*. Paris : Éditions La Découverte.
- Carpentier-Roy, M.-C. (2000), *Être reconnu au travail : nécessité ou privilège ?*, actes du colloque Travail, reconnaissance et dignité humaine, Québec.
- Chanlat, J.-F. (1998), *Sciences sociales et management : plaidoyer pour une anthropologie générale*, Quebec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval / Éditions ESKA.
- De Gaulejac, V. (2002). *Pratiques de consultation, histoire, enjeux, perspectives*, 23-37, Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Dejours C. (1993, 1ère ed : 1980), *Travail : usure mentale*, Paris : Bayard.
- Dejours C. (1998), *Souffrance en France. La banalisation de l'injustice sociale*, Paris : Seuil.
- Dubar, C. (2000), *La crise des identités : l'interprétation d'une mutation*, Paris: PUF.
- El Akremi A., Sassi N. & Bouzidi S. (2009), Rôle de la reconnaissance dans la construction de l'identité au travail, *Relations Industrielles/Industrial Relations*, Volume 64, N°3.
- Enriquez E. (1997), *Les jeux du pouvoir et du désir dans l'entreprise*, Paris : Editions Desclée de Brouwer.

Fender R., Mangematin Y., Husson J., George D. & Albrecht A. (2011), Redonner du sens au travail : essai de modélisation de la reconnaissance au travail, *Projectics / Proyética / Projectique*, 2011/2, n°8, p. 51-65.

Gavrancic, A., Courcy, F., Paquet, M., & Gagnon, S. (2007), *Échelle de mesure de la reconnaissance au travail*, Montréal: CRISO.

Giust-Desprairies, F. (2001), De la recherche-action à l'intervention psychosociale clinique. *Revue Internationale de Psychosociologie*, VII (16-17), 33-46.

Hall E.T. (1963), A System for the Notation of Proxemic Behavior, *American Anthropologist*, 65 (5), 1003-1026.

Hegel G.W.F. (1976, 1ère édition : 1802), *Système de la vie éthique*, Paris: Payot.

Heller T. (2009), Reconnaissance et gouvernement des salariés. Au-delà du mépris, *Questions de communication*, 15, 93-107.

Herzberg, F. (1966), *Work and the Nature of Man*, New York: Staples Press.

Honneth A. (1995), *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*, Oxford: Polity Press.

Kayworth, T. & Leidner, D. (2000), The Global Virtual Manager: A Prescription for Success, *European Management Journal*, vol. 18, n°2, p. 183-194.

Lazzeri, C. & Caillé A. (2004), La reconnaissance aujourd'hui : enjeux théoriques, éthiques et politiques du concept, *Revue du MAUSS*, 23, 28-115.

Lepley B. (2002), Le conflit est-il possible dans les PME ?, *Problèmes Economiques*, n°2742, 13-16.

Mahé de Boislandelle H. (1996), *L'effet de grossissement chez le dirigeant de PME : ses incidences sur le plan du management des hommes et de la GRH*, 3ème Congrès International Francophone PME (CIFPME), Québec : Trois Rivières, p. 101-115.

Malherbe, D. & Saulquin, J.Y. (2003), *Reconnaissance et GRH : au-delà de l'affirmation d'un mot un enjeu de représentations*, Communication pour le colloque AGRH 2003, 25 pages.

Martinet, A. C. (1990). *Epistémologies et sciences de gestion*, Paris: Economica.

Maslow, A. (1943). A theory of human motivation, *Psychological Review*, 50, 370-396.

Meda, D. (1995), *Le travail : une valeur en voie de disparition*, Paris : Alto/Aubier.

Moles A. & Rohmer E. (1978 ; 1ère ed: 1972), *Psychologie de l'espace*, Paris: Editions Casterman.

Morin E. (2010), La santé mentale au travail, une question de gros bon sens, *Gestion*, 2010/3, Vol. 35.

Peretti J.P. (dir.) (2005), *Tous reconnus*, Paris: Editions d'Organisation.

Pierre P. (2002), *Le difficile croisement des cultures en entreprise*, cahier de recherche du GRECO, 2ème semestre.

Renault E. (2004), Reconnaissance, injustice, institution, *Revue du MAUSS*, n°23.

Ricoeur P. (2005, 1st ed: 2004), *The Course of Recognition*, London: Harvard University Press.

Roche A. (2010), La "reconnaissance activatrice", levier de performance sociale et économique ?, Actes du Colloque AOM-IIC-Iseor, juin, Lyon.

