

BART VAN THIENEN (Claimant) vs GVC SERVICES LIMITED (Respondent)**Witness Statement Bart Van Thienen, 1st June 2019.**

1. I came to live in Gibraltar in the beginning of 2010 after having lived eight years in Torremolinos on the Costa del Sol. Before that I had lived my entire life in Belgium. For about seven years I had worked for local tour operators Blands Travel, Queens Travel and Calypso Tours in Gibraltar, initially as a tour guide only. I found out that there was a lot more work and money to be earned as a minibus/coach driver. I got training and passed all tests to get the coach driving licence, licences D and D1. I also got the "white licence" to be able to work with PSV vehicles in Gibraltar. This involved vetting by the Police and two reference letters from educated people proving that I was of good character. All that cost me about £750 but I had figured out that I would earn that money back in a few weeks on a freelance contract. After many years I started to get bored by doing the same rock tour three or four times a day, tell people not to touch the monkeys as they bite, etc. It had just become too repetitive and there were no career opportunities at all. I remember that I thought: "Is this really what I want to do for the next twenty years?"

2. At the end of the tourist season I decided to go on some type of sabbatical for a few months to think about what I really wanted to do with my life and what possibilities were available in Gibraltar for me. During this sabbatical I did a lot of voluntary work as I was not the kind of guy to sit at home all day and do nothing. One project was the restoration of six huge eighteenth century mooring anchors. I also continued to remove invasive plants from the Gibraltar Nature Reserve, mostly in the Europa Point area, a voluntary project I had started four years earlier. The costs of these projects were covered by the Ministry of Heritage and Department of Environment and Climate Change. I received a Gibraltar Heritage Trust award in 2014 and I became the first non-British person in history to get this award. I also received the Independent Civil Society Award in 2017 for my voluntary work. This award came with a plaque with the text: "In recognition of single-handed determination and dedication to Gibraltar's environment, biodiversity and heritage. We applaud and thank Bart for his hard and selfless work, undertaken oftentimes alone and

steadfastly, and always for the enjoyment and benefit of all. As a Belgian, sincere and proven long-time friend of Gibraltar, he has laboured with respect and dedication to the indigenous sensitivities and qualities of this Community. We welcome him into our home as much as into our hearts, the keys to both of which he now rightfully holds.” Since 2017 I have also been invited every year by the Governor of Gibraltar to the Queen's Birthday Garden Party in The Convent, an exceptional honor as only about three hundred people are invited from the whole of Gibraltar. His Excellency Edward Davis, representative of Her Majesty the Queen in Gibraltar, also came on an official visit to my voluntary work to show his appreciation.

3. During my sabbatical I also met with many people from all walks of life to discuss potential opportunities and options for my professional future. Interesting stories kept popping up from people working in the gaming companies and I started to investigate the sector a bit more. Some months later I registered as unemployed at the the local Government's Employment and Training Board (ETB) and the ETB started to help me by pointing out what vacancies became available in the gaming sector in Gibraltar. Three times a week I received a list with all vacancies in this sector. The ETB advised me to simplify my Curriculum Vitae, as I had previous management experience and a Master of Science degree in bio-engineering. The ETB thought companies would see me as “too senior” or “overqualified”. They argued that I could later bring up those qualifications for promotions, etc. once I got a job and had proven myself. In case of questions at such time, I should answer that those things were not relevant at the time of applying for the vacancy. I followed their instructions. The ETB also sent my CV to companies with vacancies in which I had an interest and tried to convince those companies to at least give me an interview. I had studied the local gaming sector in the meantime and decided to go for one of the very big ones, GVC/bwin.

4. On 4th April 2017 I had a telephone interview with Noemie Levy from GVC Services Ltd Human Resources Department for a vacancy in the Dutch/Flemish Customer Service team. This went well in my opinion and I was asked to continue the same day with a written language test that I sent via email to Noemie Levy. This was then followed on 13th April 2017 by an interview with Susana Martin, who presented herself as the team leader,

and Samira Mouhayar who said that she was the Customer Service Department Manager. I was not aware of the dress code for the interview so went in a suit and tie, “better overdressed than underdressed”, I thought. During this interview it caught my attention that Susana Martin and Samira Mouhayar repeatedly and specifically asked how I would react to a troublesome colleague. They both kept insisting on this subject so I concluded at that moment that there must have been some issues with one of the team members. I found that weird but did not worry too much about it then. After having worked for about fifteen years as a tour guide in Spain and Gibraltar, I had had my share of troublemakers and unhappy tourist so I replied that I was sure I would be able to deal with a difficult colleague. When they asked what I could bring to the company I replied: “maturity and stability”. During the interview I found that Susana Martin was quite insecure and lacking self-confidence. Samira Mouhayar appeared to be shy and timid and I had the impression that she was trying to hide. My first impression of the management was that they were quite weak. I did not see that as a problem though as they were doing their best to be nice and friendly.

5. A professional background check was done by an external agency “The Security Watchdog” on GVC's request. My former supervisor Martin Nuza was asked a few questions as a reference to my employment with the local tour operator Blands Travel.

6. The answers/reference given by Martin Nuza:

Dear Mr Beavington

Thank you for your email of today and in answer to your questions...

Bart has been employed on a part-time (freelance basis) for Blands to conduct local rock tours and guiding duties.

We would be happy to re-employ Bart if he were to leave us, as he is a very trusted driver/guide to which we have received numerous commendations and recommendations (positive feedback) from highly content clients.

Time keeping is excellent. Always before his time and ensures every second of his duties are fulfilled. Never cuts corners to finish early. Stays as long as required and never complains about it afterwards.

Honesty is excellent. One of the few driver/guides to which I can vouch personally for his

candour. A true gentleman.

General behaviour is excellent. Well-mannered and polite to all our clients. I have never seen Bart angry or upset, even when trying to solve an unexpected problem. Very calm and professional.

Bart has been working freelance, so he has never truly left, as he only works when we require his services and if he available to work on the date in question.

If you require any further information about Bart kindly contact me at your convenience.

Hope you have a good day.

Kind regards

Martin Nuza

Blands Travel DMC

7. I was very happy when I got the job at GVC. Everyone in the company called it bwin, by the way, after its most well known brand. The initial wage of £17,000/year for the first four months of probation was the lowest pay for similar jobs in the gaming sector in Gibraltar. I had seen in the list provided by the ETB that other gaming companies offered much higher wages. I actually had the possibility to start for Lottoland at the same time but my personal preference was for GVC, being the biggest company. The contract also mentioned Private Medical Insurance, Life Insurance and "flexible benefits". After the probation period the wages would go up to £20,000/year and there would be a ten percent bonus. That was still lower than the other gaming companies paid, but GVC was one of the biggest players in the field and GVC had a well know aim to grow the business and take over or merge with other gaming companies. That convinced me that there would be more career opportunities in the long term, specifically for a person with my experience and background. I saw the lower initial wage therefore as an "investment" that would afterwards be compensated by making a career much sooner with the associated pay rises than would be possible in smaller gaming companies.

8. On 15th May 2017 I started working at GVC Services Ltd, trading as bwin, premium, partypoker, partycasino, foxy bingo and a few other well known brands in their respective international markets. I was very enthusiastic as at the age of forty-six this was like a second chance to start an entirely brand new career. I strongly believed that the gaming

sector in Gibraltar was the only real opportunity to make a career for a foreigner living in Gibraltar. Local companies in Gibraltar are quite closed off as they prefer family and lifelong friends to work in higher positions and employ Spanish people for the cheap labour. Several other foreigners I knew for years worked many years in gaming companies and all had reached high and well paid positions in a relatively short time span. I specifically liked GVC as it was one of the biggest gaming companies locally and had a strategy to grow which would create opportunities. GVC also had locations in several other countries like Austria, Bulgaria, UK, USA and India and I saw that as an opportunity to travel for work.

9. Another advantage of GVC/bwin was that the company also offered the whole range of products: sports betting, casino, bingo and poker and with bwin and partypoker had some of the best known brands on the market. My plan, about which I had thought a long time, was to start at the very bottom, in Customer Service. I saw that as a perfect position to get to know the in house developed products, different types of customers and their needs and the different departments. Then, after an estimated maximum two years, I would decide based on my experiences in the company in what direction I wanted to continue and grow within the company. As I had very little interest in sports and was not a casino player myself, I guessed initially that I would grow in the poker product, the only product I had a real affinity with. On the other hand my engineering Master of Science degree and many years of work in IT as a systems engineer, programmer and database administrator could come in handy. I was aware that some of that knowledge was a bit outdated but the general principles of IT do not change so I could pick up again quickly and learn on the job and with self-study as I had done before in other jobs. I started my first day with an open mind and looked very much forward to see how my career would prosper from there.

10. On the same day there were two other new starters for my team: Stef van Veen and Dennis Dorland, both of them from the Netherlands while I am from Belgium/Flanders. We speak the same language Dutch although with a different accent, comparable to UK English and American English. There was also Christoffer Thomsen for the Scandinavian team. I later found out that he had the same team leader, Susana Martin, as my Dutch/Flemish team. I noticed that the four of us were all somewhat older, not the typical

youngsters the gaming companies seemed to like to employ for Customer Service roles. There was also a younger woman, Celine, for the French team and a younger guy, Luka for the Italian team. We were six new starters in total. In percentages this meant that 0% of the English team, 5% of the French, 5% of the Italian team, 25% of the Scandinavian team and 37% of the Dutch/Flemish team were in training. The Scandinavian and Dutch/Flemish team both had Susana Martin as team leader but I had not made that connection yet at that time and neither did I worry that the percentage of new starters was significantly much higher in the teams led by Susana Martin. The first month would be almost entirely made up of training in one of the company's class rooms. After the first week we would bit by bit join our teams one day per week to start to get on the job experience and practice what we had learned during the training.

11. The training was not easy. GVC was a merger of several companies and they still used their original different softwares, inherited from the various companies. It was really complicated at times to get all information to answer a customer's question. You had to go in three different softwares and then also in the Standard Operations Procedures database called MOSS to puzzle all things together and come up with an answer that fulfilled the company's standards and requirements. As an engineer and former programmer I did not have too much difficulty in that puzzle work. I noticed though that the other new starters were struggling with it and one of the trainers mentioned that this was the reason why the probation and on the job training took four months. Although the training phase was pretty hard, the atmosphere in the class room was excellent and there were many opportunities for a few laughs. I felt quite happy and looked eagerly forward to start on the real job to prove my worth for the company.

12. During those first weeks, I built up a pleasant working relationship with Stef van Veen and Dennis Dorland. Stef van Veen was a mature reliable guy who it was a pleasure talking to. Dennis Dorland was a bit slow in the uptake of the training but turned out to be a nice guy. In those early days I did not do a real big effort to befriend Stef van Veen and Dennis Dorland out of work as I wanted some time to observe the team environment. I had already lived for seven years in Gibraltar and had a well filled social life and agenda. I had also made the decision to separate work and private life entirely until I knew my new

colleagues much better. When I walked into the office, my private life stayed outside the office door and at the end of my shift I closed the office door behind me and all work related issues stayed inside the office. With Stef van Veen I had talked a few times to go for a drink after work but that never materialised as he lived somewhere near Tarifa. With Dennis Dorland I had a few pints of lager once as he wanted to learn about Gibraltar's history and what interesting second world war events happened in Gibraltar. After work I continued my voluntary work in the Nature Reserve at Europa Point/Foreshore and I had found the perfect balance between a fast-paced and busy job and relaxing doing hands on voluntary work. Even after a very stressful day I could disconnect entirely and start the next shift the following day with a clear mind and a smile on my face. During the first few weeks of training I was given one morning off to do the GCSE exam for Spanish as a second language via the Gibraltar College. I had prepared for one year for this examination during compulsory class attendance and passed all four modules with maximum points, getting 400 out of 400. I also voluntarily helped my newly arrived colleagues to register with the local Tax Office as they did not know how to fill out the forms and where to hand them in.

13. On 22nd May 2017 we had our first day with the Dutch/Flemish team, after which the training would continue in the class room. We were given the task to reply on simple customer queries via email and practise with the different softwares. The more experienced team members were to shadow us and evaluate our first emails and give advice on how to improve where necessary. I asked my very first question to Sabir Nouri who by coincidence sat beside me. He immediately replied in a rude, aggressive and brutal way "Don't you see I'm busy?". He actually never has been friendly to me as long as I worked for GVC/bwin and I quickly learned to avoid him whenever possible. The same happened to Dennis Dorland who avoided Sabir Nouri as much as possible. At that moment I also remembered Susana Martin and Samira Mouhayar repeatedly asking about how I would deal with a troublesome colleague during the vacancy interview and I thought that my original suspicion was correct and Sabir Nouri was the person they were having in mind when asking that question. As there were many different shifts from eight in the morning till midnight, including weekends, I expected not to be troubled too much by Sabir Nouri as I would have enough shifts that I would not have to be working with him. The office set up was that each team had its own area in which there was free seating. I

decided to find a seat somewhat away from Sabir Nouri from then on. I was still positive that things would work out over time as I knew a lot of good jokes and have a quick wit from my days as a tour guide so I expected to break the ice over time with my humour. Unfortunately this never happened and Sabir Nouri never became friendly towards me. I later noticed that Sabir Nouri had the same disdain and unpleasant and rude way of treating people for Dennis Dorland. Apparently Sabir Nouri thought that because he had some university degree, he was more important or valuable than others in the team without a degree, what I found somehow comical as nobody was aware that I had a Master of Science degree.

14. As the training went on, we started to spend more days per week on the floor with the experienced members of the team. I loved the job and I really felt like I was doing something useful. Helping customers sort out their problems was really giving good vibes and the occasional unhappy or frustrated customer was something easy to deal with for me as I had been in much more difficult situations with people during my fifteen years as a tour guide in Spain, Gibraltar and Northern Morocco. I noticed Stef van Veen had some difficulty with these unhappy customers and we discussed that a few times. Dennis Dorland continued to struggle with all the different types of queries and the use of the softwares. Although these small issues were affecting both of them somehow I always kept a very pleasant working relation with them throughout the time I worked at GVC/bwin. As I had picked up the systems and way of working much more quickly than Stef van Veen and Dennis Dorland, my team leader Susana Martin was very happy with me and my work standards, both quality and quantity, and there was an excellent atmosphere between me and Susana Martin with lots of laughs, high fives etc.

15. After about a month it became obvious to me that there were two camps in the team. Camp One was the team leader, Susana Martin with Martijn van der Vechte. Stef van Veen and Martijn van der Vechte knew each other for many years as good friends and they even lived together in El Bujeo somewhere between Algeciras and Tarifa. Stef van Veen told me that Martijn van der Vechte was in a "secret" relationship with our team leader Susana Martin and that that was the reason for the existence of Camp Two: Yousri Amrani, Sabir Nouri, Jose Luis Aznar (his name on his Facebook profile was Jose Luis Hernandez

Aznar) and Hamid Ringelberg. The four Camp Two members hated our team leader Susana Martin and did everything they could to convince me, Stef van Veen and Dennis Dorland to choose sides in what looked like a revolution against the team leader. Part of their motivation came from Jose Luis Aznar who aspired to become the new team leader after Susana Martin would have been bullied away by them. I made it very clear from the start that I did not want to get involved in such conspiracies and I tried to be friendly with everyone. Dennis Dorland reacted differently to this internal power fight and closed himself off from the team and sat in his own world during his shifts. He was bullied by the Camp Two guys who found that Dennis Dorland was stupid and lazy and they did not do a lot to help him get better in his job. Stef van Veen tried to be friends with both Camps by now and then going out for drinks after work with the Camp Two guys. All of this created a tense atmosphere in the team as you had constantly to be very careful what you said as the Camp Two guys were all the time looking out for things they could use against Susana Martin.

16. After four or five weeks I had found out that the Camp Two members, who were supposed to shadow me to improve the quality of my work, gave me on purpose wrong answers on my questions. They were obviously trying to manipulate me to make errors in replies to customers. I also often got very short answers that did not answer my question, for example "Read the relevant MOSS article" without saying which article it was. Yousri Amrani told me that one of the trainers had told him that in the training sessions I quickly picked up the stuff and had asked intelligent questions. The Camp Two guys seemed to be upset that three more mature people had started in the team. Stef van Veen, Dennis Dorland and me did not want to get involved in the internal power struggle by choosing sides and that was not to the Camp Two guys' liking. I think that Hamid Ringelberg was worried with me in the team as I was picking up things quickly. He himself was struggling with the job requirements. He was a slow worker and made many mistakes and he was still in probation. Later his probation would be extended twice for a month by Susana Martin while I got my fixed contract immediately at the end of my four months of probation time. Jose Luis Aznar continued to see himself as the soon to be team leader although he did not have any qualities required for a leadership position in my opinion (that I kept to myself). I was convinced that Jose Luis Aznar saw me as a threat for his team leader ambition and that that explained his cool and negative attitude towards me and the

explanation why the Camp Two guys were trying to force me to make mistakes so it would reflect badly on me.

17. The most experienced team member was Martijn van der Vechte who was very direct, open and friendly. In the past he had been a Senior Customer Service Agent which meant that he was an expert but did not have any managerial responsibilities. The role of Senior Agent was abolished some time before I had started working at GVC/bwin so in reality he was just another colleague on the same level as me. That I asked Martijn van der Vechte, the specialist, several times for advice for work related matters, was not liked by the Camp Two guys Sabir Nouri, Yousri Amrani, Hamid Ringelberg and Jose Luis Aznar. I also had found out by then that the quality of the Camp Two colleagues' work was not always very good, to say the least, and I had come across a good number of customer queries they had dealt with in the wrong way. I found out because these customers came back and by coincidence, for example during another shift, I had to deal with them. I never pointed this out to them, other team members or Susana Martin though so as not to upset the Camp Two guys. Martijn van der Vechte told me at a certain moment not to listen too much to their advice as it was not always correct. I had already come to that conclusion myself but I felt relieved that Martijn van der Vechte confirmed it as he was the expert in the team. My conviction that the Camp Two guys continued to give me wrong advice on purpose grew stronger over time.

18. I found the company rules to give bonuses and freebets to customers quite confusing. In the Dutch/Flemish team, every team member had developed his own theory over time about when a customer was to be granted a bonus or not and it was not unusual that there were conflicting opinions about the same case. It was therefore quite normal to ask advice to a team leader or shift supervisor to make a decision in such cases. Another problem was that promotions (for instance deposit 100 euro and get 50 euro free bonus) were not brought to our attention and we often only found out about new promotions when something had gone wrong and customers contacted us to complain. That was not professional at all and the Camp Two guys blamed it on team leader Susana Martin for not doing her job as she was expected to do by providing promotions information to her team members. On the other hand the Camp Two guys had obtained some promotions

information that they kept to themselves and did not share with the rest of the team. I did not report this situation to the upper management as I did not want to be seen as a troublemaker as that could negatively affect my future career prospects. The Camp Two guys also enjoyed going around to the other language teams in the department to “inform” them about the mistakes I was making according to them. Many of my “mistakes” were invented by them or misrepresentations by them of things I had done correctly. They seemed to do that to gain popularity and initially I did not give it much thought but after some time I started to worry me that people in my department might start to believe that I was not doing my job properly. Interestingly enough I was never told off by my team leader Susana Martin for the things that I had “done wrong” according to the Camp Two members and the expert Martijn van der Vechte kept advising me to continue working as I was doing.

19. It became more obvious over time that Sabir Nouri, Yousri Amrani, Hamid Ringelberg and Jose Luis Aznar always ganged up at work. They also spent a lot of time together socially. It became clear that they tried to undermine team leader Susana Martin who showed to be a very weak and ineffectual leader and was not able to cope with her responsibilities. Susana Martin did not get a lot of support from her fellow team leaders either who even publicly claimed that she lacked both the technical knowledge of the products and was not very proficient with the different softwares. For those she relied heavily on Martijn van der Vechte who for example also helped her with the monthly evaluations of each team member. I personally did not mind that as Martijn van der Vechte knew his stuff but the Camp Two guys hated it that someone on the same level as themselves made evaluations about their work, catching out their mistakes, etc. The monthly evaluations were intended to help us to improve the quality of our work but were used as well to see if you qualified for the yearly ten percent bonus. The Camp Two members were also very upset that Martijn van der Vechte got more and longer breaks during which he had lunch with his girlfriend, team leader Susana Martin, etc. The Camp Two guys said they had complained about it to Samira Mouhayar, the department manager. It was true that Martijn van der Vechte got a preferential treatment from his girlfriend Susana Martin but I never had an issue with that as it did not affect me personally. Everyone in the team used the frequent team leader absences to watch videos, read news websites, etc. I limited myself to check for Facebook messages now and then

and never had a prolonged use of non-business related time at work. The champion was Yousri Amrani who watched for instance whole boxing and football matches on his computer screen but he was never told off for it. I often had the impression that Susana Martin was scared of Yousri Amrani or felt intimidated by him and did not have the courage to tell him to stop. Susana Martin's lack of management skills made that the team was quite dysfunctional. The mean and spiteful behaviour of the Camp Two guys went entirely unpunished and that didn't help the atmosphere in the team. It was pretty obvious that Samira Mouhayar as department manager closed her eyes for the bullying Susana Martin was victim to in the hope that the problem would go away one day. Samira Mouhayar was always hiding in her office and it was rare to see her on the floor. I had heard from colleagues in the other language teams that Samira Mouhayar didn't like constructive criticism and she was in general disliked by most people in her department.

20. After the first two or three weeks, the bad atmosphere in the team had become constant. It was uncommon to have a normal day at work when the Camp Two members were present. Luckily I found a lot of solace in my voluntary work in the Nature Reserve and I was able to clear my mind of the negativity at work. Due to the bad working conditions I actually spent much more time at my voluntary work than ever before. After five or six weeks, it was quite normal that before or after my shift I would spend three or four hours doing hard physical labour in the Nature Reserve. This was therapeutic and it helped me a lot to overcome the constant struggles between team members at work. By then I had come to the conclusion that Stef van Veen, Dennis Dorland and I, the three older and more mature guys, were brought in by the management to try to break up Camp Two. I was pretty sure that Yousri Amrani, Sabir Nouri, Jose Luis Aznar and Hamid Ringelberg knew that and that their hostility most probably originated from there. I also continued to suspect that Jose Luis Aznar saw me as a probable threat to his doomed ambition to become the new Dutch/Flemish team leader as my monthly evaluations were very good. I had by then noticed that being a team leader in the customer service department was kind of an end station in a career at GVC. Many team leaders got stuck in their jobs for many years without any further chances of promotion. I decided in that very early stage already that becoming a team leader in the customer service department was not one of the suitable career options for me.

21. There was also a constant stream of stories from the Camp Two guys about Susana Martin that when she disliked a person in her team, or someone fell out of her favour or was known to look for another job in the company, that would inevitably result in bad evaluations, problems with holiday requests, badmouthing people behind their backs in the presence of other team members, etc. These stories came mostly from the Camp Two guys but other team members, even from other language teams, confirmed it. In general in the whole team Susana Martin was not held in high esteem. In a way I pitied her as it must not have been easy for her to be team leader in a team where four guys were constantly and relentlessly undermining her. I brought this up in an off the record discussion with Samira Mouhayar in the kitchen/recreation area once when we were alone there. Samira Mouhayar seemed to be well aware of the problem but I do not think she ever did anything to stop it. It appeared to me that she had a soft spot for Yousri Amrani and on purpose looked the other way regarding his unacceptable and unprofessional behaviour. On the other hand I do not think that Susana Martin ever got appropriate training on how to act as a team leader. I tried to be supportive of her with my background of my own previous management experience and so did Stef van Veen who had a background in HR studies and loads of management experience in his earlier career. Stef van Veen told me that he was quite hard at times on Susana Martin by telling Susana Martin to stand up for herself and that she had cried once during a monthly evaluation meeting with him when he explained to her that she had to be stronger. Stef van Veen told me that he gave Susana Martin a lot of leadership advice and guidance but that she never used it. It showed that Stef van Veen too suffered from the negative atmosphere at work.

22. When I worked at GVC/bwin for about two months Susana Martin told me that she was going through a very harsh divorce from her husband. She had two young children that she occasionally brought into the office. I caught her once weeping at her desk because of these private issues in her life. During working hours, we also went many times for walks out of the office, in the streets, where I explained to her my difficulties with the Camp Two guys and she told me about her own problems with them. These walks helped us both to release some of the tension that was building up almost every day at work because of the bullying. I saw Susana Martin and myself both as victims of the same bully boys gang. It was terrible to see how they also went around in the other language teams to badmouth Susana Martin. Susana Martin definitely had her weaknesses as a team leader but this

relentless campaign to make someone look bad was way over the top. The other teams also had noticed that Susana Martin was not capable of doing her job. Susana Martin had to work with the other language teams on late shifts or weekend shifts when the other team leaders were not present. I was shocked to hear Jean-Philippe Surget, the team leader from the French team, publicly say that Susana Martin was useless. Such things didn't help to improve the situation in my team or the department in general.

23. The Camp Two members also excelled in their immature comments about their sexual exploits with women. I had no choice but to listen to them on the work floor on several occasions when they were describing very explicit details. It was quite normal for them to explain how and where they reached their climax with past or present girlfriends and other things I was not particularly interested in. Then there was also Yousri Amrani explaining that he would only cheat on his girlfriend Marjolaine in Belgium, never in Spain so she would not find out. Yousri Amrani and Jose Luis Aznar also liked to comment on the female staff members that walked past and their sexual interests in them. How they would throw some of the more attractive women on their desks and f*** their brains out. The less attractive ones were allegedly only good enough to provide oral pleasure. How they could spend so much time during working hours with childish chats about sex is something I never understood as there was always more than enough work to do. I never had a day at GVC that there was no work that needed immediate attention.

24. During our eight hour shifts, we had three breaks at work: a fifteen minute break, a half an hour break and another fifteen minute break. These breaks were all registered via a software installed on the computers. I almost never took the shorter breaks and in the evenings, when I sat alone, ate my dinner (warmed up in a microwave) at my desk so as to continue to have the customer service chats manned. Even when you sat alone it was allowed to take those breaks meaning that there was no Dutch/Flemish person present during your breaks to man the chats. I never did that, I did not think it was professional to abandon my post. I never had the feeling that this caused me extra pressure or stress as I enjoyed the job. Continue working instead of having all the breaks also made time pass much more quickly. The Camp Two guys on the other hand took more and longer breaks, for instance for smokes outside the building, than was allowed as a reaction on Martijn van

der Vechte's preferential treatment. Team leader Susana Martin must have been aware of this but never reacted. I thought that she found it quite convenient for the Camp Two guys to be away for some time so they left her in peace.

25. One thing that went constantly wrong were the promotions to attract new customers with for example a welcome bonus “deposit £... and get 50% extra from bwin” and other marketing actions that had to reactivate players that had stopped depositing, etc. There were also other promotions like for instance Christmas actions, all of those were aimed at making people deposit more money. For most of these promotions, we only found out when customers contacted us about it. The problem was that Susana Martin did not pass on the information she got about new promotions. Many of these actions were launched out of the blue and it made you feel stupid that you had to ask a customer to send a screenshot of the promotion or forward an email in which the promotion was announced. You had to ask the customer for the info as our team leader did not pass the information she received on to the team. I noticed on several occasions that Susana Martin failed to understand how promotions worked and this led to frustrations, especially with the Camp Two guys. Sometimes we could rely on the French team as they dealt with the French speaking Belgians. Their team leader Jean-Philippe Surget did keep his team up to date with promotions. Other times you had to ask around at other departments via email or skype chat if a promotion was launched by them. This was complicated as sometimes for example the Poker team launched a promotion in which you could get a Casino bonus for cross selling purposes. In such a case a customer would contact us and ask for “his casino bonus that he could not find or use” or something like that. You would naturally contact the casino team as the user had asked about his casino bonus. The casino team then had to ask around too where the promotion came from. On several occasions I found that the Camp Two guys had found that promotion information already but that they did not share it with me and other team members making us lose time. I never understood why Susana Martin did not share the promotions information with the team, it was as simple as forwarding an email that she had received. It led to a lot of confusion and wasting of time. Leanne Dyer, originally from the English customer service team but later shift supervisor, was an expert on promotions. She collected all information available and was kind of a walking encyclopedia. On several occasions she was the one who sorted out our promotions issues and all team members went to her for advice and help. Leanne Dyer

complained about that on several occasions and said that Susana Martin was not doing her job adequately.

