

**Date:** 06 August 2018

**Time:** 09:30

**Place:** Participant's Office

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**Interviewer:** Maybe we can start with annual leave?

**Participant:** The, the annual leave?

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Yeah, erhm I think when, when I was reading that document I was like, Oh it's quite erhm a lot of information {...} and one... there are {...} of course ehr like... like sections... when I'm reading and then I'm like re-read again and then...

**Interviewer:** So you do a lot of *re-reading* between the sections?

**Participant:** There's a lot of *re-reading* yes between the sections.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** And then ehrrm even with the annual leave...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** You know... ehrrr... there was something that... just the *terminology* I mean even if you look at 3.3.1.a...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Ehrrr... then the (reading aloud) leave credit in a particular leave cycle increases pro-rata over time to reach the maximum at the end of the cycle.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** So and then I went what does that *mean*? And so it was... and then I was ok now I have to think pro-rata... and it was just *too* much for me... I... mea... ehr...

**Interviewer:** To work out?

**Participant:** To work out now so how...

**Interviewer:** Uhr, uhr.

**Participant:** How do I do that now and, and all of *that*.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** And then ehm so, so I think it does, it does, ehm... get one a bit... ehr... *confused* more... es...

**Interviewer:** Mmm, Mmm

**Participant:** I'm not sure, I was just even thinking maybe there needs to be (chuckling) an education...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** on it... where we get like... sit down and then you... you get someone...

**Interviewer:** An info session?

**Participant:** Yeah, an info session.

**Interviewer:** Someone helping you? Ok.

**Participant:** Like, like we did with the...

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**Participant:** I think, the *terminology*... its, its, its... and then I was while I was reading it as well I was thinking does this apply to *everyone* that works for the university? Like starting from like Professors, up there to the people who are working...

**Interviewer:** Uhr

**Participant:** so and also I'm just thinking in terms of the *jargon* that has been used...

**Interviewer:** Uhr

**Participant:** and... *how*... how maybe I mean it's all again available thinking probably in English and Afrikaans you know.

**Interviewer:** Uhr, uhr it is yeah.

**Participant:** And not all of those languages are our languages.

**Interviewer:** Uhr

**Participant:** So *that* might be another issue that tells us...

**Interviewer:** The language issue?

**Participant:** Yes the language issue.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** Yeah

**Interviewer:** All right. Anything else there?

**Participant:** Ehm... the, the, the maternity leave.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** I found it *fairly... clear* actually.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Ehm... I was just... ehr... saying to...

**I omitted sensitive and irrelevant content.**

**Participant:** It was quite clear.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Ehm... and then also again I didn't find... ehm like *too much big words* that will not be understandable.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** Yeah ehm... I did find though... there was something that ehr said about ehm the *Unemployment Insurance Fund*.

**Interviewer:** Uhr

**Participant:** I think that's point 3.3.2.a and then...

**Interviewer:** Second last bullet.

**Participant:** Second last paragraph (reading) as regards the terms of the preceding subparagraph, employees also have the option to take maternity leave in the form of unpaid leave and claim the maternity benefit from the Unemployment Insurance Fund instead. So I was like...I just asked myself what are the chances if, if you know that you can take your maternity leave and it's paid...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** From the cost... is it cost of employment?

**Interviewer:** Mmm, mmm cost of employment.

**Participant:** So why then will I actually claim from the Unemployment Insurance Fund? Because first of all, let's face it Unemployment Insurance Fund it's a very tedious...

**Interviewer:** Process yeah.

**Participant:** which one doesn't want to do it. We do it because...

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**Participant:** It's just *too much*.

**Interviewer:** Uhr, if you *do* have the benefit why go that route?

**Participant:** Yeah, why go there? And... I didn't actually see the *reasoning* of that paragraph.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** Yeah so that was the other thing.

**Interviewer:** As regards to *your paternity leave*?

**Participant:** To paternity leave I think it's short (chuckling).

**Interviewer:** Too short?

**Participant:** Yeah, ehr, but erh... but wai {...} that's one thing I just felt... I mean its 3 days... and... it's, it's actually part of... is it part of com... passionate... leave? Ehrm... I'm not sure (paging to compassionate Leave).