Roche A. (2013), Reconnaissance et performance : proposition du concept de reconnaissance activatrice et d'un modèle intégrateur, Thèse de doctorat en Science de gestion, 12 mars 2013, Lyon.

Roche A. (2014), La recherche-intervention comme révélatrice des dimensions des pratiques de reconnaissance dans les organisations, @GRH, 4 (n° 13), 11-42.

Roche A. (2015), Définition de deux systèmes dialectiques de reconnaissance présents au sein des organisations, RIMHE : Revue Interdisciplinaire Management, Homme(s) & Entreprise, 3 (n° 17), 20-44.

Savall H. (2010, 1ère ed: 1975), *Work and People An Economic Evaluation of Job-Enrichment*, USA: IAP Information Age Publishing Charlotte.

Savall H. & Zardet V. (2008, 1st ed. 1987), *Mastering Hidden Costs and Socio-Economic Performance*, USA: IAP Information Age Publishing Charlotte.

Savall, H. & Zardet, V. (2011, 1st ed. 2004), *The Qualimetrics Approach*, USA: IAP Information Age Publishing Charlotte.

Stajkovic, A.D. & Luthans, F. (1997), A Meta-analysis of the Effects of Organizational Behavior Modification on Task Performance, 1975–1995, *Academy of Management Journal*, 40, 5, 1122–1149.

St-Onge, S.; Haines III, V.Y., Aubin, I., Rousseau, C. & Lagassé, G. (2005). Pour une meilleure reconnaissance des contributions au travail, *Gestion, revue internationale de gestion*, 30,2, 89-101.

St-Onge S. & Thériault R. (2006, 1ère ed. 2000), *Gestion de la rémunération : théorie et pratique*, Paris: Gaëtan Morin/Chenelière Education.

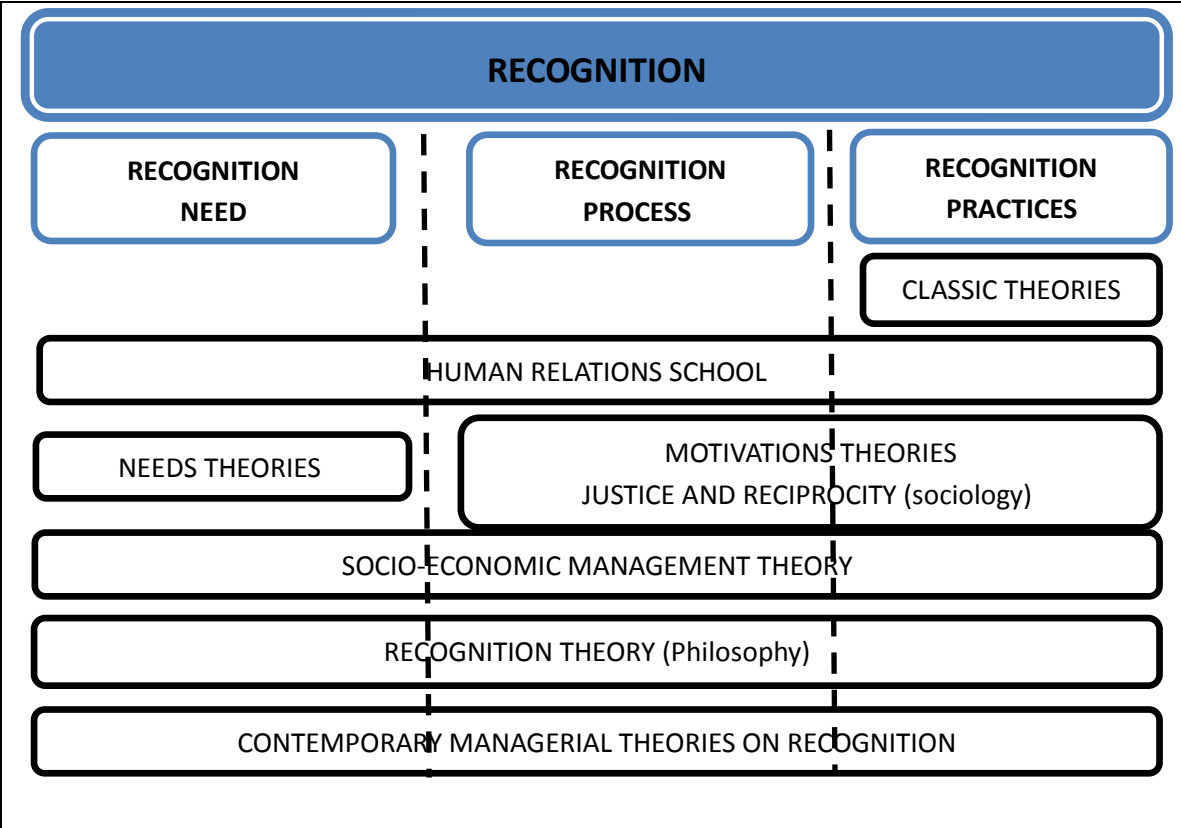
Thévenet, M. (1992), *Impliquer les personnes dans l'entreprise*, Paris: Laisons.