26. An issue that was discussed in the team a few times was that bwin was officially asked to stop offering their online products in The Netherlands since 2014. Apparently the Dutch legal framework did not allow for operators based abroad to offer their products in the Netherlands via the internet. This was brought up at a certain moment by the Camp Two guys but we were told that legally everything was fine and we did not risk any legal problems. Targeting Dutch customers in The Netherlands continued in Dutch, their own language. There was even a CRM guy, Thomas Landheer, who worked from the Netherlands to gain new customers and we had to work a lot with him on promotions follow up, etc. When I had worked there for several months, we all of a sudden had to stop doing customer service in Dutch for people from The Netherlands for legal reasons. No further explanations were ever given to us. GVC/bwin kept targeting customers in The Netherlands with promotions though, never was any customer refused because he resided in The Netherlands. As Dutch/Flemish team we continued dealing with Belgians in Dutch but had now to deal with the Dutch in English, what was a bit comical. This was very confusing for most members of the team but I did not mind as I had the best English knowledge in the team. A few months later the support for customers from The Netherlands was transferred to the English team but they had had no training or information in the specific promotions for the Dutch so they kept asking us questions about it. The Dutch/Flemish team then all of a sudden also got the overflow of the English team when it was very busy so quite often we had to deal with the Dutch customers again. As I speak and write English fluently I did not have an issue with this situation but other team members struggled and mistakes were made. There was a general complaint in the team that Susana Martin did nothing at all to sort this problem out. On most days I volunteered to take care of the English language requests as my proficiency of the language was proven.

27. A constant reoccurrence during the first months that I worked at GVC was that the bullies from the Camp Two group kept telling everyone that they were going to leave the company as soon as possible and that they were actively looking for other work elsewhere

in Gibraltar and Spain. They kept repeating all the time that they could not handle the stress caused by Susana Martin's lack of professionalism anymore, etc. This negatively affected the morale in the team even more. As the bullies promised they would leave as soon as possible, that at least gave me some hope that the atmosphere at work would improve drastically as soon as they were gone. In fact that never materialised as they were not successful in finding other employment and that made the Camp Two bullies even more frustrated. Jose Luis Aznar turned out to be the most negative person I ever met in my life. For Jose Luis Aznar, everything was bad according to him; the company was bad, the management was bad, the customers were bad, the products were bad, the softwares were bad, Gibraltar was bad, his colleagues (including me) were bad, etc. His negativity was endless. The other Camp Two members tried to explain and condone this pessimism with Jose Luis Aznar's history; his sister had committed suicide, his brother was doing a long prison sentence in Belgium, he had had a travel agency in Belgium but it had gone bankrupt, etc. Jose Luis Aznar's bad attitude and continuous criticism was a serious nuisance for the other team members and was reported repeatedly but the management never intervened.

28. I also learnt in the first few months that almost every department in the company had to deal regularly with the customer service department and their team leaders. I therefore focused on maintaining a good relation with my own team leader Susana Martin. I for instance wrote positive messages about her (failed) interventions to stop the Camp Two guys bullying me. I also did that to give her more courage to deal in a stronger way with the bullies. The reality was that Susana Martin was a weak and ineffectual leader and had a vicious streak. She was not made for the job and could not handle it. Susana Martin was vindictive towards people she blamed for her own failures. Still I respected her for being my boss and followed up her requests to the best of my capabilities although some of her requests were simply wrong or unreasonable. Always have respect for my superiors, is how my parents educated me, it did not feel strange to me. Samira Mouhayar was not really interested in Susana Martin's problems or possibly Susana Martin never spoke about her difficulties with Samira Mouhayar for fear of losing her job. The Camp Two guys claimed that they had gone a few times to HR to complain about the management and specifically Susana Martin. I had decided not go to HR and continued to try to not get involved because I did not want to jeopardise my job and career opportunities. Samira

Mouhayar was very introvert and I often wondered how she had gotten the job of department manager. She was not liked very much by anyone in the department and was known for telling people that they could leave the company if they did not agree with her or had constructive criticism. I had a few face to face chats with Samira Mouhayar, mostly in the kitchen or recreation area, about trivialities and she was friendly enough but I never lost the feeling that she was hiding something.

29. On a few occasions Susana Martin instructed me to do things that were clearly wrong according to the company's own guidelines. For example she had misunderstood a case, did not read all comments that were already written for the case or did not read all Terms and Conditions for a promotion, etc. In these situations I politely and calmly tried to explain to her that I had another opinion (based on facts) but then she would get upset about that and accused me of being stubborn and wanting to do things "my own way". That put me in a difficult situation. If I would "solve" the case in Susana Martin's wrong way, that could later be used against me and result in a bad evaluation. If I solved it the correct way, Susana Martin could go to Samira Mouhayar, the department manager, and tell her that I was stubborn and did not follow her orders. I quickly learned to "cover my backside" in such situations by asking written advice to VIP managers, other department specialists, etc. This happened only three or four times but Susana Martin kept on bringing these issues up for months afterwards. She kept repeating now and then that I was a good employee but stubborn and "doing things my own way". I found that quite unfair and unprofessional. She kept hiding her incompetence by accusing her personnel of making mistakes but many times Susana Martin did not have a clue herself what she was talking about. Apart from this upsetting nuisance I did not have any other issues with Susana Martin. My Master of Science degree in engineering meant that my analytical skills were well developed and my years of programming experience taught me how to bring complex things together. I always followed the Standard Operation Procedures in MOSS while I noticed that my colleagues had developed their own ways of doing things, deviating from the Standard Operation Procedures which sometimes led to discussions. In such cases the Camp Two guys backed each other up even when they knew they were wrong. Susana Martin did not have the product knowledge to correct those people and the Camp Two guys used Susana Martin's weakness to manipulate her and make her believe that things were right if that was convenient for them to for instance cover up for one of their

mistakes. During a monthly evaluation meeting it was quite normal to be instructed one thing by Susana Martin and the next month be instructed to do the entire opposite. But when I tried to point out to her what was written in MOSS, she picked up her litany again that I was stubborn, trying to do things “my own way”, etc. This was a constant source of complaints, confusion and frustration in the team.

30. The struggle between the two camps continued every day. Sometimes Yousri Amrani and Susana Martin would not speak with each other for days. Yousri Amrani seemed to really hate Susana Martin. On several occasions I had the impression that Yousri Amrani did not like that his immediate boss was a woman. Jose Luis Aznar seemed to me the main instigator fuelling the hatred against Susana Martin. During many days there was an icy atmosphere in the team and when other language teams could be heard to have laughs and banter, in the Dutch/Flemish team the days were passed in a deadly silence. Nobody dared to say a word out of fear that someone from Camp Two would feel provoked and start shouting and screaming. In the thirty years that I have been working for companies I had never experienced anything like this. Nobody did anything to stop it, that was the most astonishing and disappointing thing about it, it was just left festering and getting worse over time. I just kept hoping that the Camp Two guys would soon find another job and leave the company. I kept spending hours every day doing my voluntary work in the Nature Reserve to distract my mind from the toxic atmosphere at work. There were days that I was fearful to go to work for what could happen and even in my free time I felt at times tense and uncomfortable. The bullying issues were regularly discussed between me and the neutral colleagues Stef van Veen and Dennis Dorland when the Camp Two guys were not present. Stef van Veen and Dennis Dorland told me that they pitied me for what I had to undergo. On the other hand they were clearly trying not to get involved for fear of repercussions from the Camp Two guys, they were clearly intimidated by what they were seeing. It seemed as well to be convenient for Stef van Veen and Dennis Dorland that I was bullied so at least the bullies left them alone. Dennis Dorland was bullied too, specifically by Jose Luis Aznar who disliked Dennis Dorland tremendously. But then at times Jose Luis Aznar was friendly to Dennis Dorland trying to recruit him for his Camp Two or manipulating him against Susana Martin by telling him gossip or tell Dennis Dorland upsetting and negative things that Susana Martin had publicly said about Dennis Dorland.

31. When I worked at GVC for about two months, the company organised a summer BBQ for the personnel. This was organised at the Gibraltar Rowing Club premises, not far away from the offices in Europort and Eurotowers. I was keen to go as I saw networking with other department's colleagues as an important way to learn how to best chose my career path. Susana Martin organised the shift plan so that I was free that afternoon and evening and I was able to go to the BBQ. A few of the Camp Two bullies were going too, including Yousri Amrani. That worried me a lot and in the end, on the very evening of the BBQ, I decided not to attend. I could not bear the thought of having the bullies around me for a few extra hours out of the office.

32. In general my personal relation with my team leader Susana Martin went well. Especially on the days that we worked together without any of the Camp Two guys on shift there was a pleasant atmosphere and there was time to have a few chats about our private lives and other non-work related topics. Susana Martin also confided in me and told me about some of her issues in the team. She explained how Dennis Dorland was slow in picking up things and sometimes kept making the same mistakes again and again. On another occasion she told me how Yousri Amrani had come in wet from the rain one day and called his mum in Belgium on his mobile phone to complain about it. Susana Martin laughed very hard with that story and called Yousri Amrani a little schoolboy with no balls. I never repeated those comments to any of my colleagues. In my opinion Susana Martin was too hard on Dennis Dorland. Yes, Dennis Dorland was struggling, but nothing warranted her public criticism of him like for instance saying that it was good that Dennis Dorland was sick one day as she said that he was useless. Of course the Camp Two guys repeated this to Dennis Dorland who felt humiliated and demotivated which was not helpful in his further professional development. On another occasion she called Yousri Amrani and Jose Luis Aznar in their absence "mietjes", this is a Dutch word meaning effeminate homosexuals. There were several more of these denigrating episodes and it taught me to be extra careful to always keep Susana Martin on my side with praising comments in communications with the management, etc. I always kept my distance from the Camp Two guys as they were constantly looking for more gossip about Susana Martin. The Camp Two guys were also very good at creating or inventing issues where there were none. I for instance never publicly criticised Susana Martin but the bullies found a way around that; once they asked me if I thought that Susana Martin was a bad team leader. I gave an

evasive reply that “I accepted Susana Martin as my team leader and that we all had our good and bad days”. The Camp Two guys then went around the department saying that “I had not denied” that Susana Martin was a bad team leader. You could not win with those guys...

33. During one of the meetings I had with Susana Martin during my first two months at GVC, I was quite desperate after a tough morning with the bullies. I asked Susana Martin if the Camp Two guys had an alcohol problem and they worked in the mornings with a hangover explaining their bad attitude. She replied to my astonishment that alcohol was not the main problem, that it had more to do with the other substances they were taking. Susana Martin specifically pointed out that they hung together in the evenings smoking drugs. When Yousri Amrani and Jose Luis Aznar came back after a smoking break one day, their behaviour was weird and irrational. Dennis Dorland later mentioned that they were blowing marijuana during smoke breaks while at work as if that was the most normal thing to do and that “they would hang if there was an on the job drugs test”. A few days later Stef van Veen mentioned out of the blue that he had met up a few times with colleagues after work. He said that many of the customer service agents lived together in the same building in La Linea and that there were a good number of coke-heads there, including in the management. I never went to La Linea with any of my colleagues so I had no personal evidence of this but Stef van Veen's statement was made in a very convincing and derogatory way so I had at that moment no doubt but to believe him. It for sure left me worried that so many colleagues were living together and hearing the Camp Two guys' negative stories about me that might damage my reputation and negatively affect my career opportunities at GVC. This slowly began to undermine my self-esteem and self-confidence.

34. In my case, the bullying had started almost immediately after I joined the team. After about two months of it and reporting it to my team leader Susana Martin verbally on several occasions, I had enough of putting up with it and started to document it in emails to Susana Martin, my team leader, and later I also included Samira Mouhayar, the department manager. On many occasions Susana Martin went in hiding in her little office corner close to the window where she always sat and pretended to remain oblivious to

what happened around her. On one occasion Jose Luis Aznar shouted at me directly over Susana Martin's head that I was stupid and a hypocrite for supporting a conspiracy from the company to steal from and defraud our customers. This was done at a very loud tone but still Susana Martin claimed that she had not heard anything at all. Susana Martin was very close to Martijn van der Vechte which I first attributed to them working together for many years in the company, even before it was bought by GVC, and teaming up against the bullies from Camp Two. Only later I found out that Susana Martin and Martijn van der Vechte had an amorous relationship (Stef van Veen told me this) and that Susana Martin was going through a bad divorce from her husband and the father of her two children. Susana Martin and Martijn van der Vechte spent a lot of time together during breaks, actually much more than allowed, which angered the guys from Camp Two who as a reaction also took more smoking breaks.

35. All members of Camp Two made it very clear from the beginning that they were all seeking other employment elsewhere as they hated working for GVC because of Susana Martin's incompetence and hidden punishments with bad evaluations, blocking holiday requests etc. They were openly using the company's computers to apply for vacancies in other companies. Jose Luis Aznar also applied for different roles within GVC but without success which made him even more frustrated and led to him threatening Noemie Levy from HR with violence. He stated this openly in the group and did not make any effort to keep it secret at all. Noemie Levy later confirmed to me that this had happened to her. I found it very strange that HR never followed up on this aggressive behaviour involving one of their own staff members. The hope that the bullies would soon leave the company was what gave me the strength to carry on working although the atmosphere was still very toxic. There was a systematic campaign of mental abuse and at moments I was close to crying. Although I asked the management repeatedly for an environment free of harassment, that never materialised. The bullies were oppressive and unreasonable but they always got away with their behaviour. The management simply was not interested in the bullying problem. Once I went to Samira Mouhayar's office to report about more bullying and she apparently got fed up with me reporting the same again. She waved with her hand towards the office door and said that if I did not like it there, I could go and they would find someone else to do my job. I interpreted that as that I could get sacked if I would continue to report the bullying. My voluntary work in the Nature Reserve helped me

cope with the difficulties at GVC but bit by bit I was losing my trust and confidence in the management.

36. My direct management in the customer service department was my team leader Susana Martin (a weak and ineffectual leader), department manager Samira Mouhayar (she was always hiding in her glass wall office and rarely came on the work floor) and the deputy department manager Daniela Schiena (a not very intelligent woman who was generally disliked by the department's personnel). Later I found out that there was also Roni Maman, the customer services manager for the whole GVC group of companies and vice president of GVC. He never really interacted with us at work and was based in another building in Gibraltar. There were other language teams in Vienna (German), Bulgaria (Eastern European languages) and Nicaragua (Spanish) but we almost never communicated with them. Samira Mouhayar's behaviour at times was very unusual and strange, almost as if she was not aware of the seventy people in her department who worked under her. It at times looked like as if she had an inferiority complex and was hiding inside herself, blocking out the world. There was a persistent rumour in the department that Samira Mouhayar's husband, who also worked for a gaming company, was having affairs with other female personnel in the company and did not make any effort to hide it. Maybe that was the reason for Samira Mouhayar's behaviour but as far as I am aware I never met her husband and never found any evidence to support or discredit his rumoured infidelity.

37. On 11th July 2017 I had a meeting with Susana Martin in which I mentioned the bullying and that I was having a hard time. I expressed my fear that the Camp Two guys were trying to bully me out of the company and the real possibility of that happening as I was still in my probation period. During this meeting Susana Martin called the three bullies (Sabir Nouri, Yousri Amrani and Jose Luis Aznar) cowards. She told me a story about how they sat weeping at their office desks one day after a member of the Scandinavian team, of which Susana Martin was team leader too, had tried to commit suicide by jumping out of a second floor window at home. Susana Martin did not show any emotion at all about it, actually even ridiculed the event and said that the guy who jumped out of the window was stupid and she loudly laughed about it. I never asked the name of that person and

although I later heard some rumours about the suicide attempt I never found out what the background really was. It scared me a lot though and I decided to always be very careful with Susana Martin.

38. Around this time during office hours while we were both together on shift, Susana Martin and I also had a lot of off the record chats during walks outside the office building. I estimate we had about ten of those walks. Susana Martin was visibly suffering from the bullying by Sabir Nouri, Yousri Amrani and Jose Luis Aznar. During these walks, I also told her about the way I was bullied by the same group of people. She asked me about possible solutions and I explained to her about the clique formation and I advised her to put the Camp Two guys in different shifts so the three of them (Hamid Ringelberg just seemed to be a follower) would not work together and so would not be able to team up again to bully people. Susana Martin followed this advice many weeks later which upset the three bullies quite a lot. It was impossible to keep them separated all the time though and there were still many occasions that all Camp Two members were together on shift. Susana Martin also explained during one of our walks that the Camp Two members all lived together in the same building in La Linea and that the only thing they had in their lives was their job at GVC/bwin. By living together the work issues continued to be discussed between the Camp Two members after their shifts had ended. Susana Martin also gave me examples of how they were constantly scheming against her. It has always remained a mystery to me why Samira Mouhayar never intervened and put an end to this story. It was just allowed to fester and become worse all the time. The Camp Two guys learned soon that they could get away with murder and gained more courage from that to continue their bullying campaigns.

39. During the first two months (June/July 2017) there was also the surprise dismissal of the whole CRM team that had been recently set up. Aaike Christens was part of that team and could easily have been offered a job in the Dutch/Flemish customer service team (where she had worked before) but that did not happen and she was made redundant. A few months later the CRM team was set up again with different people but now named VIP team. This was the first example of the company's strategy to squeeze people out like lemons and then throw them away. This served as another warning that I had to be very

Careful with my direct management as they did not seem to care about how their decisions influenced people's lives. I thought they were very lucky that no one had taken them to court yet because it was quite obvious that they were not worried about laws protecting employees' rights.

40. In the Dutch/Flemish team in the meantime, negative comments about my application for British Citizenship were made and there was a general anti-Gibraltar atmosphere. Jose Luis Aznar was publicly bragging that he was close family of one of the La Linea drug smuggling gangs and knew when drugs launches would arrive. Another time he mentioned that he had applied for a job in the Guardia Civil so he could create queues at the frontier and could always wear a weapon "for the people that annoyed him". Yousri Amrani frequently used rude language when he had Muslim customers on the chat: "son of a wh*re, I'm going to f*** your daughters and your mother, your religion forbids you to gamble, etc." This was done shouting and was very annoying when I had customers on the phone who could overhear this. He was also bragging about his kick-boxing training, I found that threatening. Yousri Amrani and Sabir Nouri were keeping files on Muslim customers. I found that strange. "Was it to blackmail them or fund terrorism?" I once thought. Yousri Amrani was from Molenbeek in Brussels and said that he knew some of the Paris terrorists. I checked these people's Facebook profiles and googled them. That's how I found that Hamid Ringelberg was listening to an extremist imam on YouTube. The continuous bullying, all these weird comments and unusual behaviour and the management's inaction made me start to sit away from the team and I closed myself off from them and the rest of the office, concentrating on my work. I later noticed that other colleagues reacted the same way.

41. On 24th July 2017, only two months after I had started in the team, the atmosphere in the team was extremely bad. The Camp Two guys had had a few go's at me early during my shift, followed up by an email from Jose Luis Aznar to team leader Susana Martin that I was "not cooperative" at work and writing about me that "he shuts down to protect himself". I was by this date already so continuously bullied that I indeed closed myself off from the world every time another bullying attempt was made. Jose Luis Aznar's email with a total misrepresentation of the situation forced me to defend myself against the false

allegations and I sent a lengthy reply to Susana Martin with for instance "I would have preferred to tackle my professional duties first but the fact that my colleague found it necessary to falsely accuse me of being unprofessional needs a reply as I am still on probation and Jose Luis Aznar's remarks could as such negatively affect my evaluation. As I was still in my probation period I was scared that it would affect my chances to stay in the company." ... "It is as such entirely unreasonable that Jose Luis accuses me of not listening to his thoughts and advice." ... "Jose Luis said in an agitated tone that that was the wrong thing to do." ... "This criticism only stopped when Martijn van der Vechte intervened and said that I had followed the right procedure. I felt humiliated by the loud tone that Jose Luis Aznar seemed was appropriate for this occasion." ... "Jose Luis increasingly angered voice and louder attacks" ... "At that moment Jose Luis Aznar exploded and in a very aggressive way shouted that he would deal with it as it was now his chat. I answered in the most appeasing way that he could then go on with the chat and that I would be happy to assist if needed. That made Jose Luis act even more aggressively and I decided to leave it at that." Jose Luis Aznar requested a meeting as a reaction to my reply but this time he sent it to all team members. It was clear to me that he was rallying his Camp Two supporters against me and tried to make me look bad to the rest of the team members. Susana Martin then invited me and Jose Luis Aznar for a meeting the following day to "clear some doubts about the collaboration". Susana Martin even came in an hour early for this meeting so she seemed to be aware that something important was happening. Jose Luis Aznar was surprised that there was this meeting between Susana Martin, me and himself but during the meeting his only contribution was that he denied that there was any bullying.

42. The email I sent to Susana Martin:

Hi Susana,

Can I first point out that I deplore that I have to waste my time to answer on these spurious allegations. There are several e-mails in the mailbox, chats coming in, etc. and I would have preferred to tackle my professional duties first but the fact that my colleague found it necessary to falsely accuse me of being unprofessional needs a reply as I am still in probation and Jose Luis' remarks could as such negatively affect my evaluation.

I wish to point out first that I have not directed any queries to Jose Luis today as he is just back from a two week holiday and he has a lot of e-mails, important MOSS changes, etc.

to go through, I thought it was respectful from my side to keep that in mind. On the other hand the queries I had were related to the new bonus article that Jose Luis doesn't know yet and about cases I had already worked on yesterday with Martijn. It is as such entirely unreasonable that Jose Luis accuses me of not listening to his thoughts and advice. I can assure you that I have asked Jose Luis' advice constantly in the past and was so happy with it that I gave him the maximum of Kudo points at the end of last month.

About the case he mentions where I have worked on, this was about customer "bz_Mo_023" whose father we were in contact with yesterday as he claimed the account was opened by his underage son. I have followed the MOSS article to the letter as such cases can have important legal repercussions and following the article I closed the account. Jose Luis said in an agitated tone that that was the wrong thing to do. Then he went on to tell me that it was wrong to contact the user (whose e-mail address is now monitored by the father) to get a photo ID for the supposed minor to pay back his balance. This criticism only stopped when Martijn intervened and said that I had followed the right procedure. I felt humiliated by the loud tone that Jose Luis seemed was appropriate for this occasion.

When Jose Luis accuses me of "shutting down to protect myself for mistakes" I can only add to my defence that the only thing I did was try to concentrate on the user's account to see exactly what had happened, go through the communication history, etc. Jose Luis increasingly angered voice and louder attacks made that though quite difficult.

Another case to which Jose Luis refers is "bz_Micheljennissen". This customer has since four days an issue with one of his games and came on chat. I opened the relevant MOSS article and went through the step by step procedure to try to help this user. This involved the user losing his chat connection several times but we worked through it almost entirely and the only step needed was ask him for a screenshot of the error message to escalate to second line. This time the customer came back on chat and arrived at Jose Luis' desk. He asked me if I was working on that case and I replied that he could pass the chat on to me. At that moment Jose Luis exploded and in a very aggressive way shouted that he would deal with it as it was now his chat. I answered in the most appeasing way that he could then go on with the chat and that I would be happy to assist if needed. That made Jose Luis act even more aggressively and I decided to leave it at that. Unfortunately the customer was told that I was not available and must have felt that was not the truth (I had him on chat seconds before...) and he left the chat and didn't come back anymore. Bad customer service and an unhappy customer with an unsolved problem.

In short, I wish to assure you that I take my professional responsibilities very serious and do my very best to be nice and correct to the management, my colleagues and our customers. As such I find it not correct that my colleague Jose Luis tries to misrepresent what actually happened with the obvious intention of creating a negative image around my work.

I do hope that this unfortunate chain of events can be discussed between us all to prevent any future repetitions and continue working together in a positive atmosphere.

Sincerely,

Bart Van Thienen

43. By this time I already felt depressed by the continuous attacks from the Camp Two guys and I had only been working there for two months and still had two months to go till the end of my probation period. Jose Luis Aznar' observation "*shutting down to protect myself for mistakes*" was very correct. I just locked myself up inside myself to block out the bullying that by then was seriously affecting my mental health. Jose Luis Aznar and Yousri Amrani must have understood by now that I was very uncomfortable with the way they treated me, but they just continued. Stef van Veen and Dennis Dorland had already told me that they felt that the Camp Two guys were trying to bully me out of the company but that they were too scared to stand up for me as they feared the same bullying treatment would then happen to them as well. Every day I studied the shift roster to see when I would not sit together with the bullies and felt alarmed and distressed as I thought that the clique of Camp Two ganging up on me might negatively affect my chances to get a fixed contract after the four months probation. I also had by now concluded that the department's management was weak and ineffectual and avoided dealing effectively with the bullying. The management was well aware about what was happening by now but I never saw any real effort to stop it. One afternoon Yousri Amrani and Sabir Nouri came on shift while I had already started on an earlier shift. They made a show of it to greet everyone present but ignored me entirely. These individual acts of bullying would not have affected me but it went on and on and on, it never really stopped. The cumulative effect of all the bullying incidents and that no adequate or effective steps were taken by the management to stop the bullying started to affect my mental health.

44. On 26th July 2017 I sent another email to Susana Martin about further bullying: "The three musketeers Jose Luis Aznar, Sabir Nouri and Yousri Amrani have started a campaign to discredit me in the team and I noticed a very cool and distant treatment by Niels Paz from the Scandinavian team too, so it might go beyond the Dutch/Flemish team. The campaign is focused on going through the cases I have been working on and trying to find mistakes in them, mail that then to me like "check that user case again" and wait for me to react angrily on that. They have waited in vain as I was able to explain to them nicely that the case was treated correctly according to MOSS, the intranet reference database with Standard Operating Procedures for customer queries. Every time they had to agree I was right and that seemed to make them even more angry with me. Also me working on a case is now "Bart is blocking a case again", even when it is a very basic action to take and they don't need any access to the mail." ... "In Yousri's words in loud voice for everyone to hear" ... "Now they are publicly criticizing me that I on purpose do things wrong to make them look bad." ... "he again started saying in a loud voice that whatever he said I wanted to protest it etc. etc. He refused to greet me or shake hands when I left." ... "I do have to admit though that I feel uncomfortable about the long term effect this situation might have on people in the company who don't know me thinking I am an unprofessional guy who is a shit stirrer." Susana Martin then replied via email: "I am really sad about the current situation and the way you are feeling. I have made Samira aware of this. I will get back to you as soon as possible."

45. The email I sent to Susana Martin:

Dear Susana,

First of all I wish to thank you for the constructive meeting we had yesterday.

I might say that today's experience shows that there is though no goodwill on the floor to leave the past behind and start afresh. The three musketeers Jose Luis, Sabir and Yousri have started a campaign to discredit me in the team and I noticed a very cool and distant treatment by Niels from the Scandinavian team too, so it might go beyond the Dutch/Flemish team. The campaign is focused on going through the cases I have been working in and trying to find mistakes in them, mail that then to me like "check that user case again" and wait for me to react angrily on that. They have waited in vain as I was able to explain them nicely that the case was treated correctly according to MOSS. They every time had to agree. Also me working on a case is now "Bart is blocking a case

again", even when it is a very basic action to take and they don't need any access to the mail.