**Interviewer:** Yes

**Participant:** Yeah it's part of compassionate leave.

**Interviewer:** You get when your child is, is born.

**Participant:** When your child is born, when your child is sick and all of that.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** So I think it was just like wow, short. In fact I mean I'm on annual leave even now cause I had to take those three days then realized it's not enough so I took more ten days from my leave so... I just think it's a bit short.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** But ehr... I mean I'm not sure when we get to compassionate leave?

**Interviewer:** We can move to compassionate leave.

**Participant:** Ok

**Interviewer:** Yeah here it is for the birth of an employee's child you get a day...

**Participant:** Yeah ehr, ok 3 working days...

**Interviewer:** Uhr

**Participant:** a year... and then...

**Interviewer:** But then it says here you get (reading aloud) another 14 working days during every cycle of three years.

**Participant:** *What does that mean?* Does that mean then... I mean (pause) like that to me I was like actually I don't understand what it means. And also this cycle of three years... I mean if for example I have... let's say 3 days a year...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** And then what do I do with that 14 days?

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Because I don't know what it means.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** Yeah so that was another thing. When I was reading that I was like ok so another 14 days. So do I then take the 3 days plus the 14 days (chuckling) now?

**Interviewer:** Uhr

**Participant:** You see if I knew that I would have done it {...}.

**Interviewer:** Confused you?

**Participant:** Yes

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Then... so that was something else.

**Interviewer:** Yeah and then it goes on to say that you got actually 23 working days compassionate leave.

**Participant:** Yes

**Interviewer:** So you could've taken that also when your daughter was now born.

**Participant:** Yeah, but you see that's the thing (chuckling) it was *not clear at all* to me.

**Interviewer:** Uhr

**Participant:** Because it's like why don't you just say you have 23 working days?

**Interviewer:** Uhr

**Participant:** For compassionate leave... instead... because the... every cycle of 3 years is *hard*. I don't understand what that means.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** Yes and I think it even goes to even the annual leave because there is like a cycle of 3 years. So I was asking myself does that mean... if... I don't know you have your, your 20 days, 25 days... per year and then you have 3 years. Does that mean if you don't finish those days they roll over to the following year for *the next 3 years*?

**Interviewer:** Mmm, Mmm

**Participant:** I mean it's just... I'm like thinking and asking myself and ehr trying to calculate. And also yeah.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** So now I've just missed 14 days that I could've taken because I didn't know what it meant.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** Yeah so...

**Interviewer:** So that's with regards to the compassionate leave.

**Participant:** Yeah

**Interviewer:** Ok where do you want to move to, which section?

**Participant:** Maybe let's just go above that, the research opportunity.

**Interviewer:** Urh

**Participant:** Also it was like ehr... I mean it's clear, clear in those first paragraphs and then you go to a paragraph, the last paragraph where it says (reading aloud) employees who have been granted a research opportunity must remain in SU's employ for a corresponding period after the opportunity... So I also had to think of that corresponding period so which means if you had ehr 30 days or 250 days of your research leave you have to stay at the university for 250 days.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** I think that what I'm getting for *what does the corresponding period mean*.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** Yeah why not overtly say employees who have received SU leave must stay in the university for 250 days?

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Yeah so maybe I'm just being pedantic (chuckling) I just feel these are the things that need to be *very clear*.

**Interviewer:** Uhr, clear.

**Participant:** Especially a policy, it's an important document.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** I mean you can use it as a framework, you can use it... I mean off course sometimes in other departments it's at discretion of the head, the line manager and then and all of that but it's important it's a binding document.

**Interviewer:** Uhr

**Participant:** It needs to be *very clear*.

**Interviewer:** Uhr

**Participant:** Yeah

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** Leave of absence... oh here I think also its quite clear, 15 working days, conferences and all those things.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** And it does say per occasion so it's quite clear.

**Interviewer:** Sure

**Participant:** Yeah! This is another part.

**Interviewer:** Uhr

**Participant:** First of all for me now we talking about if we move to the continuation of work... (Reading section softly) Ok but we go to unpaid leave.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** Yeah, that one are, are in special cases blah, blah, blah and then (reading softly) in special cases, and on the conditions set by the University, SU may grant employees

unpaid leave during which period they will receive 25% of the pensionable amount of the COE.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** That also ehm to me is... when you talk of the pensionable amount, *I don't know what that means.*

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** Yeah let me just put it blatantly (chuckling).