Torres O. (2002), *Essai de conceptualisation proxémique de la petitesse des entreprises*, 6ème Congrès International Francophone PME (CIFPME 2002), HEC Montréal.

Townsend A.M., Demarie S.M. & Hendrickson A.R. (1998), Virtual teams: Technology and the workplace of the future, *The Academy of Management Executive*, vol.12, n° 3.

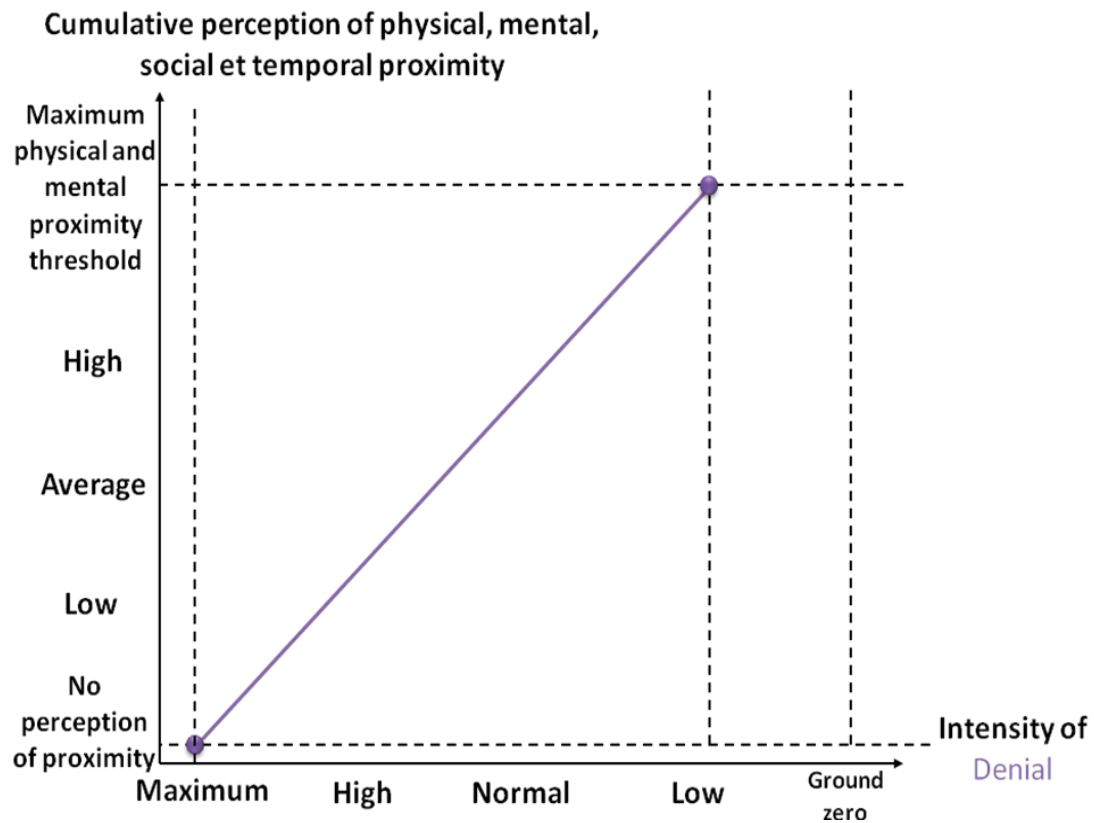
**FIGURE 1**

**Synthetic scheme of theories articulation**



**FIGURE 2**

**Intensity of denial based on the perception of physical proximity, mental, social and temporal (Roche, 2013)**



**TABLE 1**

**Summary of sample characteristics**

<b>N°</b>	<b>Name of the organization / Country</b>	<b>Year of Diagnosis</b>	<b>Organizations size</b>	<b>Business sector</b>
<u>1a</u>	Packaging Company / France	2009	450 employees	Industrial
<u>1b</u>	Packaging Company – Headquarters	2010	39 employees	Industrial
<u>1c</u>	Packaging Company - Site B.	2010	150 employees	Industrial
<u>1d</u>	Packaging Company - Site C.	2010	150 employees	Industrial
<u>2a</u>	Security Company / France	2011	700 employees	Service
<u>2b</u>	Security Company –Remote Monitoring and Data Service	2011-2012	136 employees	Service
3	Computer Engineering Company / Belgium	2005	10 employees	Industrial
4	Business travel services / Belgium	2005	12 employees	Service
5	Trading of building materials and DIY Company / Belgium	2005	13 employees	Service
6	Trading of building materials Company / Belgium	2005	9 employees	Service
7	Security Systems Enterprise / Belgium	2005	3 employees	Service
8	Accounting firm / Belgium	2004	4 employees	Service
9	IT services Company / Belgium	2004	5 employees	Service
10	Manufacturing cotton swab Company / Belgium	2004	11 employees	Industrial
11	Plastics extrusion Enterprise / Belgium	2004	7 employees	Industrial
12a	Cultural Auditorium Institution / France	2000	300 employees	Cultural Organization
12b	Cultural Auditorium Institution - Workshop Building	2000	150 employees	Cultural Organization

**TABLE 2: Mapping of the recognition system**

<b>THEMES</b>	<b>SUBTHEMES</b>	<b>SUB-SUBTHEMES</b>
<b>CONDITIONS OF WORKING LIFE</b>  <i>Report to the possession and living conditions compared to others</i>  <i>Conditions for the exercise of work</i>	REMUNERATION	Regular salary
		Bonuses
		Stock exchange actions
	PHYSICAL WORKING CONDITIONS	Work equipment
		Work physical environment
		Human resources
		Fringe benefits
	INTANGIBLE WORKING CONDITIONS	Rules and Procedures
		Training
		Financial resources
		Active listening and freedom to voice
		Transmission and use of information
		Sensory stimulation and proximity