The next step was to tell other team members that whatever I did or asked was to make them look stupid, that since the day I started working I asked them a question and EVERY time I got an answer I went to someone else to ask the same question. In Yousri's words in loud voice for everyone to hear: "Jij doet er alles aan opdat ik mij een mongool zou voelen." [translated: You do everything to make me feel like a mongol, a person with the Down Syndrome.] It is true that there have been a few times that I asked advice for e.g. customers who were on the edge of just getting/not getting a bonus and that I asked Martijn or another team leader (when you weren't there) to make a decision. This was not to criticize my colleague but to give the user the best service possible. On other occasions I was given "advice" without asking for it (looking over my shoulder and saying "you have to do it this/that way" without knowing the case"), advice that was simply wrong. Now they are publicly criticizing me that I on purpose do things wrong to make them look bad. I do not think that I should follow wrong guidance and do things wrong on purpose to keep my colleagues happy? Or are they just trying to set up the other colleagues against me in an "all against one" scenario.

At 16h00 my shift ended but I was still in a chat and finished that around 16h15, in the meantime I was answering an e-mail about a lost bet too. Yousri took that up as me "blocking a file again" and when I showed him on my screen I was actually working on it to get it out of the mailbox, he again started saying in a loud voice that whatever he said I wanted to protest it etc. etc. He refused to greet me or shake hands when I left.

I'm off on Thursday and do the late shift on Friday so I won't be together for long with these three colleagues as they do early shifts. On Saturday I have the same shift as Yousri though so that might become problematic as he will come to look for trouble. The two others are more easy to ignore, by the way. I'm off on Sunday again. Next week Sabir is on holiday, so that's one problem less, I work partly with Jose Luis but that's not too bad but my first four hours of every shift I am together with Yousri, not something I look forward too.

The good news is that now all three of them are publicly claiming to be actively looking for another job so this situation might sort out itself sooner or later. I do have to admit though that I feel uncomfortable about the long term effect this situation might have on people in the company who don't know me thinking I am an unprofessional guy who is a shit stirrer. Could you please give me some advice and guidance on how to handle this situation?

Thanks and kind regards,
Bart

46. Susana Martin's reply via email:

Hi Bart,
Thanks for your e-mail.
I am really sad about the current situation and the way you are feeling.
I have made Samira aware of this. I will get back to you as soon as possible.
Thanks and kr.
Susana

47. Shortly afterwards Yousri Amrani, Sabir Nouri and Jose Luis Aznar were called in for individual meetings with Susana Martin to discuss their bully behaviour in the team. When they came back from their meetings they looked at me angrily. Initially I hoped that as they were now fully aware that the bullying was harming me, their behaviour would change and the bullying would stop. Unfortunately they were looking for revenge after their meetings with Susana Martin and there was more bullying instead of less. As it went unpunished, they knew they could get away with it and they intensified their campaign but took more care now that it wasn't noticed too much by the management.

48. On 29th July 2017, three days after my email that led to meetings with the bullies, I sent my next email with complaints about bullying to Susana Martin and Samira Mouhayar: "I had a friendly chat with Dennis Dorland, relaxed atmosphere until Yousri arrived five minutes late and in a very foul mood. As soon as he was settled in he started to attack me and the first hour he didn't stop shouting at me" ... "the user offered to send a screenshot what I accepted. Yousri overheard me and went entirely mad, shouting and screaming" ... "Yousri then said he would send an e-mail to Samira to complain about my bad way of work, not following procedures etc." ... "After a happy start of the day, the next three hours in our team passed in a deadly silence. Twice Yousri Amrani left for a break without telling me or Dennis Dorland and during those fifteen minutes all of a sudden the nice atmosphere was back" ... "Dennis Dorland said that he didn't want to say who was right or

wrong but that Yousri's behaviour towards me was definitely over the top, uncalled for and unnecessary." ... "The result of all this is that after one hour on the job I got a terrible headache that I normally never ever have" ... "What I can say for myself is that I'm happy to work with everyone in the team and forgive and forget. But it is also clear that this situation should not be allowed to get worse by the day as this has become insupportable for me and other team members are suffering too. I have to add that my fear is growing that my days in the company are counted." By now I was seriously alarmed, distressed, humiliated and intimidated. By now I had come to the conclusion that Susana Martin was not able to stop the bullying so I decided to take it one step further and copy in Samira Mouhayar, the department manager. I also pointed out in this email that I had politely confronted Yousri Amrani face to face about his behaviour and that his behaviour was entirely unreasonable.

49. The email I sent to Susana Martin and Samira Mouhayar:

Hi Susana, CC Samira,

I write this e-mail from home as it was way too busy at work to do it from there. The only break I had was for a quick meal. Dennis told me that this morning there were 54 e-mails in our mailboxes and lots more came in plus chats and phone calls. All were dealt with by the way and the mailboxes were empty when my shift ended.

I started at noon, was there earlier for a late breakfast and well in time at my desk to start work. I had a friendly chat with Dennis, relaxed atmosphere until Yousri arrived five minutes late and in a very foul mood. As soon as he was settled in he started to attack me and the first hour he didn't stop shouting at me, the now usual accusations that I try to make him look bad etc. It became worse when I had a user on the phone who said he didn't get his sign up bonus. I couldn't pinpoint the bonus immediately and the user offered to send a screenshot what I accepted. Yousri overheard me and went entirely mad, shouting and screaming that we had instructions from a high ranking director to keep everything down to one e-mail. We had this issue with bonus identification before, remember when the trainers were asked advice, and the conclusion was that a screenshot or a link to the bonus advert page had to be asked to identify it correctly. Yousri then said he would send an e-mail to Samira to complain about my bad way of work, not following procedures etc.

After a happy start of the day, the next three hours in our team passed in a deadly silence.

Twice Yousri left for a break without telling me or Dennis and during those fifteen minutes all of a sudden the nice atmosphere was back and Dennis asked my advice for a few cases, we had a few laughs and had a few chats as normal people do. I shortly discussed with him what was happening and Dennis said that he didn't want to say who was right or wrong but that Yousri's behaviour towards me was definitely over the top, uncalled for and unnecessary.

After about three hours Yousri then calmed down but regularly said in a loud voice (so I would hear it): "another mistake, another e-mail I have to send to Susana". When I asked him politely what the e-mails were all about, he said it was about all the mistakes I was making and that he sent them directly to you because it was impossible to talk to me anyway. And so on, and so one, hour after hour. What I don't understand is that I haven't stopped working for a minute but he had all the time of the world to investigate every case with my name in it.

When finally Dennis left at five pm he became more quiet, clearly because his intended audience had gone. So when I noticed he wasn't doing anything I politely asked him what the actual situation was about, that I was open to listen and see if we, from man to man, could work it out. He started his whole litany again of how superior I felt myself, never asking advice to them but when I asked advice I always went to other teams to double check, making him look like a fool etc. So I asked him how many times that had happened. His answer was "three or four times". So I asked him: "So all this trouble is about three or four times in two months and a half, that makes one such incident every two weeks, and that is what all this fuss is about?" He had no answer to that and he started his whole litany from zero again. At that time I thanked him politely for the chat and continued with my work.

The only case I saw he was working on to find a complaint to send to you was "bb_VanlaeckeNiels", the one on the phone who sent the screenshot of his sign up bonus. I found out he has multiple accounts and one of them was closed for fraud. The Moss manual is very clear: send standard text "No bonus – no link clicked". He put a note in there (for all to see) that I had wrongly escalated the case and that the user should have gotten the Joker promotion, so he didn't find the multiple accounts or just tried to make me look bad for the team. By the way: I know that I make mistakes and I am happy for people pointing that out to me as it makes me more experienced and better in my job.

I left the job five minutes late as I still was on chat. Yousri left without a greeting.

The result of all this is that after one hour on the job I got a terrible headache that I

normally never ever have, I could not fully concentrate anymore on what I was supposed to do but held out till my shift was over. Working conditions like this unfortunately are not beneficial for the quality of my work.

To set the record straight, I wish to add here that I personally and all other more mature persons in the team all agree that Susana as a team leader has done a great job to try to settle this situation respectfully and keeping everyone's position in mind. As a team leader she has been acting where it should and been lenient were necessary. That this situation is getting entirely out of hand is definitely not Susana's doing or responsibility.

What the real problem is, that's for the management to decide. What I can say for myself is that I'm happy to work with everyone in the team and forgive and forget. But it is also clear that this situation should not be allowed to get worse by the day as this has become insupportable for me and other team members are suffering too. I have to add that my fear is growing that my days in the company are counted.

On Monday Yousri and me are both again in the same shift, for your information. I'm not looking forward to that.

Thank you for reading this and kind regards,

Bart Van Thienen

50. On 2nd August 2017 I sent another email to Susana Martin and Samira Mouhayar about further bullying. My report covered the last three days: "He makes his presence well known though by having loud conversations over my head with the French team" ... "Although the focus of attention is now temporarily on undermining the team leader's position, the tension in the group is still very high" ... "But not Yousri Amrani, in front of Leanne Dyer he began to accuse me of bad customer service for not escalating it via CSM in a very unpleasant and denigrating tone and loud voice. Leanne Dyer went through the case and entirely agreed with my way of handling the case. This made Yousri even more angry and he showed Leanne five Word documents in a folder and pointing at them he said: "I'm building a file about Bart's mistakes to use it in the right moment, as I do for other people." This caused me to feel even more alarmed, distressed, humiliated and intimidated than I already was. I started to become very desperate as I had no control over the situation and I was entirely unused to that. Even after fifteen years as a tour guide in Spain and Gibraltar with exigent and demanding customers I had not been affected. I was able to live with criticism, for instance as an environmental activist in Gibraltar I clashed with the

Government in the press on a few occasions and I was not affected by the public criticism, even although it was sometimes unfair and incorrect. But these were instances that I knew could happen and I accepted them as part of my environmental cause battles. But the bullying at work, day in day out, the relentless undermining of my self-confidence, the never ending criticism for things I had done correctly according to the Standard Operating Procedures, the gossiping behind my back about what a bad employee I was, it all started to take its toll on my mental health.

51. The email I sent to Susana Martin and Samira Mouhayar:

Good evening Susana, Samira,

A short update about this week's issues in the team.

Monday:

I'm alone with Yousri this morning and he's in a much better mood today. He's still trying to find every error or mistake I make so I'm extra careful trying to not make any. There are enough e-mails in the mailboxes to keep me busy so again I don't understand where Yousri finds the time to go through my cases.

He makes his presence well known though by having loud conversations over my head with the French team, he could as well walk those few meters and discuss whatever he needs to in private with them.

Below a case he said I've been treating badly. Noortje was away on holiday, Steven took over. I contacted Steven on Saturday via e-mail re a bonus for a VIP. I got no reply so I forwarded the e-mail to Noortje today who's back and she replied my e-mail immediately. Now Yousri complained to me that Noortje had contacted him by chat that I should have escalated this to Noortje via CSM and he told me that I should contact Noortje via chat to explain my mistake to her. I did so but she claimed she hadn't been in touch with Yousri at all. He's now away on a break apparently without saying anything to me.

Tuesday:

A very nice day as an issue with a bonus registration went wrong and did so apparently for eight months. Pure ecstasy for Jose Luis and Yousri as they are going around now telling everyone that our team leader is to blame for all the mess etc. Specifically Fabien was to be brainwashed about the poor quality of team leader we supposedly have. The more mature team members watched in disdain at the poor spectacle but in a way we were relieved that we were left in peace for some time.

Yousri even had the kindness to tell me that he now understood why "I did everything differently to him as there was poor leadership in the team and I was misguided etc." I can assure you that I have full confidence in Susana's qualities as a team leader and me nor the more mature team members support that gossip.

Although the focus of attention is now temporarily on undermining the team leaders position, the tension in the group is still very high as you never now when the next target/victim will be chosen.

Wednesday:

Back to the normal routine to try to discredit other team members. Yousri went for me again in front of Leanne about escalations for VIPs asking for GWG bonus. I had a user on chat and contacted Noortje via Skype, the user got on the spot a bonus so every body happy. But not Yousri, in front of Leanne he began to accuse me of bad customer service for not escalating it via CSM in a very unpleasant and denigrating tone and loud voice. Leanne went through the case and entirely agreed with my way of handling the case. This made Yousri even more angry and he showed Leanne five Word documents in a folder and pointing at them he said: "I'm building a file about Bart's mistakes to use it in the right moment, as I do for other people." I spoke to Leanne afterwards and she will happily testify about these events.

What is terribly shocking though is that Yousri is collecting a file about me or things I do without proper authorisation or permission from all parties involved, what is a breach of the Gibraltar Data Protection Act. Even worse is that he uses company infrastructure to build up that file "that he will use in the right moment against me." That is totally illegal in Gibraltar, it's an offense and it is called blackmail. This is obviously not acceptable and I have been advised to report this to the Royal Gibraltar Police for investigation.

I would really appreciate advice and guidance from you because if this isn't handled cautiously we're going to end up with people arrested, computers confiscated for investigation, police officers walking in and out of the offices for all to see etc. etc.

I repeat that I am willing to do what is right for the company so, again, I ask for advice and guidance to find a way out of the present mess that seems to become worse by the hour.

Thank you for reading this and looking forward to your reply,

Bart Van Thienen

52. On 7th August 2017 I sent another email in Dutch to Susana Martin in which I stated

that I was becoming desperate. The bullying was relentless and no effective management decisions were taken to alleviate the toxic atmosphere. This was less than three months after I had started at GVC/bwin after a sabbatical that had made me feel entirely relaxed and free of worries and working in a job that I liked very much and gave me a lot of personal satisfaction.

53. The translation of my email to Susana Martin:

Hi Susana,

Tomorrow I have the 14h00-22h00 shift. This means that unfortunately I will have to sit together with some unpleasant people for most of my shift.

I personally think it's really sad that I am studying my shift roster before I start to check how bad the following day/week will be. This is a new experience for me, I never before in my life had to live through something like this.

I had hoped that my 3 day weekend would be sufficient to improve my mood somewhat but that didn't materialise unfortunately although I did several relaxing activities.

Is it possible to have a motivation chat with you tomorrow so you can lift my spirits up? I would appreciate that a lot.

KR,

Bart

54. By 9th August 2017 Susana Martin had again called in the bullies for individual meetings. I have no idea what was said during those meetings but it seemed to be a bit more successful this time. I feared though that the relief would be limited in time as by now it was abundantly proven that Susana Martin was a weak and ineffectual team manager. Even although I doubted the long term effect of Susana Martin's intervention, I wanted to show my appreciation that at least she had tried to do something and although I was actually convinced that the result would last for a short time only, I wanted to motivate her to become stronger and more proactive in her leadership towards the bullies. On the other hand I was also scared that my complaints about the bullying by the Camp Two guys would make Susana Martin feel threatened in her job and that she would start to direct her vicious and vindictive nature towards me. Therefore I sent Susana Martin a short email to express my gratitude and take away any fear for negative feelings on my side that she

might interpret as a threat.

55. My email to Susana Martin:

Evening Susana,

Thanks to your interventions the atmosphere at work was back to normal again today and there were no incidents to report with any of my colleagues.

It shows that my trust in you as team leader was proven to be correct.

Kind regards,

Bart Van Thienen

56. On 10th August 2017 Niels Paz from the Scandinavian team left the company. The Scandinavian team had only four members who were Swedish and Danish. They also had Susana Martin as team leader and shared the same office area with the Dutch/Flemish team. Niels Paz was only the first of a whole series of colleagues that came and went. The Camp Two guys were very disappointed as they were quite close to him and they went around the whole department to tell everyone that in Susana Martin's teams there had been a 100% loss of personnel over the last two years. He wasn't the last one to leave the team and/or the company, only the first one of an endless list of people that were bullied away by Susana Martin or the bad atmosphere at work.

57. The following three weeks were somehow a bit more relaxed. Susana Martin had followed up on my idea to split up the Camp Two guys over different shifts so they could not gang up again. I had also taken to sit away from the Camp Two team members so there was a desk partition between them and me and they could not see my computer screens anymore. The bullying continued though but it was less intense than it used to be and I did not feel the need to write another report to the management. I was scared that another report would endanger my chances of getting a fixed contract at the end of my probation time. I hoped now that the bullying would further diminish and eventually stop and hopefully the bullies would finally find another job and leave the company. I kept updating Susana Martin verbally of the incidents that happened with the bullies regularly in private chats. Throughout my employment with GVC/bwin I was always able to cope with

the work load and I loved my job. The only thing that made my life miserable was the bullying and harassment by the Camp Two people. Luckily my voluntary work in the Gibraltar Nature Reserve continued to be an excellent distraction of the depressing work atmosphere issues and prevented me from going mad.

58. On 5th September 2017 Yousri Amrani sent an email to all team members and management to complain about the bad atmosphere in the Dutch/Flemish team for which he blamed me. This happened only ten days before the end of my four months probation and was another attempt to try to force the management to sack me, another poorly hidden attempt from the Camp Two guys to bully me out of the company. I replied to Susana Martin and Samira Mouhayar via email: "Yousri sent you the e-mail below today to ask for a team meeting as he and Jose Luis started again with their campaign to bully me. Leanne Dyer was present when it happened, a lot of shouting and screaming and accusing me of being a cause of trouble and bad atmosphere in the team. Last week Sabir Nouri did the same but I could prove twice his claims were wrong." ... "It was not to the liking of Jose Luis Aznar though as he started shouting at me, and Yousri joined him (in front of Leanne)" ... "If you go through the chats you will see that he has no ground at all to claim that." ... "I have discussed this in a short meeting with Daniela and Samira and hope this gets sorted out." Again I had a strong feeling that the management was not taking my complaints serious. I had now on several occasions given evidence about cases I had been criticised for by the bullies and showing they were creating entirely unnecessary and unreasonable conflict and commotion about things I had done correctly. That behaviour simply was not reasonable. Again I had a strong impression that Samira Mouhayar had a soft spot for Yousri Amrani and kind of covered up for him. The management's lack of real action did nothing to assuage my feelings of being alarmed, distressed, humiliated and intimidated. Jose Luis Aznar made a tremendous fuss about a mistake he had made in a reply to a customer during a chat. I had that same customer later again on chat and sorted out his problem. Nothing really important had happened and the problem was easily resolved but still Jose Luis Aznar' created a drama and his reaction was entirely out of proportion. Working together in a team environment was clearly not something that he understood as it involved helping out each other instead of making a public fuss about a colleague that had just corrected a minor mistake that he had made because he was not up to date with his knowledge about that specific promotion.

59. The email sent by Yousri Amrani to the Dutch/Flemish team and Leanne Dyer:

Hi Susanna,

We would like to ask a meeting regarding the working atmosphere.

The reason why I put Leanne in this communication is because she already knows about all of this. "Not from my side".

Thnx nd kr,

Yousri Amrani

60. My reply on Yousri Amrani's email to Susana Martin, Leanne Dyer and Samira

Mouhayar:

Hi Susanna,

Yousri sent you the e-mail below today to ask for a team meeting as he and Jose Luis started again with their campaign to bully me. Leanne was present when it happened, a lot of shouting and screaming and accusing me of being a cause of trouble and bad atmosphere in the team. Last week Sabir did the same but I could prove twice his claims were wrong.

The discussion went about user "bz_gerritvbeek" who came on chat last Friday about missing Predictions. Jose Luis had told the user in an earlier chat that he shouldn't use his free Prediction anymore to get Predictions from his bets so the user was angry that his predictions weren't credited, this is the relevant part of the chat:

[20:17:00] gerritvbeek: maar eerder moest ik de freepredictions gebruiken als opt in

[20:17:05] gerritvbeek: dat is nu nietmeer nodig?

[20:17:25] Jose Luis: nee dat is niet nodig

I discussed this situation with Leanne and she escalated via Outlook and got confirmation that as a matter of good will and because a team member had advised the user wrongly the user would get his Predictions. Another happy customer who earlier wrote in his chat with me that he had screenshots and mentioned Jose Luis' promise and threatened to give the company bad ratings on websites etc. You can check my chat and will see that the only mention I made about the situation was that there must have been some misunderstanding. Problem solved, I thought.

It was not to the liking of Jose Luis though as he started shouting at me, and Yousri joined him (in front of Leanne), that I had done everything possible to make him look like the biggest piece of shit in the world for that customer. If you go through the chats you will see

that he has no ground at all to claim that. So restarted the bully campaign shortly before my probation time ends and by coincidence while you are on holiday.

In short: there was absolutely no reason at all to become aggressive as there never was a problem in the first place.

I have discussed this in a short meeting with Daniela and Samira and hope this gets sorted out.

Thanks and kind regards,

Bart Van Thienen

61. September also brought a few more changes in the Scandinavian team that continued with four members. On 4th September 2017 Rikke Sorensen, a Danish girl living in La Linea, started for the Scandinavian team. She did not stay long and left in the first week of January 2018. She publicly said that the only reason why she left was the bad way she was treated by team leader Susana Martin. She explained that there had been several conflicts during evaluation meetings because Susana Martin did not know her stuff and told Rikke off for things she had done correctly. 15th September 2017 was the last day for Ellinore Hallen, a Swedish girl who left the company. She was very discrete and I don't know why she left. On 18th September 2017 Christoffer Thomsen, who started at the same date 15th May 2017 as me for the Scandinavian team, was gone. He simply never appeared at work again. He was bullied away by Susana Martin who had publicly called him a big baby and treated him like a mentally disabled child. This exceptionally high turnover of personnel didn't happen in the other language teams in the department in Gibraltar. It was astonishing that no one in the management or HR ever questioned why so many people in Susana Martin's teams left over a period of at least two years that I was aware of.

62. During my September 2017 evaluation meeting, Susana Martin brought up that I had to change the way I was writing dates in emails to customers. Till then I had written dates with slashes like 15/12/2017 as I had always done when I lived in Belgium. Now Susana Martin wanted me to use dots for Belgians like 15.12.2017 and dashes for the Dutch like 15-12-2017. This sounded like total madness to me as I had never heard about different ways of writing dates for the two countries, and I had worked with Dutch people before. I

asked around to confirm in the team and nobody else had been asked to write the dates in such a way. I was perplexed by Susana Martin's request but obliged. Since then I always wrote the dates with dots and dashes till the last day I worked for GVC. I never understood the sense of this request but as Susana Martin was my boss, I simply followed the instructions given, even nonsensical ones like this dots and dashes thing. Seeing how badly Susana Martin was treating other team members, at this time the last thing I wanted to happen was to upset Susana Martin by protesting about a date format. I continued with my strategy to praise her in emails to stay on her good side. It was pretty clear to me by now that Susana Martin was utterly incompetent for her job.

63. The 15th September 2017 signaled the end of the four months probation period. I had a meeting with Susana Martin and Samira Mouhayar with an evaluation of my work during those past four months. I was scared to go to that meeting as I had no clue how my series of complaints of bullying would affect the management's opinion about me and my work. I was very surprised when Samira Mouhayar congratulated me with my excellent work and mentioned that it was even more outstanding because of the difficulties I had had to go through with the Camp Two guys and their relentless bullying. It was also the end of the probation period for Stef van Veen but extended for an extra month for Dennis Dorland. That I was now on a fixed contract brought surprisingly a bit more relaxed atmosphere to the team. I was under the impression that the Camp Two guys had somehow accepted that their attempts to bully me away had failed.

64. The Camp Two guys were unhappy that Stef van Veen had been accepted with a fixed contract too and they claimed that that had been manipulated by Susana Martin to make sure that Martijn van der Vechte (Susana Martin's boyfriend) got his £1,000 referral fee as he had brought in Stef van Veen, an old friend of his. "The girlfriend is helping her boyfriend get some extra money", was the accusation. The Camp Two guys claimed that both Stef van Veen and Dennis Dorland were not strong contributors for the team, their work was of a poorer quality, and both should have been kept under extended probation. In a private chat with me Stef van Veen admitted that he had expected an extended probation period for himself and said that he understood that being given a preferential treatment by Susana Martin because of Martijn van der Vechte caused upset in the team.

He called Susana Martin's leadership style a show of immaturity and profound lack of professionalism. Dennis Dorland told me that in his own evaluation meeting with Susana Martin he had brought up that he had had mental health problems, a burn-out, in the past and that he felt that they might return because of the bad atmosphere in the team. Susana Martin entirely ignored that and continued to treat Dennis Dorland in a derogatory and humiliating way. She actually told me that she hoped that Dennis Dorland would go away and find another job elsewhere.

65. This date 15th September 2017 was also the last day for Sabir Nouri who had resigned a month earlier. I was quite happy, as was Dennis Dorland, that he was going as during the four months I knew him he never said a friendly word to me and treated me as some kind of piece of rubbish. I hoped that with him gone the negative Camp Two influence on the atmosphere in the team would diminish. There was also a new starter, Kieran Vandenhoeck, a younger Belgian guy with two children who I therefore hoped would be more mature than the Camp Two guys. The Dutch/Flemish team continued to be eight people plus the team leader. The bullying by Yousri Amrani and Jose Luis Aznar continued but as I had a fixed contract now I was somehow less stressed by it, the fear of getting sacked during my probation was gone. The continuous bullying kept me restless while at work and I was always scared for the next unexpected round of shouting and false accusing. When I worked together on a shift with Stef van Veen and Dennis Dorland without any of the Camp Two bullies present, the atmosphere was very good and I always looked forward to those rare days.

66. During my time at GVC I had always made it clear to my team leader and all colleagues, including the Camp Two guys, that as I had no wife or children or other obligations in general, I would always be willing to change or swap shifts with them as and when required. This happened several times and I was able to help out colleagues with planning holidays, family visits, etc. This had the extra and unexpected advantage that I did a lot of shifts from 16h00-24h00. This shift came with an extra shift allowance after 20h00 and most of the time after 20h00 I worked entirely alone so I was not bullied. It also gave me many hours in the morning and early afternoon to do my voluntary work in the Nature Reserve that helped keep me relaxed and mitigated the negative influence of the

continuous bullying at work.

67. Towards the end of October the Melon Madness disaster happened. Melon Madness was a casino slots online game for which a bonus was given to thousands of UK customers. Someone had made a mistake and the bonus money was not restricted so there were no conditions attached to the bonus money like for example "you have to play twice the bonus money to release it and be able to withdraw it to your bank account". Most users would have lost their money by then, therefore it would cost the company almost nothing. A few people however withdrew the bonus money to their bank accounts without playing with it. When this was noticed GVC/bwin simply blocked all accounts of users that had received that bonus. This led to thousands of complaints, many via resolver.co.uk so the company needed to take these complaints seriously, and that resulted in a tremendous overload on the English team. Thousands of UK customers were affected and the complaints kept coming in non-stop for weeks. The customers all had the same feeling that they were ripped off as they had played with the bonus money and had made some winnings with it. These winnings were taken off them. I was quite shocked to see what was happening as it did not seem a fair way of treating customers. Notwithstanding my moral feelings about what was happening I offered the management to do four hours overtime on Saturday and Sunday evenings on 28th and 29th October 2017 from 20h00 till 24h00 to help the English team with their backlog. My offer was accepted by Samira Mouhayar and a few days later she awarded me £50 of Morrisons supermarket vouchers with the words: "Of the 70 people in my department you were the only one who volunteered to do overtime and then not even for your own team."

68. On 29th October 2017 I entered a five day annual leave request in the system for 27th November 2017 till 1st December 2017. Susana Martin immediately accepted this as it had been verbally discussed between us already. That is how holiday requests worked; you discussed it with Susana Martin, she verbally agreed and then closer to the date you entered it in the system around the time when Susana Martin was making the shift roster for that period. Each year only five days of annual leave could be transferred to the following year and this holiday request was to reduce my number of annual leave days still available. In the end I did transfer five days of annual leave to the next year's amount of

days. This actually proved that I really enjoyed my job and didn't need to maximise my holidays for feeling bored. The only negative point in my employment was the bullying and the toxic atmosphere created by the Camp Two guys.

