

# BERNARDO

Project manager at an innovative company in the software sector

**AGE** 36

**GENDER** Male

**NATIONALITY** Portuguese

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION** Single

**JOB/CAREER** BA degree in computer engineering. He has lived and worked in Iceland for 2 years

## CURRENT CHALLENGES

He is doing very well at work and has gotten very positive feedback from his boss. His Icelandic is not good enough and that has been holding him back a little. Especially regarding flow of information within the workplace. He sometimes hears about the workplace receiving recognition or certification for various things from people outside the workplace. Emails about something that has gone wrong are often translated into English, but e.g., information about social events within the workplace are not. Many things like this annoy him and he sometimes feels a bit out of the loop.

## ATTITUDES AND EMOTIONS

- He really wants to learn Icelandic in order to have more opportunities for professional development within the workplace and to be a more active participant in the social life of the workplace. He feels that he is sometimes forgotten, especially when it comes to providing information.

## MOTIVATIONS

- He does well at work and delivers on time. He has received praise from his boss who has cheered him on and encouraged him to learn Icelandic. He envisions living in Iceland for the foreseeable future and sees learning Icelandic as a prerequisite for being able to thrive and prosper at work and in Icelandic society in general.

## WORK SITUATION

- Bernardo is leading quite a large multinational collaborative project at the company, but it was precisely through such a project that he was recruited to work in Iceland. Since the project is multinational, Bernardo's working hours are somewhat irregular and therefore difficult for him to make plans far into the future. The project is conducted entirely in English, so knowledge of Icelandic is not necessary in that sense. Bernardo and his Icelandic and international colleagues are all very proficient in English, so that is not really a problem either. But naturally, his Icelandic colleagues often communicate in Icelandic, and then he feels that he is not part of the group.

## Manager's questions

- Bernardo is great at leading these kinds of collaborative projects and we have projects like this going on all the time. I really want to keep him. Can we offer him Icelandic lessons at work? Can we pay for him to study Icelandic?
- What is offered by unions?
- Is it reasonable to expect him to learn Icelandic on his own time when his work hours are so irregular and take up so much of it?

## Peers/colleagues' questions

- Bernardo is a great guy and aims to stay with us for a long time, it would be better if he could express himself in Icelandic. Sometimes you don't realise that you are talking to each other in Icelandic while he is sitting with us and understands very little. You can't really expect a man who works so much to have time outside of work to learn Icelandic.
- Would it be such an inconvenience if he took Icelandic lessons during work hours?
- How would that affect us, his co-workers?
- Would it add much workload to our day?



## Individual's questions

- I wonder if I could learn Icelandic during working hours. Or is the company willing to accommodate me in some other way?
- How can I communicate my grievances regarding the flow of information properly?
- Am I asking for too much?

## Policymakers' questions

- What is our workplace disclosure policy?
- Is it a problem to have all posts and notifications in both Icelandic and English?
- Can we start that process now?
- Can we accommodate him in any way regarding Icelandic lessons?
- Maybe we are obliged to?
- What do collective agreements and laws say about this?