		Involvement and support in the work
		Level of human pressure on individuals
		Time management and work organization
		Employment stability
<b>STATUS</b>  <i>Relative to each other, facing each other and the judgment of other</i>  <i>Or positioning in the working groups and positioning of these groups</i>	STATUS IN CONNECTION WITH A TITLE	Appreciation of a title or a promotion
	STATUS IN CONNECTION WITH ANY LIABILITY	Appreciation of the responsibility of an activity
		Appreciation of the work value
	STATUS IN CONNECTION WITH THE SKILLS	Appreciation by others of working practices and skills
		Appreciation by others of results of a work
		Appreciation by others of pro-activity
	STATUS IN CONNECTION WITH THE RELATIONS WITH OTHER INDIVIDUALS	Relationships with persons recognized
		Appreciation of the group membership
		Appreciation by others characteristics of the individual
	STATUS IN CONNECTION WITH THE REPUTATION OF THE ORGANIZATION	Appreciation of belonging to the organization
<b>ACHIEVEMENT</b>  <i>Relation to oneself and its creative usefulness judgment on itself, its activities and development opportunities</i>  <i>Sense of movement through the work and meaning of work</i>	ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH THE CREATION	Personal appreciation of the creation / production of a product / service
		Personal appreciation of the creation / evolution of a group
		Personal appreciation of the development of individual skills
		Personal appreciation of the contribution to the development of others
		Innovation sense of the individual
	ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN OBJECTIVE AND MEANING OF WORK	Achieving a goal set by others and work meaning
		Achieving a goal set by the individual himself/herself



**TABLE 3**

**Relationship between small organization size and distribution of the issues of recognition**

	Tendance	700 Employees	300 to 450 Employees	1 to 20 Employees	<i>Average</i>
CONDITIONS OF WORKING LIFE	↘↗	<b>73%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>73%</b>
STATUS	↗↘	23%	<b>24%</b>	19%	22%
ACHIEVEMENT	↗	3%	4%	<b>6%</b>	4%
Total on all topics ( <i>excluding rounded</i> )		100%	100%	100%	100%

**TABLE 4**

**Relationship between small organization size and the sub-themes of working conditions**

	Trend	700 Employees	300 to 450 Employees	1 to 20 Employees	<i>Average</i>
REMUNERATION	↗↘	3%	4%	1%	3%
PHYSICAL WORKING CONDITIONS	↗	12%	18%	<b>25%</b>	18%
INTANGIBLE WORKING CONDITIONS	↘	<b>58%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>52%</b>
Total on all topics ( <i>excluding rounded</i> )		73%	72%	75%	73%