69. On 2nd November 2017 I booked flights for my May 2018 annual leave and holiday in Belgium. I booked this as my Belgian Passport had to be renewed and for my nephew's (my brother's oldest son's) confirmation, I'm his godfather. I discussed this with my team leader Susana Martin who agreed with the proposed dates and told me to put it as usual in the system closer to the dates when she was going to do the shift roster for that period; end of March, early April. Susana Martin also mentioned that there was going to be a new system for holiday planning in the near future. I remembered the stories from colleagues about Susana Martin causing unnecessary problems (her vindictive attitude) with holiday requests if she did not like you but my relation with her was still very good so I did not foresee any issues. This date was also when Martijn van der Vechte and Yousri Amrani left the team and took up jobs in the VIP team. They continued sharing the same office space though and constantly visited the team. We were also several times per day in touch for customers whom they had as VIP but that was mostly done via skype chat. The team was down from eight to six people now so the same workload had to be shared by fewer people. I hoped that with Yousri Amrani gone from the team the bullying would become less of a problem with only Jose Luis Aznar left to bully me and Hamid Ringelberg who never said a word to me. It also meant though that the positive influence of Martijn van der Vechte had gone. Martijn van der Vechte had stood up several times in my defence when the bullies were on purpose wrongly criticising me for replies to customers that I had done correctly.

70. In January 2017, four months before I started working at GVC, I had booked flights to go to Belgium for six days during the Christmas period. At the job interview stage I had mentioned this to Noemie Levy and she had replied that that would not be a problem for my application. Susana Martin had told me to put an annual leave request in the system closer to the date when she was doing that month's shift roster. Getting closer to December I had on several occasions volunteered to work on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, as those days don't really mean a lot to me. Other colleagues volunteered for

the Christmas days so there were no issues for covering the different shifts on those special days. I remember this because it was one of the very few times that everyone in the team agreed about something. I looked very much forward to being away for a few days to escape the toxic atmosphere at work and “reload my batteries”. On 11th November 2017 I entered a one day annual leave request for 20th December 2017 and four day annual leave request in the system for 25th December 2017 till 28th December 2017 to take up my annual leave days in the shift roster. Susana Martin accepted these immediately as everything had already been agreed verbally months earlier and we had spoken several times about it afterwards.

71. It was towards the end of the year that I got a bad cold. Many colleagues suffered from the same illness that was most probably caused by the air-conditioning system that did not filter out the bacteria and just kept pumping the infected air around. Several people from the Dutch/Flemish team called in sick but I continued to work, using my medicine on the job to guarantee a customer service presence for my team. I worked entirely alone during several of those days. It was around this time that I overheard a conversation from the Camp Two members Yousri Amrani (although now at VIP), Jose Luis Aznar and Hamid Ringelberg who were discussing the shift roster and how they could organise it between them to call in sick to make sure there would be no one on shift on certain days. They wanted to do this to cause troubles for Susana Martin. I dutifully reported this to Susana Martin and even told her what I remembered of the dates they had discussed. Later it proved that indeed they called in sick and there would not have been any presence in our team. Susana Martin bluntly refused to accept my statement, which I found very weird. It was like she wanted to live in some state of denial that she had entirely lost control of her team. When indeed the total absence of personnel in the Dutch/Flemish team became a reality (because of the Camp Two pre-planned sick leave), I volunteered to come in on my day off to cover the shift. By doing this the carefully orchestrated Camp Two plan to call in sick did not work and the Camp Two guys were angry with me because of it. Susana Martin kept refusing though that the sick leave was planned. She even forbade me to bring up similar accusations in the future. She simply denied the reality of what I had overheard and told her would happen and indeed did happen exactly as I had told her would happen. Very weird all of that... It also showed that my hope that with Sabir Nouri gone, Yousri Amrani out of the team and a new starter in the team, the atmosphere would improve, was

not going to happen.

72. In the build up to the Christmas period the Advent Calendar promotion was launched. Users had to opt-in every day via the website or mobile phone app with the chance to win something. Every day there were other prizes and other Terms and Conditions you needed to satisfy to qualify for a prize draw. There was no guarantee you would win a prize though as it was a draw. This promotion ran over several weeks and it became a source of frustration for customers who thought they had qualified for the draw of the day, or forgot to opt-in, or the opt-in did not work, or thought they had won a prize but could not find it, etc. This led to a constant stream of customer service calls, emails and chats. We had then to contact the marketing department to check if the customer had opted-in, qualified and won something or not in the draw. Getting an answer could take hours, which frustrated the customers even more. With my programming background I had by then figured out that the marketing department must have had a database in which all these customer promotion data were collected so I started asking around via Skype chat about this. It turned out that this promotion was run by Thomas Landheer from the London office, although he was mostly in The Netherlands, together with a few guys in the India office. I asked them if we could get access to their Advent Calendar promotion database to be able to answer customer queries immediately without having to contact them. Thomas Landheer organised a video chat with me showing on his screen how this database worked and I wrote a manual for it for my colleagues. We had to go to an internet address and log in to get access to the database, then we had to find a customer number based on the customer user name in another software. We had to download an Excel file to see if the customer had opted-in, etc., a complex set of things to do and check. I made the manual as user friendly as possible with screenshots. To puzzle it all together you had to open six different screens which complicated matters but at least we were now able to give a customer an answer within minutes. My team leader Susana Martin was so impressed with my proactive investigation work and manual that she forwarded it to all customer service agents in the office. The public praise I received made the Camp Two guys very unhappy. And so the bullying continued.

73. In February 2018 the UK Gambling Commission gave the GVC subsidiary

ElectraWorks Ltd (operating the bwin brand for which I did customer service) a £350,000 fine for repeatedly misleading consumers with adverts relating to free bonuses. GVC also received a formal warning from the Commission for failing to ensure that the person responsible for marketing at the business held a personal management licence. Richard Watson, Commission Programme Director, said: "This fine should serve a warning to all gambling businesses that we will not hesitate to take action against those who mislead consumers with bonus offers or fail to ensure they are correctly licensed."

74. This actually confirmed a story from the Camp Two guys who kept repeating all the time that GVC was ripping off our customers. Yousri Amrani and Jose Luis Aznar repeatedly told us that they were collecting evidence about it and that they would publish all of it "at the right time". When I had started with GVC/bwin, they said it was one of the reasons they were looking for other jobs, apart of Susana Martin being a bad team leader who was victimising them with bad evaluations, sabotaging holiday requests, etc. I never found out if they indeed collected any evidence or if it was just another of their inventions to talk negatively about the company. I did not bother too much with it at that time either as I enjoyed my job and was thinking of the future career opportunities that for sure would come my way sooner or later.

75. Another negative issue that was frequently pointed out by the Camp Two guys were the customers who got big casino wins and then all of a sudden their online game froze and the winnings were lost. I dealt indeed with a good number of such complaints but according to GVC's technical department that happened because the customers lost their internet connection temporarily. The company also had weird reasons for blocking people who were winning with sports betting, their accounts were restricted so they could not place bets anymore. The Camp Two guys said that it was another rip off by GVC. I did indeed deal with several of these cases but I kept believing that as GVC had gambling licenses in several countries, including Gibraltar, there could not really be a problem and I did not give it a lot of thought.

76. Early 2018 Susana Martin had agreed with Samira Mouhayar that the Dutch/Flemish

team would get the overload of the English team although we were down from eight people to six. Susana Martin claimed that the Dutch/Flemish team did not reach their targets so we needed to do more work. This was received by the entire team with astonishment as we were all constantly busy and usually had a backlog of customer queries that needed action. To take over calls and chats from the English team, we actually never got any training for the legal issues involved. The regulations on the UK market were quite different to the Belgian regulations and for The Netherlands market we shouldn't even have offered the products according to the Dutch Government's regulations. It became quite normal that eighty percent of my customer service work was for the English team and only twenty percent work for the Dutch/Belgian market. The customer service requests from Dutch/Flemish customers were passed on to the French and Italian language teams who had no legal training to do that either. Specifically for Belgium that could create serious problems with the Belgian Gambling Commission. Susana Martin's obvious mismanagement created the situation that the Dutch/Flemish speakers were dealt with in English by the Italian and French team while the Dutch speakers were dealing with English customers in sometimes bad English... This was total madness but Susana Martin refused to review her decision. The other team members were very unhappy with it but I enjoyed the extra work as it was an opportunity to learn a lot from my English colleagues about the UK market and I was sure that this extra knowledge and experience would be beneficial for my future career with GVC. I also noticed the continuing ID verification for new customers from The Netherlands even after the change to English language customer service team. I noticed that because of the discrepancies with Dutch nationals' names on passports and their day to day used names. For instance someone with official first names Jacobus Henricus on his passport would be called Henry by friends and family. This is something typical for The Netherlands and doesn't exist in Belgium/Flanders.

77. Another customer complaint that came up frequently was that the pay out of their winnings was purposely delayed by GVC/bwin by several days to "motivate" customers to play with that money again and eventually lose it. This kind of complaints could have been easily prevented by doing a pay out immediately after it was requested by the customer. Apparently it was worth it for GVC to have these people losing their money by creating a lesser cost of having to employ customer service personnel to fob these people off but it

created a lot of unpleasant customer reactions towards the customer service personnel that could have been easily prevented. I dutifully followed the company's instructions to fob these customers off with the standard texts prepared for this type of queries.

78. All these legal issues were not too much of a worry for me in those days. After all I was being paid to do the job and, as it was part of my job requirements, I did what had to be done. Stef van Veen had more troubles with it and on 29th December 2017 he contacted me on skype chat (in Dutch) and wrote: "Sorry Bart but I can't handle this anymore, I'm heavily stressed and no one here is interested in it. I'm very unhappy and stressed since I work here."

79. On 2nd January 2018 I had the 8h00-16h00 shift. There was no one after 20h00 because Stef van Veen had called in sick and the team was now down from eight to six people. I volunteered to do overtime and after I left from my early shift at 16h00, I returned at 20h00 and worked again till 24h00. The management was impressed with my flexibility and sense of responsibility to make sure that the customer service was up and running for the Dutch/Flemish team. This was seen as going the extra mile. The Camp Two guys were angry about my effort as they had hoped that the absence of personnel would reflect badly on Susana Martin. Especially Yousri Amrani who continuously kept undermining Susana Martin as team leader. Yousri Amrani and Martijn van der Vechte had moved in November 2017 to the VIP team and had left the customer service department but they still shared the same work floor as my customer service team. Yousri Amrani still spent a lot of time hanging around the Dutch/Flemish customer service team. He really hated Susana Martin and there were many days that they even did not talk to each other. I had initially hoped that with Yousri Amrani promoted to VIP the bullying problems in my team would disappear but that never happened. Jose Luis Aznar was in a worse mood than ever and constantly unnecessarily negative about everything and everyone in the company. Hamid Ringelberg never ever talked to me and entirely ignored my presence. On the other hand he did not cause me any troubles so I did not bother too much with that although it was at times annoying.

80. On 15th January 2018 we once again had a new starter in the team; Jalila Kessissa, a Dutch girl. She was initially very friendly with me and all others in the team but her main characteristic was that she arrived too late for her shifts quite regularly. This annoyed Susana Martin tremendously and she complained about it to me on several occasions. Soon afterwards Jalila Kessissa started a relationship with Jose Luis Aznar and her behaviour towards me became much cooler. That Susana Martin regularly complained about Jalila Kessissa arriving too late for her shifts, became another reason for Jose Luis Aznar to be frustrated with Susana Martin.

81. On 23rd, 24th, 25th and 26th January 2018 I finally got my Poker training. I had looked forward to that for a very long time as it was the only product I had a real affinity with. It was also a good way to be away from the toxic atmosphere in the team for some days. The course was interesting and good fun, with lots of laughs, in the group that was made up of members of the different language teams. It was a great occasion to learn to know these people better and see how a pleasant atmosphere was perfectly possible in the department. It made me see even clearer how bad the atmosphere was in my own team, something that definitely diminished my enthusiasm to return to my own team although I still liked the job a lot. On 25th January 2018 both Kieran Vandenhoeck (8h00-16h00 shift) and Hamid Ringelberg (9h00-17h00 shift) called in sick meaning that there would be no one present in the Dutch/Flemish team till 16h00. Jalila Kessissa would be there in the morning but she had only just started so was unable to work alone yet. During that morning the trainer received a Skype chat from my management in which I was asked to leave the Poker training and go to my desk to work. As soon as the trainer communicated that to me during a break I went to my desk without discussion. When I arrived in the customer service department office, I bumped into Jose Luis Aznar who had come in on his own accord on his day off to work as he had seen the emails mentioning the sick leave from home.

82. I was very surprised by Jose Luis Aznar's action as it was entirely contradictory to his past behaviour and eternal negativity. As Jose Luis Aznar was now present to attend to the Dutch/Flemish customer queries, I was sent back to the Poker training which was a huge relief for me as I definitely wanted to complete the Poker training for my future career

objectives. That day we learned about the different softwares and how to get information from them about a customer's Poker game play, bonuses, tournaments, etc. This turned out to be very complicated and as usual involved a lot of puzzle work. It became very clear that day that dealing with Poker queries was a difficult and time consuming activity, exactly the kind of things I liked doing. This day was all about theory and the following day we would do some exercises to show us how to deal with customer queries. Till now we had learned where to find different bits of information, but not yet how to bring it all together to be able to answer a query. I looked forward a lot to learn how to do that the following day, the last day of the training.

83. On 26th January 2018 both Kieran Vandenhoeck (8h00-16h00 shift) and Hamid Ringelberg (9h00-17h00 shift) called in sick again. Again no one would be present till 16h00 in the Dutch/Flemish team, apart from Jalila Kessissa who was still very inexperienced. Susana Martin had not prepared for this eventuality by for example rescheduling the shifts of colleagues so that for instance Dennis Dorland who worked 16h00 till 24h00 would come in in the morning and I would take over his later shift (after the Poker training had ended) and I would have completed the training. It was a perfect example of how the Dutch/Flemish team with an incompetent team leader and only six members (and a new starter) was under-staffed so that sickness or holidays from team members would seriously disrupt the normal functioning of the team. When I was called out of the Poker training I did so immediately and without protest. On the way to my desk I popped in at Samira Mouhayar's glass office to inform her that I was going to my desk, as requested. I expressed my worry that by missing the final and most important Poker training day, I would be unable to answer Poker queries from customers. Samira Mouhayar answered that she would organise something like sitting together one full day with an experienced Poker employee to learn on the job how to do it. I found that a perfectly reasonable proposal that I gladly accepted and I thanked Samira Mouhayar for that, mentioning how important the Poker product was for me personally. Unfortunately Samira Mouhayar's promise was not kept and I never finished the Poker training although I brought the issue up several times in the following weeks and months as this was an important professional aspect for me because of my affinity with the Poker product.

84. Towards the end of January 2018 I had one of very few normal conversations with Yousri Amrani. Obviously in this chat he had to bring up some negative remarks about Susana Martin, now his ex-team leader. He told me that Susana Martin had gone to Luis Pinto, the VIP team leader/manager, a few months before and had told Luis Pinto that he shouldn't take on Yousri Amrani as he was a bad guy. Yousri Amrani told me that Luis Pinto himself had told him that. Yousri Amrani had also been told by someone that the job at VIP had been created for him to remove him from the Dutch/Flemish customer service team so he could not create troubles there anymore. Susana Martin had told that same story about a job being created for Yousri Amrani to one of the VIP team members, Steffie van den Bogaard, who was leaving the company. Steffie van den Bogaard then told Yousri Amrani. Steffie van den Bogaard told me that she had worked in Susana Martin's team in the past and that she hated Susana Martin for her lack of professionalism. Susana Martin actually told me an almost identical story about that job being created for Yousri Amrani to get rid of him so apparently I was not the only person to whom Susana Martin had been gossiping. Yousri Amrani told me that he was very upset about Susana Martin doing the rounds to make him look bad.

85. Yousri Amrani brought this up again a few days later in the kitchen and recreation area adjacent to the office. He approached me and told me the story again about Susana Martin badmouthing him behind his back and about creating a job for him to get rid of him. After all the bullying I had to undergo from him, Yousri Amrani now tried to recruit me for his Camp Two anti-Susana Martin campaign, I hardly could believe it... I diplomatically replied that maybe he should look at the situation from a different angle as his new situation in the VIP team could also be seen as a promotion with a pay rise from £20,000 per year to £26,000 per year and 20% bonus instead of 10% bonus in the customer service department. I suggested that maybe he should thank Susana Martin for doing him a favour. Yousri had no reply to that and I advised him to let the past rest and focus on the future. I guessed that he was still having a go at undermining Susana Martin's team leader position to help Jose Luis Aznar get the team leader position after Susana Martin was bullied away. That same evening Yousri Amrani sent me a private message on Facebook messenger bringing up Susana Martin again. He had never contacted me out of work before and I had none of my colleagues as friends on Facebook as I wanted to keep my private life separated from my work, especially because of the bullying. Definitely the last

thing I needed in my out of office life was a reminder of all the bullying troubles I had to go through. I was very shocked by Yousri Amrani contacting me and invading my private life with his message and I had some kind of a nervous meltdown after all I had to go through with him at work. I blocked Yousri Amrani immediately on Facebook without replying to his message.

86. The next day I worked together with Susana Martin was on the 29th January 2018. I went to work and reported Yousri Amrani's Facebook message to my team leader Susana Martin and told her that I did not want to hear from Yousri Amrani again and that I had blocked him on Facebook. Susana Martin looked very upset by my complaint about Yousri Amrani going out of his way to badmouth her. Later that same day there was an incident between Susana Martin and Yousri Amrani in the kitchen area in which Martijn van der Vechte, Susana Martin's boyfriend and ex-Dutch/Flemish team member, also intervened. There was reportedly a lot of shouting and screaming and Susana Martin crying in front of several customer service colleagues. I was told this the following day as this incident had happened after I had already left at the end of my shift. This episode was clearly the result of Yousri Amrani still meddling frequently in the Dutch/Flemish team matters and his continuous campaign to badmouth Susana Martin. I still believed that Jose Luis Aznar was after the team leader position and that was the main reason for the anti-Susana Martin campaign, together with Yousri Amrani looking for revenge for the bad treatment he had received from Susana Martin. As a result of this incident between Susana Martin, Martijn van der Vechte and Yousri Amrani, the following day a meeting of the Dutch/Flemish team with the department's management was called. As from that day Yousri Amrani never spoke to me again and only looked at me in a threatening manner whenever he passed me or we met by coincidence in the hallway, kitchen, recreation area, etc. The kitchen was actually a tiny room where you had to squeeze past each other what I found very uncomfortable as Yousri Amrani twice bumped "by coincidence" into me while I was there to get a coffee. Yousri Amrani's girlfriend Marjolaine then started to join him in the kitchen area for lunch breaks although she worked for another department and in another building and she reacted negatively towards me. Yousri Amrani's behaviour towards me complicated my work unnecessarily as I was supposed to contact him several times a day to ask him regarding bonuses and freebets for the VIP customers for whom he was responsible but I had on the customer service phone or chat line. Martijn van der Vechte

came to my team once that day and looked very angry and frustrated. He posed in a threatening manner towards me as if he was about to start a fistfight with me. As he too worked in the VIP team, that complicated the matters of me dealing with VIP customers even more and the situation became quite unworkable.

87. The Dutch/Flemish team meeting on 30th January 2018 was chaired by Susana Martin and Samira Mouhayar. Dennis Dorland was absent as he was away on a holiday. Susana Martin said almost nothing during the meeting, she felt visibly uncomfortable. The meeting ended in shouting and screaming by Jose Luis Aznar and Hamid Ringelberg to me. Jose Luis Aznar started the shouting. Hamid Ringelberg shouted he hated me from the very first time he saw me and couldn't stand to have to look at my face. The management clearly had lost control entirely and there was chaos. I raised my voice to try to reply to Jose Luis Aznar but to no avail and the meeting was broken up. Until this meeting I had never publicly reacted to the bullying and Camp Two provocations but at that team meeting I had had enough and I started to defend myself. The false accusations, intended to further undermine my position in the team in front of my management and team colleagues, was something entirely unreasonable and humiliating to do and I thought that by not protesting about it, it could be interpreted that I actually accepted that their false accusations were true.

88. As this team meeting was a direct result of the incident with Susana Martin, Martijn van der Vechte and Yousri Amrani (both ex-customer service and now VIP team but still sharing the same work floor with me) it would have been a more intelligent approach to have interviewed all members and ex-members of the team individually so as not to create an open conflict or confrontation as what had happened now at the team meeting. In a way I was relieved as it must have been crystal clear to the management that indeed there were ongoing issues with Jose Luis Aznar, Hamid Ringelberg and Yousri Amrani having antagonistic feelings against me and bullying me. Until then I had been convinced that none of my complaints about bullying had been taken seriously and no real action had been taken to stop the bullying. All that lack of action culminated in the disastrous end of that team meeting. As there was no way anymore that the management could now deny there was a serious issue with bullying in the team, I was quite hopeful that there would

finally be real action to stop it once and for all, eight months after the bullying had started and six months after I had started reporting it in writing to my team leader and department manager.

89. Immediately after the chaotic team meeting had ended, Jose Luis Aznar met up in the kitchen area adjacent to the meeting room with Yousri Amrani and Jean-Philippe Surget, the French team leader who disliked Susana Martin and found her useless. I overheard part of their conversation as I had to go through the kitchen to go back to my desk. Jose Luis Aznar explained to them how badly Susana Martin had performed during the team meeting. It again showed how closely Yousri Amrani was still involved in the customer service team issues.

90. On 31st January 2018, a day after the meeting that ended in chaos, I was invited to a meeting or interview with Danielle Wood from HR. All team members, including the people from the Scandinavian team, were called in for individual meetings and I was one of the very first ones to have that interview. I had never met Danielle Wood before and I looked forward to talking to someone who was not part of my management. I had by then given up hope that Susana Martin would be able to sort out the issues in the Dutch/Flemish team and I was convinced that Samira Mouhayar was just covering up Susana Martin's failures to protect Susana Martin's job, probably out of compassion for her divorce and Susana Martin's two little children. I had by then lost all trust and confidence in my direct management. I thought that this caused a problem though; I had been seriously bullied for eight months by a clique of colleagues resulting in losing my trust and confidence in the management. I thought it was not wise to tell HR that I had issues with colleagues but also with the management. It would make me look awkward. On the other hand if I ignored the management problem for the time being and focused on the bullying issue, it would lead to the bullying being stopped by HR and then the weak and ineffectual management issue would automatically disappear too. I still saw Susana Martin as a victim of bullying by the same Camp Two people too so I decided to play it strategically and not mention the management troubles to HR. Another reason was that Susana Martin had been nice to me till then so I decided that I would not discuss the management issues with HR for the time being. A further reason for not criticising Susana Martin during the HR interview was that I

was sure that the other team members would bring up that issue during their interviews. For all these reasons and as not to complicate things unnecessarily for me, I decided to stand up for Susana Martin and talk positively about her to try and make a good impression with HR.

91. During the interview with Danielle Wood that lasted for one hour, Emma Horwood was taking the minutes. The set up looked professional so I was for the first time in a long time span hopeful again that finally the bullying would come to an end. Danielle Wood gave me the impression that she was a caring person who could be trusted. I told her my issues with the Camp Two guys from the very beginning with as many details as possible and that my management till then had not been successful in stopping the bullying. I also mentioned the Facebook message Yousri Amrani had sent me and that had led to the kitchen incident between Susana Martin/Martijn van der Vechte and Yousri Amrani. I asked her during the meeting if she was aware of the bullying issues in the Dutch/Flemish team and she replied that “there had apparently been a communication breakdown between my management and HR”. I accepted that explanation and it gave me even more hope that the bullying problem would be stopped soon.

92. That same day 31st January 2018 I sent an email to Susana Martin with an annual leave request for weeks twelve and fourteen. According to company rules ten days of annual leave had to be taken before 1st April 2018 and this was my request to fulfil that rule. My holiday request came as result of a reminder email from Susana Martin about that company rule. I had studied the shift roster and all shifts were covered by colleagues for both weeks so I did not expect any problems with my holiday requests. I only saw Susana Martin for a short time that day but noticed that Susana Martin's reaction to me was much cooler than usual. I attributed that to the chaotic meeting from the day before and that she was kind of scared about what the members of her team would say about her during the interviews with HR. Jose Luis Aznar sat at his desk in a very angry mood and he did not speak to Susana Martin and entirely ignored me. Jose Luis Aznar' behaviour showed that he had no intentions to change his attitude and the disastrous team meeting had not served as a wake up call for him. I automatically knew that there was going to be more trouble for me by him in the near future from his inciteful behaviour and not letting things

ride.

93. The following day 1st February 2018 Susana Martin replied to my email with the holiday request at 10h10 in the morning to ask if I checked with the team if someone could take over my shift for week twelve. I read that email from home as I was on the 16h00-24h00 shift. I was immediately worried by that email as it was not the norm. As team leader Susana Martin was the only one responsible in making the shift roster and it was quite normal that she changed shifts to accommodate holiday requests. If it was for shift changes for one day only, you could discuss that with a colleague and then inform the team leader about the shift swapping you had agreed on with the other colleagues and Susana Martin would normally accept the change and update the shift roster accordingly. For longer holidays that was a different scenario. After reading the email a second time, I felt heavily alarmed by Susana Martin's email as this was exactly what had happened with other colleagues when they had fallen out of her grace; using holiday requests to cause problems. Apparently the chaotic meeting had triggered Susana Martin somehow and she seemed to blame me for the investigation by HR which she probably saw as a threat for her job. As a result of this I felt very exhausted and sick and went to the Primary Care Health Centre in the ICC where I was given a sick note for flu-like symptoms. That was extended a few days later but I don't remember the exact dates. The doctor on the second occasion thought that I had had flu and that due to my lowered immune system defences I had also contracted some virus. The same day a blood sample was taken for urgent analysis. I was informed a few days later that no signs of a virus infection were detected in it. With hindsight I think I had my first mental breakdown that 1st February 2018 but it had wrongly been attributed to flu that was affecting many people in Gibraltar in those days. I did not mention the toxic work environment and how negatively it was affecting me mentally to the medical doctor investigating me as I did not think that was relevant at that moment. Less than two months later I went again to see an emergency doctor but that time I was diagnosed with stress related anxiety.

94. On 2nd February 2018 Stef van Veen sent me an email in Dutch and, although I was on sick leave, I read the work emails at home from time to time. Stef van Veen wrote that he got a job in the Sports Trader Department and that he was very happy about it as he was

entirely fed up at the customer service department. He also mentioned the bad atmosphere in which we had started together. Stef van Veen leaving the team came as a bad shock for me. Martijn van der Vechte, Stef van Veen and Dennis Dorland were the normal people in the team from whom I got some support in my ordeal. Martijn van der Vechte had left already and now Stef van Veen was leaving too. It made me feel depressed and hopeless. Stef van Veen also tried to encourage me to continue to be strong against the bullying from the Camp Two guys and mentioned on several occasions that Susana Martin was not strong enough to stop the bullying and that that was one of the most important factors of the present situation.

95. The email Stef van Veen sent me translated to English:

Thanks Bart!

Yes, I'm very glad too, I think the customer service job really sucks.

I understand very well that the whole situation bothers you. I can't understand that we are still talking about Bart going to Daniela. Very childish all of it. I do think that Susana plays a role in it, she is herself somewhat immature in situations where there is a difference of opinions etc. All of them together created the atmosphere in which we started.

Don't doubt yourself, Bart, you are really very good at your job and a nice colleague.

Don't forget that for fuck's sake and keep your back straight.

And meet up for a beer session is a fantastic idea.

Stef van Veen

96. I liked working with Stef van Veen a lot. He was a mature guy with a lot of management experience in bars in Amsterdam. He was a no-nonsense man and I liked that because I am like that too. The only pity was that he never stood up for me against the bullies, by whom he seemed to be liked too. Stef seemed to prefer to remain "neutral" in the bullying saga. I had the impression that he did that out of fear of becoming a victim himself. He said on several occasions that he felt sorry for me being bullied and tried to encourage me to go on and not give up. That was heart warming and kind of the only support I ever got in the company in my ordeal. Stef van Veen had a funny attitude of not obeying orders that he found useless. For example in the weekends we had to make a list in Excel of VIP users who had asked for a bonus or freebet and our decision to give one or

refuse it. Nobody had ever explained why that was necessary so most colleagues didn't take it serious but I always dutifully filled in the list as required. Stef van Veen did not want to do that and as far as I know he was never told off for it. We also had to check if users qualified for a bonus or freebet in a quite complicated Excel file with a formula based on several parameters like how much the customer had lost already, how much bonus he had already received, his VIP level, etc. Stef van Veen was not interested in this and almost always gave a freebet to get rid of the customer on the chat. That too was quite funny in my opinion and Stef van Veen seemingly always got away with it. I don't think Susana Martin felt strong enough to confront Stef van Veen with these things as he was quite an impressive tall guy. I loved working with Stef van Veen as he was a good and honest person to talk to. He criticised Susana Martin and Samira Mouhayar on several occasions for their lack of management qualities and saw that as the major reason for his unhappiness in his job at customer service.