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** Its, it's like ehm I actually when I was reading this policy I was like I said... this is actually exposing me that you know I haven't studied anything about you know the human resources.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** And I'm not sure if it's {...} that I should study human resources for me to understand this (chuckling).

**Interviewer:** Giggling

**Participant:** So and then because the terminology very... like human resources and if you, you not someone who reads too much and then you get exposed.

**Interviewer:** Uhm

**Participant:** I mean I do read, I do read about the rights and all those things...

**Interviewer:** Uhm

**Participant:** but you, I mean you have *other* things to read you can't always read one thing.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** So you have to read widely. So those are the things that are important... yeah so...

**Interviewer:** You don't have to read all this?

**Participant:** Yeah so I think as simple as possible can be then that's the only way

**Interviewer:** Yeah

**Participant:** To, to look at it.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** (reading aloud) Employees earn no unpaid leave during a period of unpaid leave. The, the unpaid leave, so I'm not sure, I think if you can just help here now. I'm taking an unpaid leave what happens? So do you take an unpaid leave if you have to work somewhere else? And then? I think that's what I was asking myself. So off course I mean if you have unpaid leave then you... you earn no annual leave. So (sighing) I was not sure what... (Chuckling). In fact the unpaid leave section...

**Interviewer:** Uhr

**Participant:** like starting from 3.3.8, that paragraph a. up to d...

**Interviewer:** Uhr

**Participant:** They were just like something that I think it needs to be unpacked. And it must be more *clear*.

**Interviewer:** *Ok*

**Participant:** Yeah

**Interviewer:** Thank you. Presence at the workplace?

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**Participant:** I think it was actually clear. Oh I was actually asking which is something that I think I will actually raise with...

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**Interviewer:** Ok we can move on if you want to. Sick leave I think is the last one here.

**Participant:** Sick leave yeah. Let me just remind myself (reading silently).

**Interviewer:** No Problem.

**Participant:** What is an *acceptable medical certificate*?

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Yeah which one will be find acceptable by the university? Because to me medical certificate is a medical certificate.

**Interviewer:** Uhr, uhr

**Participant:** (Chuckling) Again I'm just blanketing here but I think it's important...

**Interviewer:** Who decides?

**Participant:** who decides what's an acceptable medical certificate?

**Interviewer:** I get it yeah.

**Participant:** And then ehr... and then (reading aloud) maximum of 8 months taken either continuously or separately. Ok ehrm... ehr also that it cannot be accumulated that was clear as well. Oh... yeah those sections **where** quite fine.

**Interviewer:** Ok sick leave is quite fine to you?

**Participant:** Ok yeah, that's again that's the one where it says for more than two days but again I think they need to just clarify what do you mean when you say acceptable medical certificate.

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** So... (Reading aloud) that states the nature of sickness. More especially these days I mean we talk about also the, the sangomas

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** How do they give...? I mean I had these situations where people like...

**I omitted sensitive and irrelevant content.**

**Interviewer:** Uhr, Uhr

**Participant:** How do you say what's acceptable, where do you draw a line? And that was one thing that was not problematic but concerning.

**Interviewer:** Yeah ok.

**Participant:** Yeah but I mean generally I didn't go off course to the definitions and the terms.

**Interviewer:** No, no, no don't worry about it.

**Participant:** But I felt as well I think I read only the sections because of the time but I still want to read it. All of it and see exactly what it means. I mean ehr... and I'll just maybe understand it more and more. And also the post levels.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** It took me time to even know my post level (chuckling).

**Interviewer:** Uhr

**Participant:** Because I mean... its ehr... I'm not sure...

**Interviewer:** Yeah your leave is according to your post level.

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**Participant:** And also the Mathematics. The Mathematics that's used. If you look at 3.3.1. d (reading aloud) unclaimed annual leave must be paid out upon termination of employment according to the following formula: ('number of days' multiplied by 'the *pensionable amount* of the employee's monthly *COE*') divided by 21. Urgh, I don't know do they sit down with you and actually give you that formula and calculate it with you? Or they just like calculate it at HR...