**TABLE 5**

**Relationship between small organization size and the sub-subthemes of working conditions**

	Trend	700 Employees	300 to 450 Employees	1 to 20 Employees	<i>Average</i>
Regular salary	↗↘	2%	3%	0%	2%
Bonuses	→	1%	1%	1%	1%
Stock exchange actions	/	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Work equipment</b>	↗	5%	7%	<b>14%</b>	<b>9%</b>
Work physical environment	↗	4%	7%	<b>8%</b>	6%
Human resources	↗↘	3%	4%	3%	3%
Fringe benefits	↗	0%	0%	1%	0%
<b>Rules and Procedures</b>	↘↗	6%	5%	7%	5%
Training	↘	7%	5%	3%	5%
Financial resources	↗↘	0%	1%	0%	0%
Active listening and freedom to voice	↗↘	2%	3%	2%	2%
<b>Transmission and use of information</b>	↘	<b>9%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>9%</b>
Sensory stimulation and proximity	↘↗	<b>8%</b>	5%	6%	6%
<b>Involvement and support in the work</b>	↗↘	<b>9%</b>	<b>10%</b>	7%	<b>9%</b>
Level of human pressure on individuals	↘↗	3%	2%	4%	3%
<b>Time management and work organization</b>	↘↗	<b>11%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>11%</b>
Employment stability	↘	2%	1%	0%	1%
Total on all topics ( <i>excluding rounded</i> )		73%	72%	75%	73%

**TABLE 6**

**Relationship between small organization size and the subthemes of status**

	Trend	700 Employees	300 to 450 Employees	1 to 20 Employees	<i>Average</i>
STATUS IN CONNECTION WITH A TITLE	↘	2%	2%	1%	2%
<b>STATUS IN CONNECTION WITH ANY LIABILITY</b>	↗↘	<b>10%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>STATUS IN CONNECTION WITH THE SKILLS</b>	↗	5%	6%	<b>9%</b>	<b>7%</b>
STATUS IN CONNECTION WITH THE RELATIONS WITH OTHER INDIVIDUALS	↘	4%	2%	1%	2%
STATUS IN CONNECTION WITH THE REPUTATION OF THE ORGANIZATION	↘	2%	2%	1%	2%
Total on all topics ( <i>excluding rounded</i> )		23%	24%	19%	22%

**TABLE 7**

**Relationship between small organization size and the sub-subthemes of status**

	Trend	700 Employees	300 to 450 Employees	1 to 20 Employees	<i>Average</i>
Appreciation of a title or a promotion	↘	2%	2%	1%	2%
<b>Appreciation of the responsibility of an activity</b>	↗↘	<b>9%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>9%</b>
Appreciation of the work value	→	1%	1%	0%	1%
<b>Appreciation by others of working practices and skills</b>	↗	3%	3%	<b>7%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Appreciation by others of results of a work	→	2%	2%	2%	2%
Appreciation by others of pro-activity	↗	0%	1%	1%	1%
Relationships with persons recognized	↘	1%	0%	0%	0%
Appreciation of the group membership	↘	2%	1%	0%	1%
Appreciation by others characteristics of the individual	↘	1%	1%	0%	1%
Appreciation of belonging to the organization	↘	2%	2%	1%	2%
Total on all topics ( <i>excluding rounded</i> )		23%	24%	19%	22%

**TABLE 8**

**Relationship between small organization size and the subthemes of achievement**

	Trend	700 Employees	300 to 450 Employees	1 to 20 Employees	<i>Average</i>
ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH THE CREATION	→↗	1%	1%	<b>3%</b>	2%
ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN OBJECTIVE AND MEANING OF WORK	→↗	3%	3%	<b>4%</b>	3%
Total on all topics ( <i>excluding rounded</i> )		3%	4%	6%	4%

**TABLE 9**

**Relationship between small organization size and the sub-subthemes of achievement**

	Trend	700 Employees	300 to 450 Employees	1 to 20 Employees	<i>Average</i>
Personal appreciation of the creation / production of a product / service	→	0%	0%	0%	0%
Personal appreciation of the creation / evolution of a group	→↗	0%	0%	<b>1%</b>	0%
Personal appreciation of the development of individual skills	→↗	0%	0%	<b>1%</b>	0%
Personal appreciation of the contribution to the development of others	↗	0%	0%	0%	0%
Innovation sense of the individual	→	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Achieving a goal set by others and work meaning</b>	→↗	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3%</b>
Achieving a goal set by the individual himself	→	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total on all topics ( <i>excluding rounded</i> )		3%	4%	6%	4%