97. I also liked working with Dennis Dorland. Dennis Dorland continued to struggle with puzzling together all the data from the different softwares to reply to customer queries. The Camp Two guys did not like Dennis Dorland and behind his back they accused him of making too many mistakes and errors. Jose Luis Aznar disliked Dennis Dorland the most and on more than one occasion had said in public that he would do everything to bully Dennis Dorland away. His way of treating Dennis Dorland was denigrating and disrespectful. Dennis Dorland got more frustrated by the day and closed himself off from the team. Once he had an outburst of frustration and smashed his computer screen with his fist (without causing damage). He went to HR quite often to report his issues but to no avail as he complained that no one took him serious and no one cared or tried to help him. Susana Martin definitely noticed the unacceptable way Dennis Dorland was being treated but never intervened to stop the Camp Two behaviour. The opposite happened actually, she continued to publicly call Dennis Dorland stupid and useless and told other team members, including me, that she hoped that Dennis Dorland would leave the company. The Camp Two guys then repeated that to Dennis Dorland, who got then even more frustrated. I spoke with Dennis Dorland on a few occasions when we worked together and tried to encourage him. Secretely I felt guilty for not doing more for Dennis Dorland, I did not stand up for him to stop the bullying he was undergoing by the team leader and Camp Two members. In a way I was sometimes relieved when they had a go at Dennis Dorland

as that meant that they at least left me in peace for the time being. It made me feel like a coward and a hypocrite and I disliked myself for it but at the time that was kind of the only option I had.

98. Kieran Vandenhoeck was struggling a lot with his job. He was a nice likeable chap but not very computer proficient and slow in the pick up of the knowledge. He typed with his two index fingers, which was funny to watch, and had poor English language skills. He had worked in the Port of Algeciras as a mechanic before and apparently that was a very hard job with sometimes very long shifts if a problem took a long time to get fixed. The Camp Two guys did not really do a lot to “shadow” him and teach him from their own experience. That did not help Kieran Vandenhoeck to get better in his job but he got his fixed contract after four months of probation anyway. The Camp Two guys were unhappy about that as they thought that Kieran Vandenhoeck did not deserve a fixed contract. I did not make an effort to help Kieran Vandenhoeck either as I had noticed that when I was showing my knowledge and experience, the Camp Two guys were annoyed and that led inevitably to negative body language, angry looks and semi-aggressive reactions and behaviour towards me. I just kept to myself and sat as far away as possible from the other team members during my shift to minimise contact and risk of bullying. Kieran Vandenhoeck was not liked by the Camp Two guys as they found that he was dragging the team down. Kieran Vandenhoeck once told me that he had noticed the hostile attitude from the Camp Two guys but that he had better shifts and more money than his old job in Algeciras. He also explained to me that the bad attitude from the Camp Two guys towards him was annoying him but that it was not as bad as they were treating me and that gave him some solace. He said that he pitied me for my suffering but that he preferred not to intervene as that would make things worse for him with the Camp Two guys. This just showed how the Camp Two members, including Yousri Amrani, continued to terrorise the atmosphere for everyone in the Dutch/Flemish customer service team.

99. On 2nd February 2018, the day after I called in sick, I received an email from Danielle Wood from HR with the minutes of the interview of the 31st January 2018 with the request to review and accept the minutes. As I felt totally exhausted and had no energy left because of the bullying ordeal, I slept non-stop for almost forty-eight hours. I could not

face reading the minutes and reliving the miserable events at work at that moment in time. I knew it had to be done and could not be put off indefinitely so on the 4th February 2018 I mustered up enough courage to read, digest and reply to Danielle Wood's email with the draft minutes.

100. The email I sent to Danielle Wood:

Hi Danielle,

I had to call in sick on Thursday and Friday and apart of that I'm off till Wednesday. For that I answer you on Sunday evening from home.

One thing I forgot and that was brought up again during the team meeting by Hamid and Jose Luis is their claim that during my probation time I was not following their advice and that I did do that to make them look bad. Something that definitely did not happen as such, I asked Yousri later in a quiet moment and he replied that indeed in 3 months I had asked for a second opinion 3 or 4 times. I did ask for a second opinion because I was convinced that the information given was incorrect and that was also confirmed by the person who gave the second opinion (mostly shift supervisor or team leader). I did this to do my job as professionally as possible and definitely not to make my colleagues feel bad. Yousri and his little club have gone around though for months that I did that constantly and on purpose and it caused me remarks from Susana and Samira. It's just another example of how they were trying to terrorise me on the job.

As latest evolutions I can add that Stef leaves the team on 05.03.2018 and goes to traders. Dennis had a second job interview with an IT company in Marbella. I am not planning to leave but feel very demotivated to have to go working in such a terribly bad atmosphere.

Thanks and kind regards,

Bart

101. I continued to feel very depressed and the fear grew in my mind that I might be close to the end of my employment with GVC/bwin. Whatever was happening could definitely not be positive for any career possibilities I had worked so hard for and under such tremendous stress because of the bullying. Returning to my job in customer service became something I now dreaded enormously as I had seen the denigrating and humiliating way Susana

Martin had been dealing with Dennis Dorland in an apparent attempt to bully him out of the company. I was sure that the same would now happen to me. That would mean bullying both from the Camp Two team members and my team leader. I felt cornered entirely without a possible escape. I felt deeply sad and was back again at the very bottom of my courage and energy. On 5th February 2018 I sent an email to Danielle Wood in which I asked her which other job opportunities there were in the company at that time. I definitely wanted to stay in the company and I still loved my job tremendously. I never felt stressed or overworked because of the job. The only thing that tore me down was the never ending bullying from the Camp Two guys, the now apparent bullying from Susana Martin and the total loss of trust and confidence in my direct management. My only hope now was that HR would sort something out.

102. The email I sent to Danielle Wood:

Hi Danielle,

As you most probably understood from the interview we had: the last 9 months in CS have been a very unpleasant experience for me. Although I love the job and am convinced that GVC is a good employer I came to the conclusion that it's time to move on, especially now that most of my more enjoyable colleagues are moving on too.

For that I would like to be informed which vacancies there are at the moment in the company to see if any of those might be of interest to me. I have a broad interest and I am not afraid of taking on a challenging position and I learn quickly so I will look at any offer with an open mind.

Thanks in advance for your help.

Bart

103. The following day 6th February 2018 I sent an email to Susana Martin (in Dutch) explaining that I had informed HR that I wanted another job in the company as soon as possible. For the umpteenth time I pointed out the bullying and that this now also was affecting my health. I had doubted if it was wise to inform Susana Martin that I wanted to leave but in the end I decided that being open and honest was the best strategy. In a way I hoped that letting Susana Martin know that I wanted to leave the team would improve her attitude towards me and that she would become friendly again in an attempt to keep me in

her team.

104. The email I sent to Susana Martin translated to English:

Hi Susana,

This email to let you personally know that I informed HR that I am looking for another job in the company ASAP.

The last 9 months in customer service have been a very heavy disappointment although I like the job. The constant insults, false accusations, making me look suspicious and spreading rumours behind my back by some colleagues have become too much for me to bear and I lost my courage to continue. Worst of all this continuous stress is starting to affect my health and that is entirely unacceptable.

Also the fact that I wasn't able to finish the Poker training resulted in a very deep disappointment for me. Add to this that I now also had to miss the Responsible Gaming training.

Stef leaving the team soon and Martijn who already left the team means that the colleagues with whom I could collaborate normally and who also could give me moral support to continue won't be there anymore.

This for your information and in my personal style that when I have to say something I do so directly to the person involved so you won't have to hear it from someone else.

KR,

Bart

105. On 7th February 2018 I handed in a sick note for flu at HR. HR asked me to go to my own customer service department to inform Samira Mouhayar of my sick leave personally. When I was in the customer service office I bumped into Susana Martin and there was no way to avoid her so I asked her for a private meeting. The meeting room adjacent to the kitchen was available by coincidence and there we had a long chat. I explained to her my issues with the bullying again and the resulting lack of courage to return to the office floor. I proposed that after the end of my flu sick leave I would take a few days of annual leave to give me extra time to build up my courage and motivation again. This actually showed how scared I was by then to return to work, although I still really liked the job. It was an open attempt to stay away from work as long as possible to omit further bullying. Susana Martin

confirmed the meeting in an email a few hours later. I thought at that moment that the personal and private one on one meeting with Susana Martin and my sad and sick appearance had made some impression on her and that for that reason Susana Martin had agreed to give me some annual leave at the end of my sick leave. I had in fact wanted to speak with Samira Mouhayar, the department manager, as HR had asked me but Samira Mouhayar had sent me out of her office in a clear show that she was not really interested in my problems.

106. The email Susana Martin sent me:

Hi Bart,

Thanks for coming and for informing me that you will not be able to start your shift today. I hope you get well soon.

I see that you would be working the following 4 days as well.

Will you be off those days as well?

If so, please call the office to let us know.

Thanks and kr.

Susana Martin

107. The next day, 8th February 2018, I replied to Susana Martin's email:

Hi Susana,

As discussed yesterday I would like to take off on Monday 12.02.2018 and Wednesday 14.02.201.

According to the time sheet I have both days are covered by the rest of the team so I guess it shouldn't be too much of a problem.

Thanks and kr.

Bart

108. Susana Martin replied a few minutes later:

Hi Bart,

No problem, anyway you need to go to the doctor.

Please when coming back to the office, request the holidays in Fusion.

Back to work would be 15.02.2018.

Thanks and kr

Susana

109. My reply via email to Susana Martin about half an hour later the same day:

OK, thanks.

Indeed on 15.02.2018 I should be back at work. At the moment I have already over 1.700 e-mails waiting so my first few hours at work might have to go up entirely going through that...

I didn't go to HR again yesterday as I hadn't the energy anymore after our short meeting. I sent them an e-mail this morning confirming I want to find another job in the company asap and that I am awaiting their proposals to assure me that my return in the team will not be the start of even more and worse bullying.

Kr.

Bart

110. After I had already informed Susana Martin, my line manager, about the detrimental effect the bullying had on my health, I now also wanted to inform Danielle Wood at HR, who I saw as my confidence person in the company, about the relation between the bullying and my health problems. All my communications and meetings in this period were actually a dramatic cry for help from a human being at the very bottom of his resources and endurance. I remember that Danielle Wood had mentioned once that the company had a Duty of Care in cases like mine, although I did not really understand what she meant with that at that time. I also wanted to make clear that me getting sick again after more bullying was a serious possibility. I was actually begging on my knees for help and compassion. I continued with my strategy to praise Susana Martin in my emails although I did not have a lot of respect for her anymore. Apart of an occasional cold I indeed had not been really sick for the last ten years. I cannot even remember when I was so sick that I was not able to go to work.

111. The email to Danielle Wood at HR:

Hi Danielle,

Yesterday I was in the office for a short time to hand in a sick note till Monday, that visit was as such entirely unplanned. I'm awaiting the results of the blood test that was done yesterday to know exactly what is wrong. The Doctor thinks it's most probably some virus. Interesting to notice though that I haven't been sick once in the last 10 years so I definitely attribute my present bad health to the negativity at work that has affected me much worse than I had imagined.

The position I'm potentially interested in is the one in Risk and following your advice I'll contact Noemie to book a short meeting to discuss the requirements etc.

I also had a very good, honest and open (as they always were) meeting with my team leader Susana yesterday, Samira asked me to do that while I was there. I have clearly repeated to my TL that I am urgently looking for another job in the company but that I don't blame her for the situation that exists in the team of which she is as much a victim as me. She informed me she is still awaiting the HR proposals and couldn't give me any assurances that my return to the team will not be a cause for even more and worse bullying.

Thanks and kr.

Bart

112. That same day Danielle Wood confirmed that she had received my email and that she wished to share it with Samira Mouhayar, the customer service department manager. I agreed that she could share it although I did not think that Samira Mouhayar would do anything with it seeing her previous shows of lack of interest in my complaints. I had come to the conclusion that Danielle Wood was the first person in the company who was taking my bullying complaints seriously and I did not want to upset her by saying something negative about Samira Mouhayar at that moment. There was also the possibility that Samira Mouhayar would actually do something this time as HR was looking over her shoulder. This lifted my spirits somewhat and I had new hope that the end of my suffering was near. With hindsight this just confirmed that my sickness was actually more a mental health issue than a flu case. My immune system defences were most probably down because of the mental suffering but I had not made that connection at that time. A month later I would fall sick again but this time the doctor pinpointed it as a mental health issue and I was off sick for about a month for "stress related anxiety" caused by the bullying. I

am pretty sure now that my "flu sickness" was actually the same as the symptoms were the same but it had not been diagnosed as such as I never mentioned the bullying issues to the first doctor.

113. On 12th February 2018, although still on sick leave, I asked Danielle Wood via email if it was possible to meet up again to get an update regarding the investigation about the shouting and screaming chaotic team meeting and my complaints about bullying. I was quite eager to hopefully get some good news at that time. It showed my continued worries and fear of having to return to a dysfunctional department with the risk of further deterioration of my health. I also wrote "I have gotten no reply at all from the customer service management apart of my monthly evaluation report that by pure "coincidence" for the very first time is not good: 2 out of my 10 evaluated contacts got a 0/10 score while in the past I always had an overall score of minimum 86%." This confirmed the stories of the Camp Two members and other colleagues of Susana Martin abusing her position as team leader to "punish" people with bad evaluations, holiday request troubles, etc. The victimisation by my team leader Susana Martin became more obvious and I got another mental push down into more negative feelings and despair.

114. My email to Danielle Wood:

Hi Danielle,

On Tuesday mornings I do my weekly shopping in Morrisons and would like the occasion to ask for a follow up meeting with you then re the situation in the Dutch team and how I am to react on it. I'm supposed to go back to work on Thursday.

I have gotten no reply at all from the CS management apart of my monthly evaluation report that by pure "coincidence" for the very first time is not good: 2 out of my 10 evaluated contacts got a 0/10 score while in the past I always had an overall score of minimum 86%. This disappointing evaluation is not going to help my return. And that after I've done all I could to defend the management in the present situation...

I also didn't get a reply from Noemie re other roles in the company and that obviously adds to my worries. I am well aware that with Stef and Dennis leaving soon there will be only 4 people left in the team where there should be 8 to run the service properly. I still do wish to leave the team asap for the reasons we already talked about recently.

Please let me know a time on Tuesday morning that is convenient for you to meet and discuss.

Thanks in advance,

Bart

115. Danielle Wood replied about two hours later that there was no need to meet at that time as there was no news yet about the HR investigation in the team issues. I agreed with Danielle Wood's point that if there was nothing to discuss, then indeed a meeting was not necessary. This email exchange showed my continuing worries about the disastrous work situation and the negative overall influence it was having on my life, even after having been away from the office for some days.

116. On 13th February 2018, still on sick leave, I had a half hour meeting with Noemie Levy at HR to discuss different job opportunities in the company. I was particularly interested in the Risk position I had seen on the job portal but Noemie Levy told me that I did not have the necessary experience in Risk for that specific vacancy. She then said that the role of Business Analyst (1 year maternity cover) would be perfect for me as they would happily accept a junior employee from within the customer service department. With "junior employee" Noemie Levy meant that they were willing to invest quite some time in teaching the new employee the different aspects of the job. She explained to me that for this internal vacancy they were specifically looking for someone with experience in the in house developed customer service softwares and tools as the job would be about analysing data from the customer services department and report back to the customer service management with presentations and proposals on how things could improve. It sounded like a perfect combination to me seeing my previous experience and background. This vacancy profile also proved to me that my strategy to always say and write positive things about my management, was exactly the right thing to do as I would have to continue to deal with them no matter what other department in the company I would work for. Noemie Levy was so enthusiastic about my unique combination of skills as a former programmer, database administrator and systems engineer with in depth knowledge of the customer service softwares that the very same day she sent an email to introduce me to the department manager for the Business Analyst role, Stefan Kalcher.

117. The email sent to Stefan Kalcher in which I was copied in:

Hi Stefan,

Bart is currently working in CS but he has a background in SQL analysis and database administration,

He would like to know more about the job,

Can you have a chat with him?

Thank you and best regards

Noemie

118. Stefan Kalcher replied via email to Noemie Levy and me the same day 13th February 2018 to invite me to do a video conference on Friday 16th February 2018 about the Business Analyst role. Noemie Levy then made the necessary arrangements for that. The initial reaction from Stefan Kalcher sounded quite enthusiastic and that lifted my spirits. In this new job I would be entirely away from the bullies in another building and only occasionally meet with the customer service management and then only in situations where they could not bully me.

119. Stefan Kalcher's reply:

Hi guys,

Yes – def. want to have a chat.

We can do a remote session – preferably via bluejeans on Friday around midday

OK?

Thanks

Stefan

120. The 15th February 2018 was my first day back at work after two weeks off, first sick leave and then some days of annual leave. The bullying started immediately again. I wrote an email to Danielle Wood to report the details. The new starter Jalila Kessissa reacted awkwardly to me. It later turned out that she started a relationship with Jose Luis Aznar at some time. Jonas Dobel and Mikkel Kristensen were mentioned, they were from the Scandinavian team but shared our office space and team leader Susana Martin. Dennis

Dorland mentioned to me that he heard part of the recording made by Stef van Veen with his mobile phone of the team meeting that ended in chaos. Dennis Dorland had given his one month's notice to HR that he would leave the company. He was entirely fed up with the way Susana Martin treated him and bullied him to make him leave the company. On top of that came Jose Luis Aznar's public remarks that Dennis Dorland was an idiot and that the team was better off without him as Dennis Dorland was dragging down the team and more of that kind of negative comments. I actually liked working with Dennis Dorland as he never caused me any trouble and although he was not as advanced in his knowledge as others that was fine with me. When Dennis Dorland and I worked together Dennis Dorland did the easy customer queries that I found repetitive and unchallenging while I sorted out the more complex problems, which was what I enjoyed doing. This worked very well for both of us. I pointed out to Susana Martin that the more complex cases took significantly more time (up to one hour sometimes) to inform her about the reason why the number of cases I dealt with might possibly go down a bit in the monthly statistics. That would not matter too much anyway as I always had dealt with significantly more cases than I was requested to do by the company's guidelines as my statistics showed during the monthly evaluation meetings. On this day there was also a very unprofessional reaction from Susana Martin when she heard that Dennis Dorland was leaving. She waived her arms in the air and was cheering and saying "Hooray, hooray, Dennis Dorland is going, one problem less in the team" in front of all present other team members. The Camp Two guys were happy too that Dennis Dorland was going. I felt very sad because it was the third person leaving in a short time span with whom I could work normally in the team. As Christoffer Thomsen was already gone and Stef van Veen and Dennis Dorland were going too from the team, that left me as the only one left from the four new starters on 15th May 2017.

121. The email I sent to Danielle Wood:

Hi Danielle,

I was back at work today after 2 weeks off (part sick leave, part holiday). I decided to go to work and do as if nothing had ever happened in the hope that would keep things quiet today. It was worse than ever though.

Jose Luis didn't even greet me or acknowledge my presence what put the new girl Jalila in a very awkward position and she choose to imitate Jose Luis. Obviously some dodgy

"behind the scenes" information was passed to her during the last few weeks.

The rest of the day there was a graveyard atmosphere in the team. Mikkel and Jose Luis totally ignored each other and Jonas went to sit as far away as possible and so we all sat together for hours in a deadly silence.

Only when Jose Luis left for breaks was there some opportunity for a friendly chat and some laughter. I met Yousri several times during the day and he did as if I didn't exist.

When Hamid arrived: same story apart of a sarcastic remark when I left at the end of my shift.

Susana was off today, by the way. Dennis arrived for a later shift and went entirely ballistic after he got an e-mail telling him his bonus would not be paid out. I took him outside to talk to him and quiet him down when Samira came out, saw us talking and probably gave another meaning to it than what it effectively was.

Just another normal day in the DU/BE/SCAN CS team at GVC...

I write this from home, btw, so as not to upset people who could be looking over my shoulder.

Kr.

Bart

122. Danielle Wood's reply on my email denouncing renewed bullying was very disappointing, she asked me to report the bullying to my team leader Susana Martin. It must by now have been very clear to Danielle Wood that I had been reporting that for nine months to Susana Martin and that absolutely nothing was sorted out by Susana Martin for lack of leadership skills and being ineffectual, not to say incompetent. It started to become clear to me that Danielle Wood was not really interested in my bullying complaints either and probably even found my ongoing complaints a nuisance. At this moment I did not want to report the new issue that had popped up with Susana Martin now bullying and victimising me too. As I was applying for another role in the company I did not want HR to know the full extent of these issues with my team leader because I feared that it might negatively reflect on me and jeopardize my chances of finding another job away from the bullies. I wanted to keep this problem from my potential future manager, he did not need to know at that moment in time that I had problems with my present line manager. Those issues were well beyond my control and mainly due to Susana Martin's lack of management skills, so were not relevant for the position anyway. I feared that it could set

the other manager Stefan Kalcher off to accept me for the Business Analyst role. The whole situation further undermined my already diminished self-confidence and self-esteem.

123. Danielle Wood's reply via email:

Thanks for the update. As you know we are reviewing the current situation. In the interim, you should raise these concerns to Susana in the first instance for her to be able to address any unacceptable behaviour/practices.

Danielle Wood

124. Around this time the customer service management had decided that when a new chat or phone call came in, the computer system would automatically and immediately accept it and force it on the available customer service agent. In the old set up you had about 10 seconds time to manually accept the chat or call which was very helpful to for instance give you the time to save your work on an email reply. That chat/call windows now opened automatically was an extra complication for an under-staffed team like my team. It was quite fine for the other, bigger, language teams where people were on exclusive chat or exclusive call duty. Another new idea was to also open the customer data screen for the customer on chat or call and another chat/call registration screen automatically. So when you were working on an email reply you had screens open for the three different softwares, a customer data screen and probably one or two other screens with Excel files or promotion specific information. For each chat three extra screens would open without the opportunity to first save your unfinished work on the email. As the Dutch/Flemish team had the overflow of the English team it was quite normal that at any given moment three chats could come in, with a total of nine new screens popping up and you still could receive a phone call with the same effect. This obviously complicated things a lot and the risk of making mistakes grew significantly. I reported these things dutifully to Susana Martin as I had noticed that other team members had serious problems with the overload of screens. I learned quickly how to deal with this new set up but noticed that my efficiency was suffering somewhat until I had learnt how to deal with the new set up. Susana Martin did not care at all about the new problems in the team, this only led to her team members losing even more respect for her. Not that there was much respect left

anyway...

125. On 16th February 2018 the video conference with Stefan Kalcher for the Business Analyst role took place in a meeting room organised by Noemie Levy from the HR department. The video conference lasted for forty-five minutes and we discussed in depth my knowledge, skills, experience, etc. I pointed out that I used Excel on a daily basis in my customer service work but that my further use of it was a bit rusty, but nothing that a refresher course could not fix. Stefan Kalcher replied that there would be a lot of on the job training anyway as it would take me some time to get used to the server landscape, as he called it. He was very happy with my knowledge of the different customer service softwares I used every day as it would not be possible to train an outsider to learn all of that in a short time. The video chat ended in a very positive atmosphere. I went back to the HR office when the video conference ended and Noemie Levy found it very positive that it had lasted forty-five minutes. She told me that she had expected some twenty minutes and pointed out that it was a very good sign. In the video chat Stefan Kalcher also told me that he knew my team leader Susana Martin quite well. He told me that he was at that moment in the company's office in Vienna as he had to attend to some family issues in his home country Austria.

126. On 23rd February 2018 Dennis Dorland left the company. This was originally planned for 5th March 2018 but he said he could no longer handle it, it all had become way too much for him. Above all he claimed that it was Susana Martin who had abused her position to bully him away. If Dennis Dorland would have stayed a few weeks longer he would have received about £1,400 bonus but he was mentally so far gone that he did not care anymore. I tried to reason with Dennis Dorland and convince him to stay on a bit longer but it was of no use, he really was burnt out and the only thing that he now wanted was to leave the company and the toxic environment immediately and leave it all behind him. With Christoffer Thomsen, Stef van Veen and Dennis Dorland gone, I was now the only one left of the four new starters from 15th May 2017, only nine months before, who had Susana Martin as team leader. With also Martijn van der Vechte gone, every single person I found normal and with whom I could work together without problems, had left the team. I still liked the job a lot but found it harder every day to go to work without fearing the bad things

to be expected that day. Susana Martin was more frustrated by the day and it became almost impossible to have a normal conversation with her. She seemed to have become paranoid and thought that everyone was talking about her behind her back. Due to the constant under-staffing of the team I now sat many more hours alone at work while I heard the other language teams laughing and having a good time. I was desperately looking for a way out of this dreadful situation. The only thing that kept me going was my voluntary work in the Nature Reserve at Europa Point. Only by working there very hard for hours was I able to forget most of the issues at work. Bit by bit I started to understand that my days in the company were possibly counted as the management and HR did absolutely nothing to solve the problems I had to suffer from the Camp Two bullies and unprofessional team leader and department manager. My best hope was to find another job in the company as soon as possible.

127. On 27th February 2018 Susana Martin contacted me in Dutch via Skype chat. She had seen me in Samira Mouhayar's office discussing something with Samira Mouhayar and she was worried about what it could be. She said that I should have come to her first. Her paranoia definitely got worse by the day. I replied to her that I felt very unhappy in my job at that moment. This was followed by a long meeting with her. I again explained the terrible atmosphere at work and how the bullying was undermining my mental health. I told her that I found it increasingly difficult to scrape together enough courage to come to work and that never before in my life had I had to go through something like this. As all my normal work colleagues had gone, my team leader Susana Martin (now also bullying me) and Samira Mouhayar (who continued hiding in her glass office and did not care) were actually the only ones left that I still could have a chat with, but they did not do anything at all to make the bullying problems stop. I started to feel very lonely in an office where seventy people worked.

128. The chat conversation with Susana Martin translated to English:

Susana Martin 12:07: Hi / I saw you in Samira's office

Bart Van Thienen 12:07: hi

Susana Martin 12:07: Anything I can help you with?

Bart Van Thienen 12:07: We'll discuss it during the meeting we'll have later.

Susana Martin 12:07: Of course, it will be a long meeting then / and I only planned for 30 minutes

Bart Van Thienen 12:08: I feel very unhappy in my job, above all, at the moment.

Susana Martin 12:09: we'll discuss it in a bit / but instead of going to Samira, you can talk to me

Bart Van Thienen 12:10: We'll do that, nothing wrong with asking Samira for advice.

Susana Martin 12:10: that's true

129. Around this time there were more incidents and some evolutions. I was very disappointed about my first bad monthly quality evaluation. I had never had less than 86% and now all of a sudden I got 70%, well under the company's 80% threshold for minimum acceptable quality. We were not supposed to discuss our quality reports with colleagues but that happened all the time anyway. The Camp Two guys interpreted my unhappiness with the bad result as criticism of Susana Martin and they liked that very much. They even became a bit more friendly towards me but without an improvement in the general atmosphere. I never criticised Susana Martin publicly about my bad result though. As she was my boss, I accepted her decision although I thoroughly disagreed with it and although I found it unfair and that she had abused her position to punish me as part of her bullying campaign. The atmosphere in the team remained the same. A general "hello" when a colleague arrived and then you sat on your own in your team for the rest of the day. I did see some minor changes like for instance a bit more chit-chat but all very superficial. Although I wanted to look at it with an open mind, still awaiting the outcome of the HR investigation of the team problems and the to be expected HR proposals to solve the issues, I found myself between a rock and a hard place: bullying by my direct colleagues and bullying by my team leader who became every day more unreasonable.