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**Interviewer:** And you don't understand the calculations?

**Participant:** Yes I don't understand the calculation and...

**Interviewer:** Have we touched on study opportunity? I think maybe we skipped it.

**Participant:** We skipped it yeah. Study opportunity (reading silently). So when you get the study opportunity I assume, it is *assumed* that you will actually have a satisfactory study and if it doesn't then ehr... and if it does it will... if it's not it will be deducted from your annual or accumulated leave. So I was not sure there.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** So (reading aloud) should the employee progress ehr satisfactorily the study opportunity will not be deducted from his or her annual or accumulated leave.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Not sure... maybe my English is just... out but I'm like wh... yeah it should be underlined what is happening here?

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** Yeah erhm... so... I think that's something that need to be quite clear there.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** So and then also there ehr the... (Reading aloud) provisions that apply to study opportunity to be taken at intervals... ok I think that one was clear if you want to attend tutorials, lectures ehr including breaks between periods. Yeah... but I mean yeah (chuckling) just feel it's like a lot of *stuff* that to have... to just be aware.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** I'm not sure also if you're taking a study leave if you sit down with the person who is like your line manager and explain this to you or what happens.

**Interviewer:** Urh, uhr

**Participant:** Ehrm... and what happens if you have more than 3 lectures...

**Interviewer:** a week...

**Participant:** That's a question I have... and... so yeah I think ehr that one it was fine (reading silently). I also assume, you see I'm intentionally using the term *assume*.

**Interviewer:** Yeah

**Participant:** Because that means maybe things are not clear.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** With 3.3.3.b where it says the employees concerned must have performed their duties *well*. So I assume maybe you got your 3 when you're doing the performance management. So you must have achieved 3 to be the person who qualifies for this. And then... something like that. So I was like ehrm...

**Interviewer:** Wondering how it fits in?

**Participant:** How it fits in so what? You see because this {...} happen. What if I am studying and I still don't get the 3 because I'm studying... I don't know...

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** You know... how do you draw the line?

**Interviewer:** How do you relate it to... yeah?

**Participant:** Yeah how do you relate it I mean for example with the...

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**Participant:** I know when you talk about a pro rata calculation or pro rata portion it's not the full cost of employment or it's not the full annual leave...

**Interviewer:** Yes

**Participant:** So it's calculated according to days. But ehr maybe they just need to be also explicit. Because the thing is each paragraph I mean it's a *lo...oo...ng* sentence that carries a *lo...oo...t of stuff*. (Reading aloud) So the employees concerned must remain an SU employee for at least another two years after concluding the study opportunity. If such employees terminate their employment sooner a pro rata portion of the opportunity will be debited against their annual leave or unpaid leave. Ehr... do we all have unpaid leave? Why I mean...

**Interviewer:** You have the option available.

**Participant:** Ok

**Interviewer:** But I think you only qualify for unpaid leave once all your annual leave is depleted.

**Participant:** Ok

**Interviewer:** Then only will you be able to apply for unpaid leave.

**Participant:** I think I remember it says make sure you finish all your annual leave {...} ok.

**Interviewer:** Yes

**Participant:** Ok so (pause) and I think also the paragraph that just follow that is also quite... *loaded*.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** (reading aloud) Annual leave for one year – 250 working days – and any study or research opportunities will be treated as credits to the employees concerned that is part of the leave granted to them. That was my first time coming across with *credits* (chuckling)

**Interviewer:** giggling {...}

**Participant:** So... yeah so I was like ah *credits* from where? So I had to actually think. I think if you can see there I was like dear Lord! (Reading aloud) would be treated as credits. To what? And all of that I mean even though it says employees concerned... but it's still... I mean they still explain it there and say that is part of the leave granted to them.

**Interviewer:** Mmm

**Participant:** And then I still... I was still left hanging. So I think the... for me... I just thought it will be nice if the policy is more explicit...

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Participant:** and doesn't actually assume that we all are HR people.

**Interviewer:** Ok. You would say this is HR terminology?

**Participant:** Yeah its HR terminology.

**Interviewer:** Ok