130. Out of misery I had another chat with Samira Mouhayar in her office. Because of the very low staff numbers in the Dutch/Flemish team, there were only four of us now instead of the eight when I had started, I now sat entirely alone during most of the time on my shifts. Samira Mouhayar came up with the idea that I could sit together with the English team to have some company during working hours. I stressed that I was very able to deal with the continuous stream of customer requests, I never had any issues with that. The

more, the better I always thought, as time passed quicker that way. I agreed to give Samira Mouhayar's idea a try and found immediately that it was much more social to have a few colleagues around me and there was a lot of banter and laughter. This change of seating also had an unexpected advantage. As the English team were still dealing with the Dutch customers, they quite often got questions about promotions they knew nothing about. I also still got the overflow from the English team with questions like: "What is the welcome bonus for Bangladesh?", on which I had no idea what to reply or where to find the answer. I could now directly ask my English team colleagues who sat beside me. There was some excellent team work there and on many occasions I took over their Dutch chats and they took over my "English" chats on which I did not know the answer as I was never trained for that market or the legal implications involved for it. This led to better customer service and less time wasting. A long time had passed since I had looked forward to come to work and I had finally found a good place. These were the only happy days I ever had in GVC.

131. During this time I noticed that Susana Martin was under a lot of pressure. She reacted overstressed on many unimportant issues. One incident was very annoying and humiliating. I was in the process of answering a customer's Poker question, an easy one for which I could find the answer in MOSS. I sat with the English team and was very focused on my work when Susana Martin left her desk in the Dutch/Flemish team area and came to see me where I sat with the English team, as Samira Mouhayar had suggested. At her arrival, Susana Martin immediately interrupted my work in a very unpleasant tone. I also had three chats with different questions going on for that I needed to focus intensely on my work. From the rude way Susana Martin addressed me it was immediately clear that she was looking for a fight with me. She started arguing with me in front of the whole English team, about ten people at that moment. I felt deeply embarrassed, distressed and humiliated and the English team members were upset with Susana Martin's uncalled for and unreasonable behaviour. Susana Martin could easily have said: "When you finish your chats, can we have a chat and talk about this Poker case?" But she did not do this and instead immediately started arguing about something that we were actually both agreeing on. This led to one of the customers actually getting fed up with me replying intermittently and he left the chat. I felt very unprofessional because of that but it was not my fault, it was Susana Martin's distraction that caused me to lose the chat but she did not care about

that. This happened at the end of my shift and I went straight to the Europa Point Nature Reserve to do voluntary work to clear my mind of another deeply upsetting and demotivating act of bullying. Even in my out of office time the ongoing work issues made my life unpleasant and I suffered from higher nervousness levels than I had ever had before in my life.

132. Around this time the management came up with a new idea called “calibration project”. We had to analyse the reply to a customer by one of our colleagues, a reply that had gone wrong. We had to study if the analysis had been done correctly, if the conclusions were right and bring up ideas to improve the answer. This was actually very interesting and Susana Martin had selected me for the Dutch/Flemish team. At that moment only Jose Luis Aznar and I were left in the team with enough experience to do this calibration exercise. But as Susana Martin and Jose Luis Aznar hated each other she chose me to do it. Hamid Ringelberg had by then given his month's notice that he was leaving the company. Kieran Vandenhoeck was still struggling to learn the job, so Susana Martin did not have many options left anyway... I had been on shift already for four hours, sitting alone all the time, when Susana Martin came in for her own shift. I had only had one short break that day. I had been constantly on three chats that day which is very intense, you have to deal with three different people with their own different problems in two different languages: Dutch and English. As soon as one chat was finished, a new chat opened automatically and you had immediately three chats again. This was very high paced work but I loved it, I never complained about the work pressure unlike several of my colleagues.

133. Susana Martin wanted to discuss the new calibration project and started interrupting me, seeing without any doubt that I was very busy on chat. She asked if I had prepared for the calibration project already and I replied that I had been unable to because of the constant stream of chats and emails. Luckily there had not been any phone calls yet on my shift that day. Susana Martin got very devious and rancorous then and kept talking to me while my chats were going on. There was no need for this as she could have told me to finish my chats first and not accept new ones so we could talk normally about it. Other teams would than have automatically taken over the Dutch/Flemish chats and dealt with

them in English. What Susana Martin wanted to remind me of was that I had to go and talk with Lizanne from the English team as she had been briefed about what exactly was expected from us for the calibration project. That conversation with Lizanne was supposed to take about half an hour. Apart from being on chats the whole time of my shift, there had been an incident in the English team that morning where James Munden, the English team leader, had told his team off angrily for not being on the chat (what probably explained why I had been inundated by chats). There was a tense atmosphere in the English team because James Munden had become really angry so it definitely was not the right moment to go to the English team for some trivial issue that could be done anytime later. Susana Martin's intervention was entirely unreasonable and she was just looking for a reason to start a fight.

134. A few days later I went to the calibration meeting with Roni Maman. It was the first time I had met him and I had no idea that he existed before that meeting. He introduced himself as the GVC Group's head of customer service and company's vice-president. The aim of the meeting was to explain to us the wider context of our work and show different aspects and costs involved. This turned out to be a highly informative event and I learnt a lot during this session. Members of the English, French and Italian language teams were also present but I was the only one from the Dutch/Flemish team as it was well understaffed. An example was given of a case where a real customer had asked for a £5 freebet related to some promotion. The initial customer service agent (from the English team) had made an analysis mistake and refused the freebet. This led to a number of complaints and escalations to other departments and only got sorted out days later when the customer was given a £10 freebet. Roni Maman then explained to us that each contact with the customer or internal contact cost about £5 to the company. He calculated that the total cost of this mistake had been £150. He invited us to keep this in mind for the future as it was better to give a customer a £5 freebet even in cases when the customer did not qualify for one. Roni Maman then asked everyone if they felt scared to give a £50 or £100 freebet. I was the only one who replied "yes" to that question and Roni Maman looked at me as if I were stupid. The reason why I did not want to give such high freebets was that it would have caught Susana Martin's attention and she would make a fuss about it but I did not dare to say that in front of my colleagues and with Samira Mouhayar also present at the meeting. Everything I learnt in this meeting was entirely opposite to the instructions

Susana Martin had given me till then and it was just another sign that Susana Martin did not understand the company's guidelines and lacked knowledge of even the most basic procedures.

135. Susana Martin showed more provocative behaviour towards me on another occasion. This kind of things had happened to many of my “disliked” colleagues before but never to me till the team meeting that ended in chaos. That meeting had clearly triggered something with Susana Martin and she blamed me somehow for the threat that she now seemed to see in me. I was working the 8h00-16h00 shift alone till 12h00 when Susana Martin and Jose Luis Aznar were coming in. There was not too much to do that day, enough to keep me busy all the time but nothing out of control. I first did the P4 and P3 VIP customers that were always our priority and then I worked down the list answering all customer queries that had come in via email and the occasional chats. Everything was entirely under control and it was to be seen if any unforeseen problems would pop up that day that might cause a flow of customer questions coming in. It was expected since a few months that the first one on shift that day made a “Daily Workload Email”. That was a schedule with all members on shift that day and what work they were supposed to do for example P4 and P3 VIP, English language, Dutch language, etc. There was a general complaint in the team that this was team leader Susana Martin's work, not for the members of the team.

136. As the team was now reduced to four people, instead of the normal eight, the sense of making such a workload scheme had gone as you mostly sat alone and had to follow the company's established priorities anyway. Especially that day there was no urgent need for a workload scheme as I sat alone for the first four hours and the work was entirely under control. I decided to wait till 12h00 when Jose Luis Aznar would come in and see how the work evolved during the morning and then have a short chat with Jose Luis Aznar to decide between the two of us how to divide the work for the next four hours that we sat together. When Susana Martin came in at 12h00, she went immediately ballistic about the fact that I had not done the Daily Workload email. She could have asked me why I had not done it but it became an immediate unreasonably rude attack. Whatever I did or did not do those days was a source for anger and aggression for Susana Martin and another reason

to cause me trouble, alarm, distress and humiliation. This time I felt especially humiliated as it happened in front of Jose Luis Aznar who sat there grinning at me and enjoying my ordeal.

137. Shortly after this incident Susana Martin decided to do away with the Daily Workload email and from then on she would make one herself on a weekly basis. This showed again how irrelevant the daily workload email had become and that Susana Martin was just looking for whatever reason to start a fight or an argument with me. This workload was important for the other language teams with twenty members each so they could set up a rotation scheme in which their team members did one hour of phone calls, one hour of chats and one hour of email and that role rotated during the day. In the Dutch/Flemish team we had to do phone, chat and emails all at the same time because we were sitting alone as the team was heavily under-staffed. Susana Martin never seemed to understand that our team had different needs because of that and although almost everyone in the team had brought the workload issue up with her. She seemed to be stuck in her old routine and unable to make decisions. The same can be said for Samira Mouhayar, forever hiding in her glass wall office and seemingly not interested at all in the problems occurring around her.

138. Susana Martin's lack of knowledge of the softwares, products, promotions and procedures was a constant source of frustration in the Dutch/Flemish team and was also widely known amongst the other customer service language teams. To that has to be added that not all the softwares worked 100% as they should and that could lead to confusing and contradicting information. Around this time I came across a request from the Risk Department for a VIP customer who regularly deposited 10,000 euro. The Risk Department had some doubts apparently that this customer's account might not be used by the customer himself or that some of the deposits were somehow suspicious. We were never told the reason for such requests by Risk. For whatever reason the Risk Department wanted the Dutch/Flemish customer service team to contact that very high value customer to send us identification documents to prove that he indeed was who he pretended to be. This was actually quite a common request and had to do with the legal requirements from the Regulator for KYC, "Know Your Customer" to prevent fraud, money laundering, etc.

High value VIP customers like this one always had a VIP account manager whose role was to personally follow these customers up on a very close personal level. This included one on one phone calls with these people, WhatsApp messaging to their personal mobile phone numbers, extra possibilities to give bonuses and rewards, meet them face to face at top sports events or promotional activities, etc. The VIP account managers knew their customers very well on a personal level, much better than we at customer service could ever do. It was therefore very normal in my job to consult with the VIP account managers to make sure no silly mistakes were made that could upset such high value customers. The easiest way was to contact the VIP account managers via Skype chat. These chats were registered and saved so it was also a good way to cover yourself in case something went wrong and you could prove that you had followed a VIP account managers instructions.

139. In this particular high value VIP case there was an important contradiction in the information provided by the different softwares. The contradiction was in the "Responsible Gaming" status field. This field was extremely important for legal reasons as customers with a "red" status meant they were excluded from depositing money as they had clearly communicated that they had a gambling addiction problem. Depending on the country the legally required time of exclusion could be six months up to several years. Failure to deal appropriately with such gambling addiction exclusion requests could lead to multi-million pound fines for the company by the relevant Regulator so it was of utmost importance to always check this "Responsible Gaming" or "RG" status. The information contradiction in this case was that the RG status was red" (meaning exclusion) in the customer general data software but "green" in the other software called Preport. I had never before seen such contradictory information for the RG status and I found it very weird and potentially dangerous so I decided to be extra cautious. The last thing I needed with my already diminished self-esteem and self-confidence was Susana Martin and the Camp Two guys to go around telling everyone I had thoroughly mishandled a case with a high value VIP customer.

140. "RG red" customers are not allowed to deposit money on their gambling or gaming accounts, they cannot be sent any publicity and bonus offers, etc. Therefore I thought:

“how can this person be asked for ID verification but he’s RG red?” This was not logical, apart from the conflicting RG status in the different softwares. I decided to ask the customer's VIP account manager Gert Merlen to have a look into this and make a decision about how to best deal with this case. Gert Merlen decided he would take it up personally with the customer but later changed his mind and sent the ID verification request back to customer service. Susana Martin picked this up and in a derogatory tone accused me of not having dealt appropriately with this issue and did she not even want to listen to my explanation. She obviously had not even checked the RG status for this customer, just pulled it out of its context to create another fight with me. Later it turned out that the conflicting RG status was a bug in the systems that only affected a very small number of customer accounts.

141. Around this time too there was a rumour going around in the team that there were two new job openings for the VIP team for Dutch/Flemish. Jose Luis Aznar had told someone (I don't remember who it was) that he had applied for the role and that someone else in the team had applied too, but he could not give a name. As we were already under-staffed (four people of which Jalila Kessissa was still in training instead of the normal eight when I started) and Hamid Ringelberg was in his last few weeks, that would reduce the team to two people only and it would become impossible to provide the service from 8h00-24h00 on seven days a week as we had always done. This was no secret and everyone was talking about it. It worried me as it would further complicate holiday requests. When I asked Susana Martin about this, she flipped out immediately and accused me of always assuming things without foundation and that by doing that I was creating problems. Her reaction was over the top and entirely unreasonable. A few days later it was announced that Jose Luis Aznar would join the VIP team and a few weeks later Kieran Vandenhoeck announced that he got a job in the VIP team too. I got the feeling that day that Susana Martin had lost it and lived in a state of denial that her team had collapsed entirely. It was another example of how things were taken out of context and blown out of proportion by Susana Martin to convert something totally unimportant into a fight or an unfounded accusation into an argument that left me alarmed and distressed.

142. On 4th March 2018 Susana Martin sent me an email with the Performance Card

figures for the month of January. She mentioned in it that I was called out of poker training but entirely misrepresented the situation and tried to make it look negative on me. This confirmed my strong suspicion that she was on a revenge mission and a personal vendetta. I think she felt that I was in a weak mental position and about to break down under the mental stress I was being subjected to. It became clear that she was on a campaign to bully me away, exactly as she had done with Dennis Dorland. I decided to let a night's sleep go over it and then decide how to react on it. The next day 5th March 2018 I wrote an email to Susana Martin with my reply on the Performance Card figures for the month of January allegations and copied in Samira Mouhayar and Danielle Wood from HR. My email was intended to clearly communicate about my feelings of alarm and distress.

143. My email to Susana Martin, Samira Mouhayar and Danielle Wood:

Dear Susana,

I wish to point out an important misunderstanding/misinterpretation regarding the partly cancelled Poker training in January as you mention in the "PERFORMANCE CARD SOCIAL REPORT 2018", specifically in the "initiative & flexibility" section where you write: "During the month of January Bart had poker training, the length of this training was 4 days, but due to sickness in the team, Bart was required to come to work on the last day, Bart did not like the decision which was made, but this decision was made due to company's decision. Bart should have shown more flexibility regarding the situation and decision made by management."

I have copied in Samira and Daniele as this ongoing issue was discussed with them too in the past and a solution has not yet been provided by the management, even on the opposite: it keeps being used to put me in a bad light and only partial information is used that not correctly represents reality.

The problem with the Poker training was indeed that high numbers of the DU/BE team called in sick causing a situation that on Thursday (3rd day of the training) and Friday (4th day of the training) mornings nobody would be present to answer user's queries. On Thursday Samira asked Miranda, the trainer, to tell me to leave the training and send me back to my desk to deal with the users. AS SOON AS this was communicated to me I LEFT for my desk IMMEDIATELY WITHOUT ANY OBJECTIONS. Miranda also communicated to me that the most important part of the Poker education, the practice

part, would be done/rescheduled for Friday. When I arrived at my desk I met with Samira and team member Jose Luis who came in on his day off to help. Seeing this, Samira sent me back to the Poker training after thanking me for my flexibility and understanding priorities. Nothing of this is reflected in your evaluation.

On Friday exactly the same happened: several people called in sick, no one present to deal with DU/BE customer's queries and this time Jose Luis wasn't there. As such I was called out of the Poker training again to work at my desk, WHAT I DID AGAIN for the second time in 2 days out of 4 days of training. If that doesn't show flexibility and respect for a management decision, then I don't know anymore what else I should have done to show flexibility and respect. I have made clear though to Samira, immediately at my arrival at my desk, that I feared that taking me out of the training at that point would make it impossible for me to answer Poker queries. Samira answered to me that my training would be completed later by having an experienced Poker CS employee sit with me for a day to do some practice work that would finish my training and prepare me to answer user queries. I agreed with that solution. AND I STARTED WORKING immediately, showing flexibility and understanding for the management decision. This is not reflected in your evaluation, actually the entire opposite of this is written in the evaluation. I don't understand why.

Until today the promised follow up of the training has not materialised and although I have tried to answer some Poker queries, I found myself incapable of doing so. I might add to this that I am well known to constantly take on the more complicated queries that need a lot of study work as I actually enjoy doing that. So if I say that I can't solve Poker queries that simply means that I can't solve them because I missed the practice part of the Poker training. During the Poker training I learned how to play Poker (what I already knew anyway) and I learned about the existence of tools with Poker data. But I missed the part of the training where you connect a user's query to the data stored in the tools that will give you the answer/solution to the initial question and lead to customer satisfaction. I find it terribly demotivating that today I got AGAIN a reminder e-mail with a Poker exercise for which I have already three (3) times stated that I am not able to answer or solve for LACK OF KNOWLEDGE and lack of TIME.

Add to this the disappointing quality report for January about which I have explained at length why I feel that my work environment is being made unpleasant and also not allowing me to do my job properly, I repeat that I find that evaluation unfair although I accept the result. On top of that please note the much higher work pressure (e.g. high

numbers of English team chats/phone calls preventing me from doing DU/BE work) and significantly less DU/BE personnel resulting that it is normal that now about 50% of the time I work alone in the team. I don't mind sitting alone, that's not the problem. The real problem is that I cannot do what other teams do: change roles every hour or so like e.g. 1 hour phone, 1 hour chat, 1 hour e-mails and change roles constantly what gives you time and opportunity to tackle complicated queries. In my case there is no balancing of workload: I have to do chats, phone and e-mails all in one go and all at the same time. Then I'm forced to write this e-mail you're reading what takes a lot of time and thinking and prevents me even more of doing my job properly.

My job has changed significantly since I started on 15.05.2017 but unfortunately the evaluations are still done as if we were a bigger team with constant workload sharing and as such the evaluation results are becoming ever more disappointing and demotivating. Isn't it time to adapt the evaluation procedures for the needs of a small and understaffed team and keep in mind the changed circumstances and at least use some leeway in evaluations that compensate for the much more difficult and complicated circumstances in which I am now working?

We are at present in a situation where I am reminded to do a Poker exercise I can't do but took me already over an hour of trying. I can try again but then I will be given a bad evaluation for not offering customer support during the time needed. I will then be accused of not being flexible and not respect management decisions. We are at present in a situation that it doesn't matter anymore what I do because I will be getting a bad evaluation for it. If I do white, I will be told off that I should have done black. If I would have done black, I will be told off for not having done white. It's never good. And I can point out that I do all my work related e-mails from HOME BEFORE I COME TO WORK so I can start to work efficiently from the very first second and do reduce my necessary BREAKS TO THE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM to maximise the amount of time dedicated at customer service and customer satisfaction. I would call that flexibility but that isn't apparently appreciated at all.

Regarding the Poker training: I am willing to come on a day I'm off to finish my Poker training, I don't need to be paid for it, I am eager to tackle this type of queries as Poker is a personal interest of me, much more than e.g. Sports or Casino.

Another issue that became a problem: I still need to take 7 days of vacation before the end of March but because of low staff numbers that is impossible without creating serious problems of team presence during certain days and hours. I specifically asked for week 12

and noticed that since a colleague was give week 12 off creating this problem for that week.

It will be highly appreciated not only by me but by everyone else in the DU/BE team of these issues can be tackled asap.

Thanks and kr.

Bart Van Thienen

144. The same day Monday 5th March 2018 I sent another email to Susana Martin in which I mention: "I also noticed a new invitation for a meeting on Wednesday afternoon without giving the agenda of the meeting although Samira Mouhayar apparently is invited too. Could you please be so kind to send me a list of the items to be discussed so I can properly prepare for it?" Susana Martin replied via email: "The meeting of tomorrow where Samira is invited as well is to talk about the general team atmosphere and expectations going forward. You do not need to prepare for this."

145. My email to Susana Martin:

Hi Susana,

I obviously will take on board your suggestion for the daily workload e-mail but I don't think I understand your remark re notes and attachments. Can you please elaborate what you mean with that proposal? I checked (from home) and couldn't find an example of it.

I also noticed a new invitation for a meeting on Wednesday afternoon without giving the agenda of the meeting although Samira apparently is invited too. Could you please be so kind to send me a list of the items to be discussed so I can properly prepare for it? That would be much appreciated.

Thanks and kr.

Bart

146. Susana Martin replied to my email and wrote some nonsensical things about notes and attachments. I had no clue what she was ranting about and was wondering if it all had become too much for her and she had gone mad. Susana Martin seemed to be unaware of the severe under-staffing in the Dutch/Flemish team and the pressure that was

constantly put on us by the shift supervisors to deal with P4 and P3 users first. Those customers were VIP's spending a lot of money with the company. It became more obvious by the day that Susana Martin seemed to live in another dimension and had lost control over the every day running of the team, more than ever. Susana Martin also replied to my question about the meeting: "The meeting of tomorrow where Samira is invited as well is to talk about the general team atmosphere and expectations going forward. **You do not need to prepare for this.**" It turned out that that was a lie.

147. Susana Martin's reply to my email:

Hi Bart,

My suggestion was to add for example a person's name for example to deal with the notes/attachments as sometimes these are being forgotten, as we concentrate on P4 and P3.

For example yesterday there was a note escalation from bb_petaat from 28.02.2018 and yesterday I took care of this request, it was pending for 5 days. This was actually a query you escalated.

Please see below:

We can always check at more suggestions in the daily work load organisation. Feel free for these suggestions. The aim of this work load organisation is to clear our inboxes as efficient as possible with the help of the whole team, therefore team work and communication is very important apart from the daily work load being done by the early shift person.

If the above is still unclear, please do not hesitate to come to me and I will explain in person.

The meeting of tomorrow where Samira is invited as well is to talk about the general team atmosphere and expectations going forward. You do not need to prepare for this.

Thanks and kr.

Susana

148. This day 5th March 2018 there is also a new starter for the Dutch/Flemish team Cathy Gosseye, a Belgian woman that was a bit older than me, I estimated. My first impression was that this was a strong woman who knew well what she wanted and would not accept

any bullying from Susana Martin. I noticed that Jose Luis Aznar immediately disliked this new team member and I thought that the whole bullying story would repeat itself as had been the case with me, Dennis Dorland and Kieran Vandenhoeck. Cathy Gosseye stayed for only a month and a half and then left the company on 20th April 2018 for reasons unknown to me.

149. The 6th March 2018 brought another unpleasant surprise. Out of the blue Susana Martin sent me an email with a reminder for my week 12 annual leave request from 31st January 2018 saying she never got a reply from me. This was a blatant lie as this was verbally discussed between us in the office a few times and my request had till that moment never posed a problem. I checked the shift roster and replied that Kieran Vandenhoeck was given the week requested by me in the meantime. Susana Martin now all of a sudden claimed that Kieran Vandenhoeck had asked for that period two weeks before I did but this was never mentioned before so she must have made that up. She wrote that week 14 was no problem. It was now crystal clear that I had fallen out of grace with Susana Martin and she was practising her usual recipe on me with holiday request troubles, etc. exactly as she had done to the Camp Two guys and Dennis Dorland. She had done it so many times that by now she knew she could get away with murder. Samira Mouhayar and HR would not cause her any problems and would even protect her by covering up for her. My last hope on building a career at GVC was disappearing quickly. I was still very reluctant to create a big fuss about Susana Martin's worsening attitude towards me as I did not want to make a future manager think that I attacked my team leader. That would not be very helpful for my career, I imagined.

150. Susana Martin's email:

Hi Bart,

Week 14 is fine to take holidays, for W 12 I never received your reply.

Week 15 is also fine if you would like to that week as holidays, as the shift plan has not been made yet.

Thanks and kr.

Susana

151. The same day 6th March 2018 I replied to Susana Martin's email about the week 12 holiday. "I wish to point out that at the time I asked about the possibility to get week 12 off, there was a tremendously bad atmosphere in the team with several people not talking to others etc." In the meantime week 12 was given as annual leave to Kieran Vandenhoeck. It had become obvious that Susana Martin used her well known tactics to sabotage my holiday requests, as she had done with other team members in the past who had complained about that repeatedly. The bad evaluations, etc. fitted in the same strategy Susana Martin had used before on others to make their life harder. This only added to my despair that my days in the company were numbered and there was a campaign by Susana Martin to bully me away by breaking me mentally, as she had done to Dennis Dorland. I decided to remain polite and respectful in my reply although mentally I was fuming.

152. My reply to Susana Martin:

Dear Susana,

I wish to point out that at the time I asked about the possibility to get week 12 off, there was a tremendously bad atmosphere in the team with several people not talking to others etc. Not to forget that it was by then very clear for me that several team members were about to leave the team and/or company even more complicating things. Add to that that Kieran in the meantime was give that same week 12 off. So one way or another the team is heavily understaffed at the moment complicating everyone's plans.

I should hear something this week about the job offer I applied for, that could solve the problem entirely of course.

Kr.

Bart Van Thienen

153. On 7th March 2018 the meeting "for which I did not have to prepare" was planned. That meeting with Susana Martin and Samira Mouhayar was postponed at the very last minute to the following day. No reason was given but I was not worried about this at that time. As the meeting was supposed to be an update on the team atmosphere I expected to be given news on how the HR investigation had gone and what steps would be announced to make sure the bullying was a thing of the past. I therefore looked actually forward to that

meeting.

154. On 8 March 2018 Susana Martin sent me another reply via email claiming again that the week 12 holiday was not possible. Now all of a sudden Susana Martin claimed that Kieran Vandenhoeck had asked for the same days of annual leave two weeks before I did. This was never mentioned by anyone in the weeks since 31st January 2018 though. I knew it was a lie and Susana Martin did not even do the most minimal effort to hide it. She was so used to getting away with it by now. HR did not seem to care at all and it started to look like the whole HR investigation was just a major fobbing off exercise. Although the week 12 holiday had been verbally discussed again, it seemed Susana Martin was creating a paper trail to cover up her attempt to bully me away. This alarmed me and I considered different options on how I would react to this. In the end I decided that I had to keep in mind the still ongoing Business Analyst role application and other potential promotions or career changes for the better. This time I decided not to fall in Susana Martin's trap again by replying verbally and I replied in an email.

155. Susana Martin's email reply:

Dear Bart,

I am still waiting for your feedback if you want to take week 14 and week 15.

Please be advised that Kieran requested W 12 two weeks before, when I received your request.

Please let me know regarding week 14 and week 15 so that I can plan it in if requested by you.

Thanks and kr.

Susana Martin

156. On 8th March 2018 I replied to Susana Martin again about the week 12 annual leave request. I wrote: "I have friends from Northern Ireland over for two weeks arriving on Sunday. As I have 16:00 – 24:00 shift next week it will be impossible to do something with them. For that week 12 is my only option." My friends were actually a married couple, Jim from Belfast and his wife Jeanine from Gibraltar. They spend three or four holidays a year

in Gibraltar and with Jim I share a passion for local heritage. We normally go on long walks around Gibraltar or do some caving and other outdoors activities. I looked forward to meet them again as it meant that I would be away for a week from the bullying at work and I highly needed to reload my batteries again. Spending a lot of time on all these different activities with Jim would definitely help me to clear my mind of the toxic atmosphere at work. Jim and his wife were self-employed people in the film industry and were always busy with interesting projects which was always fun to hear about. I planned to bring this up at the meeting with Samira Mouhayar that same day to see if she as a department manager could assist in sorting this holiday request issue out. A few weeks later it turned out that my Northern Ireland friends had work on a project rescheduled and did not come to Gibraltar in the planned period.

157. My reply to Susana Martin's email:

Hi Susana,

I have friends from Northern Ireland over for 2 weeks arriving on Sunday. As I have 16:00 – 24:00 shift next week it will be impossible to do something with them. For that week 12 is my only option.

I will give you an answer after the meeting with Samira that was supposed to happen yesterday but is rescheduled for this afternoon. Based on the information exchange during that meeting, I will be able to make a decision.

Thanks and kr.

Bart Van Thienen

158. Later that day 8th March 2018 I went unprepared (as per Susana Martin's email) to the meeting with Susana Martin and Samira Mouhayar. In the meeting room there was a long table and I sat opposite Susana Martin at one end of the table and Samira Mouhayar sat at the far end to take minutes. Samira Mouhayar told me at the beginning of the meeting that she would not intervene and we had to do “as if she was not there”. Susana Martin started talking and I noticed immediately an aggressive and hostile attitude. This meeting definitely did not look like some updates on the bullying investigation by HR would be given and indeed turned out to be an hour long attack from Susana Martin towards me. This was terribly intimidating as I constantly had to defend myself against Susana Martin 's

false allegations. Things were taken out of context and I was accused of being stubborn. Susana Martin now openly attacked me in front of my department manager Samira Mouhayar and tried to present me as a bad employee, as a problem that she had in her team. Susana Martin's campaign to bully me away was now in full charge and the meeting was clearly set up as a trap to catch me unprepared. Luckily I defended myself very well against Susana Martin's attacks as I remembered very well the issues she brought up. Samira Mouhayar indeed did not intervene. I later found out that Samira Mouhayar's minutes from the meeting reflected very well all the attacks and complaints Susana Martin threw at me, but almost none of my answers and defences. Susana Martin and Samira Mouhayar were now clearly teaming up to make me look bad with the intention to get rid of me. During this meeting there was no mention at all of the steps that had been taken to stop the bullying or what the outcome of the HR investigation was, as had been suggested in the invitation email.

159. During these days I also sent a few reminder emails to Noemie Levy at HR and Stefan Kalcher, the department manager, about the Business Analyst role for which I had applied. Stefan Kalcher had told me during the video conference that he had some family issues in his home country Austria and then had to go on a business trip to India. Noemie Levy told me not to worry if there was not an immediate reply from Stefan Kalcher as I definitely was still considered to be in the running for the job. This was quite a relief for me as it looked like a fantastic way out of my dreadful employment environment in the customer service department at that moment. I popped in at HR a few times too to talk face to face to Noemie Levy and she was always very enthusiastic about my application. I found that very hopeful and motivating and it helped me to manage my fear that my days in the company were counted.

160. On 9th March 2018 I got another email from Susana Martin. She came up with yet another excuse for not giving me week 12 off: "For week 12, I already informed you that Monday 19.03 it is not ideal to give you holidays." This time she writes that only one day of the whole week is a problem, even though Kieran Vandenhoeck already had been given that week off, but that is now not a problem anymore. Why did she every time come up with other or different reasons and excuses for a simple annual leave request? Why was

she trying to justify her decision via so many emails? There was simply no logic in her behaviour. This confirmed my strong suspicions that she was making it up as she went along to bully and victimise me with my holiday requests. The cumulative effect of all these individual issues that she was creating added to my already diminished self-confidence from the Camp Two bullying campaign and made me feel more helpless by the day. My voluntary work in the Nature Reserve continued but this was not able anymore to bring my mind to rest and I increasingly turned to drinking alcohol at home to be able to sleep and numb out my worries. But even with that I woke up several times during the night, I had nightmares and although it was still quite cold some nights I would wake up soaking wet from cold sweats.

161. Susana Martin's email:

Hi,

As discussed already this morning, please let me know if the options I give you are okay, please bear in mind that your colleagues may request holidays for these weeks and then it can become more difficult to give you these holidays.

For week 12, I already informed you that Monday 19.03 it is not ideal to give you holidays if you are able to swap with somebody from the team, as we have the new starter being with us and it is important to shadow her properly.

Please let me know. Thanks and kr.

Susana

162. During the 8th March 2018 meeting with Samira Mouhayar and Susana Martin I also brought up my concerns about the ongoing bullying again. I was desperately looking to find a way to move forward. It was now confirmed that Hamid Ringelberg was leaving the company and at least one other person would leave to the VIP team. Susana Martin brought up that she felt embarrassed that I spent my days sitting with the English team although I worked for her in the Dutch/Flemish team. I suggested as a possible solution that I would continue to sit with the English team when I was alone on shift, but would move to the Dutch/Flemish/Scandinavian area when Susana Martin came on shift. She was happy with my proposal. Samira Mouhayar brought up that it was my decision entirely and that she was happy for me to continue sitting with the English team as it was her idea

anyway to do that to keep me away from the Camp Two bullies. I thought that by showing flexibility and this goodwill gesture towards Susana Martin she might change her attitude towards me and become more friendly again as had been the case in the past, before the chaotic team meeting happened.

163. As a sign of goodwill I then decided that the following day, when I was working from 8h00 till 12h00 and Susana Martin from 12h00 till 20h00, I would sit with the English team initially but at Susana Martin's arrival at 12h00 I would move to the Dutch/Flemish team area and sit beside Susana Martin. During this meeting Samira Mouhayar gave me the impression that she was not really interested in my problems and got bored with hearing it all over again. I felt that she was just sitting and waiting for the problem to go away and did not care about how it would be solved as long as she did not have to deal with it. My biggest hope at that moment was that with two team members leaving and me giving a show of goodwill to return to sit with Susana Martin in the same team area, she would see my positive intentions and stop her bullying towards me so we could work together to build up an entirely new team with different people. I was actually hopeful for the first time in months that the end of my ordeal was much nearer. I still had not heard anything from HR regarding the bullying investigation they were supposedly doing in our team and I had not been made aware of any improvements or decisions about the problems that were made or intended to be made soon.

164. On 9th March 2018 I started my shift at 8h00 sitting with the English team and at 12h00 moved to sit beside Susana Martin, as proposed in the meeting the day before. I was in a very good mood as I was convinced that my problems were over. When Susana Martin came in she opened a full blast attack on me that lasted the full four hours I sat aside her for the rest of my shift. Four hours of nagging, criticising and questioning everything I did, asking about things I was not doing, asking about things I was doing. This went on non-stop for four hours and it became the worst four hours of my life. At the end of my shift I left entirely devastated. Susana Martin's assault had finally broken me. I had lost all hope and self-confidence and I did not know anymore how to continue my life. I was off the next two days and I think that that was the only reason why I did not start crying at my desk. I just did my emails, chats and phone calls and was counting the minutes till the end

of my shift to be able to escape that horrible environment that was having such a detrimental effect on the overall quality of my life, on and off the job.

165. On 10th March 2018, my first day off, I slept through the whole night, day and next night, thirty-six hours in total. I was mentally entirely exhausted what caused me to be physically not able anymore to do anything. It felt like my whole life had collapsed and my body could not handle it anymore. This was the second time in the last two weeks that I had lost a full day due to my exhaustion and extreme need to sleep. My despair was so huge as still there was no news from HR about an action plan to improve the atmosphere at work and stop the bullying. It looked like my ordeal was getting even worse than it already had been and there was no way out of this situation. The department's management did not care about my problems, my line manager bullied me, the Camp Two colleagues bullied me and HR seemed to have forgotten about the case and did not take any action. All my personal efforts to try to bring some improvement were ignored and even used against me. It looked like my signs of weakness were used by the bullies to push on a bit harder still.

166. On 11th March 2018, my second day off, I was still exhausted but had somehow a clearer mind and decided that this could not go on any longer. As kind of a therapy for myself, I wrote my feelings in a text and when I read it after I finished, I decided to send it to Samira Mouhayar and Danielle Wood from HR as an ultimate cry for help. My email mentioned: "strong antagonistic feelings of my team leader against me" ... "mental torture" ... "mentally exhausted by the atmosphere on the job" ... "Every bit of energy was drained out of my body" ... "terrible influence on my private life" ... I asked Samira Mouhayar for a meeting the next day to sort out the present situation. I specifically asked about the possibility to be transferred to the English team and leave the Dutch/Flemish team, Noemie Levy from HR had already confirmed that this was possible and James Munden, the English team leader, had told me that he would be happy to have me as I was a good worker with an excellent knowledge of the job.

167. My email to Samira Mouhayar and Danielle Wood:

Dear Samira, CC Danielle,

After the meeting with Susana and you on Thursday afternoon I had some hope that the strong antagonistic feelings of my team leader against me would be under control, the page turned and a new chapter written as I had asked and stressed during the meeting and hopefully the minutes will reflect that.

As a sign of my good intentions I spent the first 4 hours of my Friday shift with the English team so as not to sit alone and at noon moved to sit with the DU/BE team members who came in, as did Susana. For the next 4 hours aside Susana there was a constant and unavoidable barrage of nagging and criticising everything I did on my job. This was extremely unpleasant and humiliating and could well have a long lasting effect on the morale in the team.

As 2 team members have in the meantime confirmed personally to me the fact that very soon they will leave the team, it might have been more wise to extra motivate me instead of this relentless attacking. I could have easily seen this reducing of the team numbers as an opportunity for more overtime and show the flexibility that I have become known for. Obviously in such a tremendously negative atmosphere I will NOT do any overtime and expose myself to even more of this mental torture.

Luckily in this coming week 11 Susana has the early shift and I have the late shift so I will only be together with her on Monday 12.03.2018 for 2 hours. I can assure you that I will spend every second of my time at work in the coming week with the English team to omit every further contact with my team leader and what is left of the now entirely collapsed DU/BE team full of demotivated people. I've had way too much negativity already to have to continue to listen to all stories of what is happening.

For the near future I have asked for week 12 off but this has been constantly refused by my team leader. The rule is very clear that I had to take up 9 or 10 days of my 42 days of vacation this year before the end of March. I was only able to take 3 days off till now and with even less team members very soon taking days off will become impossible. It is not my fault that the DU/BE team has collapsed and that therefore it is not possible anymore to cover every shift during week or weekends. As such I should not be punished for this situation and I politely ask you, Samira, to overrule my team leader's decision and award me week 12 as vacation. It will definitely raise my morale a lot if this would be possible as it would be another week away from my team leader and prevent me becoming even more depressed than I am already.

In my recent shift roster I had 1 and 2.03.2018 off and 10 and 11.03.2018 off, both after a

7 day in a row shift. I find it shocking that after these shifts I slept the whole night and day and next night on 1 and 10.03.2018 without stopping. I was so mentally exhausted by the atmosphere on the job that I lost 2 entire days of my life. Every bit of energy was drained out of my body and this terrible influence on my private life is definitely not a price I am prepared to pay.

To discuss these things, I will be in the office at 3pm on Monday 12.03.2018 to talk to you. I can then start my normal shift as usual at 4pm. Things I wish to discuss and get an answer on:

- Holidays for week 12*
- Continue to sit with the English team during my shifts for DU/BE team*
- Possibility to be transferred to the English team and leave the DU/BE team, Noemie from HR has already confirmed that this is possible and James, the English team leader, is happy to have me.*

*Thanks for reading this and looking forward to your reply,
Bart*

168. In the days previous to this email I had gone to see Noemie Levy at HR to ask if she had heard anything about the Business Analyst job I had applied for. I also asked her about the possibility for a transfer to the English team. She told me it was not straightforward but had been done in the past with for example Andriana Karachalio (from Greece) and Aleksandra Zafirova (from Bulgaria). She said that it would depend on James Munden, the English team leader, if he wanted to have me in his team or not. As I sat with the English team that same day, I approached James Munden at a quiet moment and asked him about the possibility for a transfer to his team. He answered that he would happily have me as I was a good employee but that it depended on HR if they would agree on such a move. This conversation was done at whisper voice and, I stressed to James Munden, in confidence as I did not want anyone to overhear it so Susana Martin would find out and step up her bullying campaign even more. It looked to me that the end of the bullying could be achieved via a move to the English team and both James Munden and Noemie Levy agreed that it could be done. Apart from that, I was perfectly happy to sit with the English team and the positive and vibrant atmosphere that I found there. I knew not everyone got along very well with everyone in the English team but for me it was Heaven

compared to the Hell at the Dutch/Flemish team.

169. On 12th March 2018 I arrived an hour early (at 15h00, my shift started at 16h00) in the customer service office for the requested meeting with Samira Mouhayar, as mentioned in my email from the day before. Samira Mouhayar ignored me entirely although I sat in front of her glass office so it was impossible that she had not seen me. That day she even had the door closed although she sat alone in her office. Normally her door would always be open unless she was in a confidential meeting with someone. I had had meetings with her before in her office to, for instance, complain about the bullying, but even then the door had stayed open all the time. I noticed that Samira Mouhayar avoided eye contact. When after about half an hour sitting and waiting one of the English colleagues asked me something about a Dutch promotion, I looked away from Samira Mouhayar's office to answer his question which took a minute or so. When done I saw that Samira Mouhayar's office was empty and that she had quickly left without talking to me. She did not come back before the start of my shift and I mentally entirely collapsed. I left the building feeling devastated as I was not capable anymore to have to go and sit beside Susana Martin. All energy had drained out of my body in an instant and I don't even remember how I got home that day. My mind had gone blank. The only thing I knew was that I could not handle any more bullying or nagging or humiliation. That absolutely nobody in the company cared about me or resolving my issues and that I was entirely alone in the world with my suffering, this was the end of my endurance. It turned out that this was the last time I was in the customer service office as I was never to return to my job, which ended in getting sacked on the 7th May 2018.

170. The next day on 13th March 2018 Samira Mouhayar replied to my email and also copied in Danielle Wood. The subject of my email was clear enough: "Ongoing issues in DU/BE team and worsening negative effects on my life". Samira Mouhayar wrote: "It has been a busy day and I only read your email now. I was in meetings all afternoon. Since you left and didn't start your shift, we'll speak tomorrow." Apparently the subject line was no reason at all to worry about what I wrote, even after the earlier investigation. I still did not know anything about the HR investigation, the conclusions or if it was still ongoing, etc. What was very obvious was that still absolutely nothing had changed and the bullying went

on and on and on and there was no end in sight.

171. Samira Mouhayar's email:

Hello Bart,

It has been a busy day and I only read your email now. I was in meetings all afternoon.

Since you left and didn't start your shift, we'll speak tomorrow.

You can also confirm tomorrow the reason of sickness since you didn't communicate it to the shift leader.

Samira Mouhayar

172. The following day 13th March 2018 I went to see the emergency doctor, Dr Fitzpatrick. I had never met him before, I just asked for the first available doctor at the Gibraltar Health Authority in the ICC Primary Care Centre. I explained the bullying problems at work and the lack of action against it by management and HR. Dr Fitzpatrick signed me off sick for "stress related anxiety" until 20th March 2018. He requested me to come back at that date for a follow up check. The symptoms I had were: shaking hands, lack of appetite, my heart beating faster than usual, I was constantly thinking of the bullying at work, distress about the work situation and that I might lose my job, trouble concentrating, forgetting in the middle of a sentence what I was talking about, constantly feeling tired but when I went to bed I was unable to fall asleep, when I finally slept I woke up several times at night soaking wet from sweat although the nights were cold, I had nightmares for example my team leader scratching my face with her nails. I kept thinking that if I would lose my job at the age of forty-seven it would be the end of my life. I could not understand that after several emails over the last few months to my management and HR mentioning that the situation was detrimental to my health, still nothing had been done to prevent my mental breakdown. The foreseeability of mental injury must have been terribly clear to these people, especially after it had already happened to Dennis Dorland not so long ago. So many emails about bullying mentioning the facts and witnesses must have made clear to these people that there was indeed a real problem that could cause my mental collapse. And still nothing was done. How could I ever regain trust and confidence in such a management and HR department?

173. I had worked for thirty years in both small and big companies, since I did my first student holiday jobs at the age of sixteen, and I never had to go through anything like I had to go through at GVC/bwin. After Dr Fitzpatrick diagnosed me with “stress related anxiety” he also prescribed sleeping pills Xanax. The second time I met Dr Fitzpatrick, after the end of the first sick note expiry date, I explained that I did not take the pills and that I actually never bought them. The pills actually scared me as I had read so many stories about people getting addicted or committing suicide with pills. I did not want to go down that road but was scared that it could happen. I don't remember if it was during this first or the second meeting that I mentioned to Dr Fitzpatrick that what helped me most was my voluntary work in the Nature Reserve. I explained to him that I spent a few hours per day doing manual labour removing invasive plants at Europa Point. Simple repetitive work but at least it made me forget the work issues and clear my mind. I pointed out that I was sure that this voluntary work prevented me from going entirely insane. I remember that Dr Fitzpatrick advised me to keep doing this as it would help me to cure the “stress related anxiety” I was suffering and so I followed his advice. This indeed improved my peace of mind somewhat. My voluntary work at Europa Foreshore was the only thing in my life those days that made me feel useful. I handed the sick note in at HR as I did not have the courage anymore to hand it in at my own department for fear of bumping into one of the bullies. HR promised they would inform my department. I had the opportunity to speak shortly to Danielle Wood, who told me that she was very busy, and I showed her my shaking hands and explained to her my other symptoms. Danielle Wood then advised me to start to do yoga to help me to better cope with the results of bullying. This left me flabbergasted as instead of coming up with a solution to stop the bullying, she just wanted me to be able to better deal with it. When she saw the startled look on my face, she again said that she was very busy and I left with the impression that she was not really interested and that she was annoyed that I had come to talk to her. I still saw Danielle Wood as my confidence person in the company, what made her way of treating me extra disappointing, even painful.

174. On 14 March 2018, the third day on sick leave for stress related anxiety, Noemie Levy sent me an email to inform me that Stefan Kalcher, the manager for the Business Analyst role, wanted to do the testing for the Business Analyst vacancy that week or the following week. I agreed on Friday 16th March 2018 at 14h00 for the testing. There were then some

further emails about what the test was about exactly and it was pointed out that it would be a test on a computer. I was very surprised that all of a sudden the Business Analyst application got expedited after weeks of no progress. Before the test started I asked Noemie Levy some general question about the number of candidates for the vacancy, she replied that I was the first candidate to do the test. Stefan Kalcher himself came to see me personally before the test started.

175. The test was done on a portable computer and there were three questions. The first one was a question on an impossible subject but I wrote a reply that Noemie Levy confirmed was the correct one. The second one was about the database programming language SQL and I included bits of coding in my reply to show I understood what I was talking about. The third question was to use Excel to work with a big data set. I was surprised by the third question as there had been no mention about this one before. I had indicated that I needed some refreshing on my Excel knowledge during the video interview. If I would have known that there was an Excel question in the test, I would have done a serious effort in my spare time to get up to date again with my Excel skills. There are lots of free tutorials in the internet so this could have been done at no cost for me. The test had been referred all the time as "the SQL test" so the Excel question was unexpected. I succeeded in producing two graphs anyway. I handed the portable computer back to Noemie Levy and we discussed my answers shortly. Noemie Levy seemed to be satisfied with how the test had gone.

176. On 19th March 2018 Susana Martin sent an email to all Dutch/Flemish team members that the daily workload email would from then on be done by her personally and become a weekly workload email "and if needed we need to adjust to the current work load.". This entirely contradicted her statement in the meeting on 8th March 2018 (the meeting set up as a trap and then turned out to be the hour long attack on me) and proved that Susana Martin had created a problem out of nothing as this daily workload was indeed not relevant anymore for such a very small team.

177. The email Susana Martin sent:

Hi all,

Please be advised that I will prepare the daily workload from now until :-), if not informed differently.

There will be a small change however, it will be transformed in a weekly workload instead of daily one with subject to changes of course, therefore I ask you kindly for your flexibility and if needed we need to adjust to the current work load.

In case you have any questions, please let me know.

Have a good start of the week!

Thank you and kr.

Susana

178. On 21st March 2018 I got the second sick note for "stress related anxiety". Dr Fitzpatrick wrote me another sick note for "stress related anxiety" until 29th March 2018. I felt a huge relief that I could stay away longer from the bullying at work that had so obviously become a dangerous environment for my health. The symptoms I had, continued and there was no significant improvement in my mental state of despair and hopelessness. My worries made me short tempered and several friends pointed out my changed behaviour. As per Dr Fitzpatrick's advice I continued to do voluntary work in the Nature Reserve when I was able to scrape together enough energy to do so. I continued to await the outcome of the HR bullying investigation and as Noemie Levy continued to be optimistic regarding the Business Analyst job, I was eagerly awaiting some positive news about that.

179. On 22nd March 2018 I sent an email to Danielle Wood with a request for the minutes of the meeting on 8th March 2018 with Susana Martin where Samira Mouhayar was taking notes, the meeting I felt was set up as a trap with Susana Martin attacking me for a whole hour. The way that meeting had evolved kept playing in my mind, it kept alarming and distressing me. If there was no way to stop Susana Martin from further attacking me or misrepresenting my work and attitude as those of a bad employee, the risk of getting more and worse anxiety was very high. I feared that a further prolonged sick leave would eventually lead to me getting sacked and it could also be evaluated by the manager for the Business Analyst role as a negative aspect for a person he was evaluating to start in his

team or not.

180. The email I sent to Danielle Wood:

Hi Danielle,

As discussed yesterday I want to be properly prepared for a "return to work after sickness" meeting, hopefully soon.

Pointing out again that I strongly felt that the last meeting with my TL in the presence of Samira was set up as a trap, I wish to review the minutes taken from that meeting. I wish to stress that under the Gibraltar Data Protection Act it is my full right to get that information so if that won't be allowed please confirm so in writing.

I again want to make very clear that I am the person that is most looking for and most benefiting from getting a solution for the present breakdown in the DU/BE team.

Unfortunately my conclusion still is that it's getting worse, not better.

As usual thanks very much for your help.

Bart

181. 22nd March 2018 was the last day at work for Hamid Ringelberg. He left the company without ever having talked to me. I had no idea at all if he had a girlfriend, what his hobbies were, absolutely nothing I knew about him. The Camp Two group now being reduced from four to two members was what looked like the only positive evolution at work in those days. The two most problematic members and ring leaders remained though: Yousri Amrani and Jose Luis Aznar. Although Hamid Ringelberg never reached a high quality standard in his work and he was a slow worker, it further reduced the number of people in the Dutch/Flemish team. The constant flow of people leaving the team did not seem to ring any alarm bells at HR apparently and that continued to surprise me. They really did not seem to care at all and till that day no real proactive steps were taken by anyone to sort out the ongoing problems in the Dutch/Flemish team.

182. On 23rd March 2018 Danielle Wood sent me an email with the minutes of the meeting on 8th March 2018, the one I felt was set up as a trap and with Susana Martin's hour long attack. Reading the minutes left me in total shock as in no way did they represent all

aspects of what was discussed and the minutes taken by Samira Mouhayar were very one-sided towards Susana Martin's accusations and attacks without a full report of all the replies and defences that I had brought up during the meeting.

183. The meeting minutes:

Participants : Bart Van Thienen (BV), Susana Martin (SM)

Minute taker : Samira Mouhayar (Smo)

SM Thank you for coming to the meeting – we are here to talk about the concerns you had

How is it going with JL?

BV Still a very distant relationship – No real constant interaction – there was a certain improvement but I already spoke to SMO about it

I was disappointed about my quality evaluation.

I was criticising you and they started talking to me again – there was some improvement so I tried not to get in negativity

Yes some improvement but I don't know if it's related to the criticism made about my TL

Smo said we should not compare ourselves to other

This was sorted

Yes improvement but don't know if it's going to last

SM So you have seen improvement

BV 1 day yes 1 day no. I try to ask only professional questions – It's not like a very welcoming atmosphere – It's just hello and then you sit alone in your team for the day

SM I had the impression you told me that things were better and collaboration was better – I will check how development are going

BV I see some changes that are very superficial – more chit-chat but superficial – I look at it with an open mind

SM thanks for the feedback – I will have meetings and chats to see how we can improve better

There are things I think you need to improve

- Professionalism

- making assumptions is not the most appropriate

BV Example?

SM when a colleague is sick and you make comments (they've arranged to take turns calling in sick)– We cannot say that – not knowing if this person is really sick

BV If I hear 2 of my colleagues saying – If I call in sick Susana will be in trouble

There is a scheme to “fuck up” – I’ll do overtime today overhearing my colleagues – My word against theirs – They want to play games, I’ll do OT to cover

Other people heard it

SM when people call in sick, my job is to follow on it – Please don’t make assumption because you don’t know – I’m the manager

BV I agree

SM This needs to be stopped – After your hols the 1st thing you said is look other people

BV this was the 1st time you told me to stop and I stopped

SM I’m not always here we need to behave – I don’t want people to complain about this and that

BV I take on board and agree 100% Once I said to you privately in Dutch – I will follow the rule

SM I’m your manager – Come to me with your concerns – I will do my best to solve

BV My experience over some time – We’re all under pressure – Less experienced people

– other have to learn. I felt a big amount of pressure on the job – I also see pressure with you ♦ You’re stressed and you react stressed – eg. Poker case I had to check in the

MOSS I was very focused and you came and I felt that you were annoyed that I was not giving you attention – It was unpleasant the way you spoke to me – If something is wrong between 2 people – a bit of an issue – I think you’re looking for a fight with me – better if you said “when you finish your chat let’s talk about this case” You were arguing about something but we were both agreeing on – Maybe you are too straight to the point.

I lost the chat in the end. I try to do my job, I explain to you but at that moment we wasted 10 min about something we agreed about. I am stressed, you are stressed. We have to be careful with each other. I’ll be scared to come and talk to you

SM you don’t need to be scared about me – I was not stressed, I came earlier that day –

Another concern I have is when I ask you to do something you do not follow- I told you check with Lizanne for example – I was trying to explain that but you were not listening to me – as said, I’ll take your feedback on board – There is no fight – I’m focused on my work of course I have other things to work on but if I tell you to do something for your own benefit

BV If I feel at a certain moment – only 1 break, on my own for 4 hour – I worked on calibration project – If you sit there and I tell you let me switch the chat and you didn’t want. I’m focusing on my chats and I have to listen to you- If I sit alone for 4hours, I can’t

switch off my chat and go see Lizanne. James was angry because he's team was not on the chat – I couldn't really disconnect from chat – Next time can I ask you pls give me 10 min to finish my chats

SM Of course you can do it. I came to see how you were doing – I saw that you had the poker question open and I wanted to know how you were doing – I told you to speak to Lizanne

BV I never said that – I have a missing link in the poker training., It's annoying me because I cannot deal with difficult cases

SM I'll get back to you later we will see how you can catch up on it– I can't check the tool now. You will feel more comfortable

BV talking again about and for the 3rd time – I made my point, you made your point I know I should take my breaks but if I'm not tired – you took me at the wrong moment, was trying not to make mistake – pls let's not get in the arguing thing – I felt like whatever I say you accuse me of being stubborn. You are my boss, I'll listen to you –I ask question doesn't mean that I don't want to listen but I'm just trying to understand – It'd be interesting if you were telling – military style order – yes captain. I feel insulted Keep peace in the team. If I was stubborn. Eg. Evaluation meeting. 1 of the 1st one – good result – ok Bart we have dates for Belgians and different for Dutch & ROIW ♦ Even before the meeting I started doing that – Completely ridiculous to be down scored for that – I always keep doing it because it's not logical to me – If I totally disagree with something I still do it. I am not stubborn- I'm a strong minded person

SM I never said that word to you – Of course we see things differently – If I ask you to do something you should take the ownership

I want to come back to you being stressed – I suggest for you to take your breaks so you feel more comfortable – so you blow away to tension

BV OK

SM Back to my expectations –Please listen to me when I ask you to do something eg. You've been working 8-4. When I came at 12 you told me you didn't do the workload so I asked you to do it and you refused and said I'm going to ask JL. I told you know what you need to do.

Workload suggestion – some notes were not done – attachments – we need to think about – I gave suggestions

BV 2 points – Workload issue, you said Bart you should do it at 8am, it's better like this. I said I don't get why we should do it – but now and for the rest of the week I've been doing

it – Even if I didn't understand I've done it. I told you. Susana I have purposely not done it because I'm on my own for 4 hours I was dealing with all priority. I want to be a nice guy today, when JL comes in I will ask him what he wants to do to work and team effort. I didn't know how the inbox would be at 12. I tried to work with JL, It was a very good intention. I told you and you build a wall

SM Can I talk please

Bart I had good intention

SM It's a good intention but it's not what you told me – Don't put words that I never say – I came at 12 and you told me I didn't do it because I was very busy – then please do it now that you are not busy

BV but I did it

SM yes you did it but you keep second guessing

BV how can I 2nd guess – If something feels wrong to me I will investigate

SM yes but instead of talking about other case – it's good idea to collaborate with JL but you didn't tell me that

BV because I couldn't tell you

SM good team spirit is what I want but when I ask you to do WL when you only have 1 chat – I tell you once and no need to 2nd guess – I never said what you just said –

BV It is possible to do it. At 8am today I sent it - Priority for me was very clear – Maybe there was no chat

SM Doing the WL is team work and need to be done. People starting at 8 have this responsibility

If you're very busy you can do it later – but don't tell me it was too busy

Other things – more ownership of cases. More training needed? Eg. Gert AM and things have changed we shouldn't transfer to him. If it's not about bonus fast withdraw we need to take care of it. But you were not sure and you escalated to him

BV I was probably on a skype with it – I asked Gert what he would do with it. He told me to send it to him and then he changed his mind and sent it back – I thought it was about GWG

SM no it was a request from risk about documents to be sent – very common question

BV In that case, it was RG red and not in Preport – I thought how can this person be asked for verification but he's RG closed – what's this? comment about payment – we can't do that if he's RG closed – Pls Gert have a look

SM But you should have asked Risk – Ownership – take the case and take care of it.

Do you need additional training?

BV Bart no apart from Poker training. I'm happy to do the poker training on a day off – very eager to do poker training. It pains me not to be able to do it – It's difficult for me, don't want to leave EN chats

SM I will take care of it and you will be informed

BV about ownership – case comes from risk, I can send it back – If I see there is an issue that a user is asked for his docs he might not like that – I take the ownership – I try to see it from a different angle – I had to ask Gert – Explain why he did that, personally what do you think – I want that contact best CX is to see what's best solution- I lost a contact to make sure

SM You didn't lose. You know it's a valuable customer. Risk knows it – why do we ask people for more information – we have security checks that need to be done – if they registered they need to comply – If risk ask for an info, it's because we need it

BV 100% agreed

SM What I want from you is to be collaborative –

BV You didn't use the word collaborative before

But if I see something that is incomplete or wrong it's part of my job to improve

SM I agree but if I have done the investigation and tell you it should be like this and you 2nd guess – Most appropriate – Of course if it's wrong I'll take full responsibility

VIP week-end bronze players should not be escalated

BV VIP list

SM Why did you put them in the list? Info from 19.01

BV Have not seen it

SM that's fine

BV You will never see them again but in general 3 people my colleagues could have told me I shouldn't do it.

SM Last point is professionalism

BV well that the 1st time

SM We all need to work

BV I told you at the 1st point that you told me and I didn't do it again

I'm very interested to look elsewhere in the company, maybe this week, next week, 6 months I won't take the 1st thing that comes – I would hope to get an environment where I can be happy

We have 2 jobs going to VIP soon it can be an improvement –

SM again your' making assumption

BV pls I try to bring my message – I look at it from the distance. Most important at the moment you and I are not good. Everything that is said we are fighting – why is this – there is no need for it – pls let's not fight

Can we please find a way not to do that?

SM If you had this impression apologise, not my intention

BV I know don't worry

SM this was about investigation - I'll keep an eye on the situation

BV Question: by coincidence on Sunday I'm with EN I'm happy there. Is that for you a problem that I do that? I can understand that you don't want

SM Of course when you're alone yes. But if the teams comes when you are there. I need you in my team. It would be nice that you sit with us. You belong to my team

BV I'm happy with EN but I'll sit with the team from now on

SM About taking feedback on board. It need to be also from your side.

BV Tomorrow I'll sit until 12 and change sit.

184. I did not read the minutes of the meeting taken by Samira Mouhayar for a few days. There was no urgency involved and I was trying to distract myself as much as possible from the bad experiences at work. This did not go well as the cumulative effect of the bullying and the length of time it had been going on now made it impossible for me to forget them. When I finally read the minutes, I was tremendously shocked to see that Samira Mouhayar had well documented Susana Martin's attacks but hardly any of my defences and answers. The document was very one-sided and this could only have been done by Samira Mouhayar to cover up for Susana Martin and make me look bad. I started to write a list of my replies to the different issues covered during the meeting which had been missed or obviously not written. This took a long time as having to work on my reply email mentally exhausted me as I had to relive the bad episodes again. After writing bits and pieces as notes or bullet points over more than a week, the email with my reply to the minutes received on 23rd March 2018 was finished. My strong suspicions that my management could not be trusted and they broke every bit of confidence were confirmed in writing now. Only on 6th April 2018 did I send this email to Danielle Wood, Emma Horwood and Noemie Levy at HR. The reason I did not send it sooner was that I was still awaiting the answer on my application for the Business Analyst vacancy. In case I got that

job, I had decided never to send the email as I did not want to create a fuss with my customer service ex-managers with whom I was supposed to be in touch now and then in the future, collaborating with them as a Business Analyst. The email had become a full blast attack on Susana Martin, which was unplanned, and was for the first time documenting the full extent of the different types of troubles Susana Martin was creating for me and the rest of the team. I wanted to show HR how bad the situation was in the hope that they would finally wake up from their lethargy and start doing something to stop the bullying.

185. On 29th March 2018 Dr Fitzpatrick wrote me a further extension sick note for "stress related anxiety" to cover me until the 10th April 2018. I handed in the sick note at HR the same day. At the request of HR I also called the customer service office number to inform the available shift supervisors about my further sick leave extension. While I was at HR, I also asked Noemie Levy for an update regarding the Business Analyst job and she said that she expected an answer soon. Again HR was not able to inform me about the bullying investigation and I really started to doubt that such an investigation was going on. It was now two months after the team meeting that ended in shouting and chaos and still there was no conclusion? The impression they gave me was that it was actually a nuisance that I asked about the investigation. It looked like they were just sitting and waiting for the problem to go away so it could be brushed under the carpet. I now started to seriously suspect them of thinking that maybe I was the problem. If the victim of the bullying would go away, then also the bullying would disappear. I was heavily distressed by this thought as it indeed explained perfectly why no action was taken by the management and HR to stop the bullying.

186. Later that same day 29th March 2018 Emma Horwood from HR confirmed via e-mail that my sick note had been received. To my dismay she also wrote that in total 18 days of my sick leave would be paid half. I was aware about the limitations of full pay in case of sick leave but in my opinion this should not have been the case for me as the cause of my sickness was the company's lack of action to stop people from bullying me. I would have accepted this pay reduction if I had been sick because of negligence on my side but I found it very unfair that it was the company's fault that I became sick and still they wanted

to reduce my pay. I also felt, after the disappointing way I was treated by HR that morning, that they were using the reduction in pay to try to force me back to work but without any measures being taken to improve my work environment. This email from Emma Horwood showed that there was no empathy for my suffering at HR. Maybe they believed that I was faking my sickness or something like that. Again I had that feeling that they were just waiting for the problem to go away, me leaving the company seemed to be an option that was OK for them. In any case till then absolutely nothing had been done to effectively stop the bullying.

187. The email I received from Emma Horwood:

Hi Bart,

Thank you for dropping your medical certificate in to HR today.

I wanted to drop you an email to let you know of the payroll implications for April.

As you know, Statutory Sick Pay is paid at 10 days full pay, 20 days half pay and then onto zero pay in any 12 month rolling period. Your absence for the period 12th to 19th March was processed in March payroll and of the 6 days absent from work, 3 of those were processed at half pay as you have exhausted your full pay allowance.

*Your absence for the period 20th March to 9th April will be processed at half pay. On checking your rota, this is a total of 15 days and as such the deduction stands at £576.92 (day rate of £76.92 * 15 * 0.5).*

Should you have any questions in this regard, please feel free to contact me.

Kind regards,

Emma

188. On 3rd April 2018 I sent another reminder email to Stefan Kalcher for the Business Analyst role I had applied for on 13th February 2018, over a month and a half ago. On 6th April 2018 I also sent a reminder e-mail to Noemie Levy. This application was going on for a long time now, much longer than originally indicated as initially there seemed to be some hurry. This delay worried me as more and more people were leaving the Dutch/Flemish team and I would soon have become the only experienced person still around in that team. My fear was that the management and HR were scheming behind my back to find a way to keep me in the team to train the new people that inevitably would be needed. Such a

scheme would mean that I would be stuck for at least another half a year at customer service and with the Camp Two bullies and my team leader bully. That was something that worried me tremendously and it was keeping me awake at night. The possibility of more bullying to come started to take over my life. Although I tried to clear my mind with voluntary work in the Nature Reserve, as Dr Fitzpatrick had advised me to keep doing, I had started to drink significantly more alcohol to help me fall asleep without having nightmares.

189. Later that day 6th April 2018 Noemie Levy informed me via email that I had not been successful with the Business Analyst role. The reason given was that Stefan Kalcher and Noemie Levy did not feel that my technical level was sufficient. It surprised me that Noemie Levy wrote "we feel..." as she definitely did not have the technical knowledge to understand how good or bad my level actually was. The statement was also in contradiction with her initial remark that they were open to someone quite junior for the job, this meant that they understood that a lot of the knowledge could be learned on the job. That perfectly fitted my profile. It also contradicted the initial enthusiasm from Stefan Kalcher that led to the forty-five minute video interview. This email was followed up by a few more about the reasons for not getting the job. I was actually never given a real reason why I didn't get the job, it looked much more like a list of vague excuses and a fobbing off exercise.

190. The email that Noemie Levy sent me:

Hi Bart

I discussed with Stefan and we feel you are not at the level required technically ,

You can contact Stefan directly for more details

Best regards

Noemie

191. My email to Stefan Kalcher:

Hi Stefan,

Noemie informed me that the BA role is not for me as you think that I don't fulfil the technical requirements. She said that I could contact you directly for a better explanation

of the reasons.

Thanks and best regards,

Bart

192. Stefan Kalcher's reply via email:

Hey Bart,

It wasn't only the technical requirements

Thanks

Stefan

193. I was absolutely flabbergasted by this reply from Stefan Kalcher. This was not a reply at all. He did not explain how I did fail for the technical requirements or what exactly were his reasons for thinking that I did not have the necessary knowledge or the lack of possibility for me to learn what I was missing. This email felt as if Stefan Kalcher was embarrassed with the real reason for not giving me the job and he was trying to fob me off with some general comment that could be interpreted in many different ways. After all, I was only asked to do a test after a successful video interview in which my technical skills and experience were discussed at length. The test itself went well apart from the Excel question but that had been pointed out already during the video interview and had not been a problem at that moment. I decided to send Stefan Kalcher another email asking for a better explanation.

194. My further reply to Stefan Kalcher's email:

Thanks Stefan for the reply.

I am actually baffled by your statement as I don't know or understand what the meaning of it is, can you please elaborate?

Thanks and best regards,

Bart

195. The further reply Stefan Kalcher sent me a few days later:

Hey Bart,

test revealed that you have not required skills to support as I would expect it, i.e. easy path to answers have been chosen

presentation skills suboptimal

thanks

Stefan

196. This latest email from Stefan Kalcher continued to be very vague. He did not say which of the required skills exactly was the reason for his worries. His statement “easy path to answers have been chosen” was something I did not understand at all. That my presentation skills (Excel) were suboptimal at that moment was correct but that had been discussed during the video interview and did not create a problem then. I found the content of this email nonsensical as no real information was given that I could reply to or clarify that maybe Stefan Kalcher had made an interpretation mistake. It was clear by now that I would not be offered the job and I would continue to be fobbed off with general excuses and no to the point answers on my questions would be given.

197. Having worked as a programmer, database administrator and systems engineer for years, I knew from experience that these tech people communicate very to the point. Stefan Kalcher now only replied in generalities, what was not the normal way of communicating between techies. We had done the techies talk during the video interview so I knew that we had spoken as techies before. It sounded like Stefan Kalcher was under instructions or pressure from someone to fob me off and he was not very good at it. As I felt I would not get any better or clearer replies I decided to leave it at that and not anger Stefan Kalcher by continuing to push for further explanations which he did not seem to want to give. I guessed my best option was to have a chat with Noemie Levy one day and see what she would come up with. To make sure for myself that I had not become insane and was seeing things that were not there, I showed the emails to some good friends and asked them for their interpretation. They all came to the same conclusion as me: I was being fobbed off. It is tale telling for my diminished self-esteem and self-confidence that I had to ask others for advice for fear that I might have become mad. I was also scared that my alcohol consumption was starting to impede my brain from functioning properly but that

did not seem the case then as my friends came to the same conclusions. I met Noemie Levy once later and she tried not to look at me and behaved like a guilty person who was ashamed of what she had done. That was definitely not the same enthusiastic behaviour she had shown before and it confirmed my suspicion that there was another reason for not giving me the Business Analyst job.

198. On 6th April 2018 I sent a very lengthy e-mail to Danielle Wood, Emma Horwood and Noemie Levy at HR in which I denounced the minutes of the 8th March 2018 meeting with Susana Martin and Samira Mouhayar taking minutes, the meeting I felt was set up as a trap. I explained in detail that Susana Martin's false accusations were very well represented but most of my defences/replies, showing that Susana Martin's accusations were false, were omitted from the minutes. I had worked on this email for over a week. It had started as some simple notes, mere bullet points, to analyse the minutes and the positives and negatives of it. I wanted to make clear for myself that I was indeed correct that there was something wrong with those minutes. Again I doubted my own perception and was trying to find out if I was seeing things that were simply not there. After an initial list of positives and negatives, I saw that the negatives were in much higher quantities than the positives and this alarmed me a lot. I started to make additional notes on how the negatives had to be interpreted. After several days of writing and thinking and rewriting I ended up with a full analysis that convinced me that I was not wrong and that the minutes were indeed a very unfair reflection of the real meeting. Samira Mouhayar was now very clearly abusing her position to misrepresent my version to cover up for Susana Martin. After a lot more thinking, I understood that my days in the company were coming to an end. My only option and last hope was to send my analysis and report to HR. Hopefully this would be a wake up call for HR and they would finally start to take my complaints seriously.

199. The email I sent to HR:

Dear Emma, Danielle, Noemie,

Apologies to address this e-mail to all 3 of you as I don't know who's on holiday or not at the moment. In this e-mail I wish to explain the reasons that caused me to become sick for the last few weeks. I find it my duty to inform you about this to prevent the same from

happening again to me or my colleagues.

As a matter of principle I normally never criticise my managers, it doesn't go with the education my parents gave me and I have never felt it right to do. In this case though I have decided after weeks of careful consideration that I have no other option but to condemn my direct management's behaviour that has directly led to me being sick for a prolonged time. Let me elaborate and please take the time to read my report.

On 08.03.2018 I went to a meeting with my team leader Susana and in the presence of department manager Samira who declared she was only there to take the minutes of the meeting. When I got the invitation for this hour long meeting, I asked Susana via e-mail what the agenda of the meeting was so I could prepare for any questions. On 06.03.2018 Susana replied via e-mail: "You do not need to prepare for this meeting. It is about general team atmosphere and expectations".

To my utter astonishment this meeting turned out to be a full blast attack by Susana on my person and everything was done for character assassination of my person in front of Samira. This meeting was obviously set up as a trap and for me to go unprepared and without elaborated defence. My team leader was clearly on a revenge mission and for a very long hour I had to hear over and over again that "I am stubborn, I don't respect management decisions, I'm not flexible and I'm unprofessional". I was utterly shocked and upset that I was told "no need to prepare for the meeting" but then had to go on a very profound defence of my own good name and character and that in front of my manager what I found very humiliating.

My already huge shock became deep desperation when I asked Danielle for the minutes of that meeting only to find out that Samira's report is incomplete, important parts of my defence against Susana's very serious accusations are not in the notes and other things do not reflect what I said. I can only conclude that Samira is trying to cover up Susana's incompetence and total lack of leadership capabilities. I am surprised that no one has noticed that over the last two years Susana has succeeded in losing 100% of her personnel and that this percentage is way above that of the other language teams in CS where this exceptionally high turnover of personnel is NOT happening. I wish to add here that I have zero ambition to become team leader myself and for further reference of how I see my future in GVC I can refer to Noemie with whom I had a frank and open meeting about how and where I prefer to go with my talents within this company.

I also wish to point out that I am still convinced that GVC is a great company and the one I'd preferentially work for for many years to come. I keep noticing the motivational slogans

in the HR office and in talks to HR personnel I can hear a genuine desire to make GVC a company where people are happy to work. What I don't understand is why these motivating practices are not practised in my own CS team where victimisation and punishment are the rule, terrorising me in such a way that I had to go to see a doctor who diagnosed me with "stress related anxiety" for the very first time in my life. I am shocked by this and even more shocked as I hear similar stories from (ex-)colleagues. Why has it been allowed that this is going on for years?

A first discrepancy between Samira's minutes and what I actually said is that in the minutes it is written that I was "criticising my team leader" in front of colleagues in my team. What I really said is that in astonishment to my monthly evaluation score being lower than Dennis' (whom Susana found stupid and lazy) I expressed my shock and some colleagues interpreted that as criticism. That I mention my surprise about facts and figures is something entirely different than actually criticising the person who made the bad evaluation. I repeated this twice during the meeting and as such Samira's wrong wording of this is surprising and worrying. As I said before: it is not my style to criticise my managers. The fact that I got a first bad evaluation after I had informed my team leader that I had a chat with HR about other jobs in the company (after Stef had announced he got a job at traders) was actually what other team members had predicted would happen. To my utter astonishment my team leader took it personal that I had further ambitions outside CS and this resulted in bad evaluations, a revenge attitude and attacks as in the meeting of 08.03.2018. And this was exactly what my colleagues had predicted would happen to me. Motivation is a key element of leadership but this is obviously totally lacking here even leading to sickness in my case.

Susana also brought up that I informed her about the by me overheard discussion between 2 team members to call in sick in turns. Her reply was, as correctly noted by Samira: "I don't want people to complain about this and that". My simple attempt to bring to my direct management's attention a plan that could lead to a service breakdown for our customers was snuffed out immediately. I only thought I was doing my duty and doing the right thing for the company and our customers. This was actually what I was taught to do during the new starter's training but apparently that part of the training doesn't apply to the Dutch/Belgian team. Things eventually worked out as I had reported and after my 8am-4pm shift I came back voluntarily to cover for a zero team presence from 8pm till midnight. How I can ever be accused of being not flexible is something I really don't understand. This comes on top of another example where I worked voluntary overtime on Saturday

and Sunday from 8pm till 12pm during the Melon Madness promo disaster. I was awarded £50 of Morrisons vouchers by Samira as I was the ONLY CS employee out of about 70 people who volunteered to do overtime to help sort it out, and that was to help the English team, not even my own team. Where Susana's recent continuous claim that I am not flexible comes from is entirely unclear to me and her claim is definitely unfounded, still she keeps carrying on with it. I am by the way known to my team colleagues as the guy who made it very well known that as I have no children or other people immediately depending on me, I am very willing to take over any difficult shifts from colleagues with children, sick family etc. I have been praised by Susana for this attitude in older evaluations but not anymore, although my willingness is still exactly the same. This is not honest, not correct and detrimental for the team's morale who have all been grateful for my proven efforts in this field. Susana's unpredictable change of mind is inexplicable and one of the main demotivating false accusations I ever had to experience in my life. I have followed up on that management decision immediately though and didn't report any further incidents that could be negative for the company, our customers and share holders.

A point that in Samira's minutes is entirely lost although I pointed it out in depth and repeated it in detail so some time was spent on discussing it, is the rule to use different date formats for Belgian and Dutch customers in written communication. I will add the details of what I said here now. A few months ago Susana came up with a rule for me that dates for the Dutch had to be written as dd-mm-yyyy (dashes) and for the Belgians as dd.mm.yyyy (dots) although they are both written in the same language, Dutch. There is no rule, regulation or law in the Dutch language about dates with dashes or dots so Susana's requirement has no foundation at all. Even stranger: other team members of the Dutch/Belgian team were and are NOT required to use these different date formats and only to use the dots, as is the standard for CS in the company. Although the different date formats are in my opinion ridiculous I immediately started working according to that rule and as such this is one of my main defences that I DO respect management decisions and I am NOT stubborn even when I find the decision unreasonable, unfair, laughable or stupid. I was actually scored down on an evaluation by Susana when I made a mistake against the dots/dashes rule. A rule for me but not other team members who were NOT scored down for doing exactly the same as me. This is terribly unfair, biased, ridiculous and the fact that Samira hasn't mentioned it in her notes proves that there is something wrong here that had to be hidden to protect Susana. Apparently it doesn't matter that it makes me look bad as my defence is NOT in the minutes, just the unjustifiable attacks by

my team leader.

Another item that is only superficially mentioned in Samira's minutes is the use of military style orders on the work floor although it was discussed for some time during the meeting and I stressed I found it a very important point. For that I am surprised it is hardly mentioned in Samira's report. Because of the high number of people who left the team it is well understaffed and on more than occasion I sat alone, on 3 chats with customers.

Susana came up with a case she had worked on and asked me to send a reply to the user. I sat immediately aside her and I answered that I would do that immediately after my chats was finished. That was not to her liking and instead of writing the reply herself or escalating it to the relevant department. She kept insisting that I had to do it, sitting alone for hours and on 3 chats. When I finally finished the chats I checked the case and noticed that she had an irrelevant case from another user coupled to it. After my own investigation I sent a reply to the user, after consultation with his account manager who wrote that I had sent the perfect reply. Susana was very angry about this and almost shouted "you have to do it this way because I tell you so". I am very sorry but during my training I was taught to always double check cases you take over from someone else. If my team leader makes a wrong conclusion and I find out, she stills wants me to send the user an e-mail with incorrect information as per her military orders. This is a disservice to the customer and would lead to further and more angry communication and potentially using a VIP customer. My team leader simply refuses to see the bigger picture.

Another case is mentioned in Samira's report but with important details missing, e.g. that a customer did deposits of more than 10.000 Euro in a single day and that other similar deposits happened in the past, making this a VIP user with Gert Merlen as account manager. The high deposits triggered a question from Risk and I noticed in the user's data "Red Responsible Gaming" indicated in CSM but not in Preports what was unusual and confusing so I wanted a second opinion from his account manager. This whole part of the discussion is not reported in the minutes although it was ongoing for several minutes. Risk asked some basic identification questions (not documents as Susana said and as reported in the minute, showing she didn't investigate this case properly) for this customer. This note from Risk is NOT a common question (unlike is mentioned in the minutes) as not many users try to deposit 10.000 Euro or more in a day. It is actually the only one I ever found after having dealt with thousands of cases. I was very well aware of the changed rules re basic contact but seeing the high value of this customer for our company decided to contact his account manager to ask advice, knowing that his account manager has a

much more personal contact level. What I definitely wanted to omit was send this high value VIP user a standard e-mail that might offend him. The minutes mention: "I was probably on a skype with it – I asked Gert what he would do with it. He told me to send it to him". This is not a correct version of what I said. I DEFINITELY (not probably) had a Skype chat with Gert, a conversation that was automatically saved in my Outlook inbox. Again I try to go the extra mile for this high value customer that we definitely don't want to upset. The minutes on this part finish with Susana saying: "But you should have asked Risk – Ownership – take the case and take care of it". As Risk's instructions were simply worded and very clear and no misunderstanding was possible, I TOOK full ownership of the case by contacting the account manager for this valued customer. This customer pays for a lot of wages and for share holders revenue. Again Susana didn't see the bigger picture, didn't think out of the box... Instead she prefers to misrepresent this case to try to make me look me bad and unprofessional in front of Samira. Another show of utter lack of leadership skills.

Next issue mentioned by Samira in the minutes is Susana's accusation that I am not collaborative. Again a whole unfolding discussion that is NOT reflected in the minutes. She was mixing up 2 unrelated cases of different users. I cannot just escalate a case to another department without a reason to escalate it. My team leader was mistaken on this one re a pop up screen problem that was solved 3 weeks earlier. The user is a known bonus beggar and the solution I provided was in consultation and with praise of his account manager. Again an example that Susana doesn't know what she's doing and then gets angry when it's not done her way, the wrong way. This kind of poor judgement is detrimental for the morale in the team and an important reason for people to leave. Total lack of professionalism and poor management skills from my team leader proven again. Another issue brought up during this same meeting was the accusation that I hadn't prepared the daily workload for the Dutch/Belgian team at 8am, when I started my shift, but had on purpose planned to do it at 12am when José Luis would come in, as well as Susana. The logic behind my thinking was that I personally knew perfectly well what the VIP customer priorities are and as I sat entirely alone for the first 4 hours of the day it was not needed to sent myself a list of already known priorities. I on purpose waited till the colleagues arrived to discuss with them the workload and the best way to divide the work. I informed Susana of that intent immediately at her arrival at noon. This led to another mad attack on me for not respecting management decisions etc. This was done in front of my colleagues and was clearly done to humiliate me. I was left no opportunity to explain

myself and stress that this was an effort from my side to show an open mind and goodwill towards my colleague José Luis with whom I had till then a very difficult relationship. This was to show him with acts that I was prepared to leave the past behind and start anew. My team leader's hysterical response unfortunately destroyed that good intention. She failed though to explain me how I can make a workload sharing plan at 8am in the morning (sitting alone) not knowing how much the workload would be 4 hours later. It shows again that Susana has no clue what she is doing and has a superbly childish attitude when she feels her military style orders are not obeyed. The same shift roster applied for the rest of the week and I dutifully wrote a workload for the team at 8am every morning, fully showing that I did comply with that management decision, contrary to her claims in the meeting that I didn't do that. It is interesting to notice that Susana herself shortly afterwards abolished the requirement to do a daily workload and started to send out a weekly workload for the team. How she can work out on Monday morning what the workload will be on Friday evening or Sunday morning is unclear to me and in my opinion shows again she is entirely incompetent for her current management position.

The meeting ends with me literally BEGGING Susana to stop her unprovoked arguing, fighting, bullying, etc. This is fortunately mentioned in the minutes although quite flawed and not reflecting my desperation.

Having ended my evaluation of the, as you must have understood by now, very one sided, biased and shockingly incomplete minutes of the 08.03.2018 meeting, I wish to continue to explain a few other events and incidents that happened and are still happening in the Dutch/Belgian team that have affected my team over the last 2 years (long before I started at GVC), continue to affect my team today and will affect the team in the future if not properly remedied.

I first wish to point out though that one of the main reasons why I fell sick was my team leader's childish game of trying to use my holiday requests to manipulate me or punish me. By only awarding me 3 days off in the first 3 months of 2018 I had no ability to reload my batteries and this caused my stress levels to soar as I had no way to escape my team leader's bullying for some time. I had explained Susana that I had friends coming over for a visit but she never wanted to respect my request. Luckily in the end my friends' visit was first postponed and then cancelled so that problem didn't happen at the end although it caused me a tremendous amount of frustration and didn't help anything re my health status. I find it very unprofessional that a team leader tries to blackmail you by keeping you hostage with your holidays.

Susana's use of statistics like SLA, number of contacts etc. entirely fails to incorporate that there are human beings behind those numbers. This led in the past to a lot of frustration with team members as she doesn't see the bigger picture and keeps pushing for higher numbers to an already heavily overloaded and understaffed team. This doesn't keep in mind the loss of quality of the work what means less happy customers and more stressed personnel. She simply doesn't have in mind that our customers pay our wages and the profits they generate keep our company's share holders happy. She should focus much more on putting the customer in the centre of her attention instead of slamming more and more statistics around the team members' ears. This is a general and constantly returning complaint in the team that I don't hear in the other languages CS teams.

The whole bullying problem (by more experienced team members) that I initially encountered when I started at GVC should have been tackled immediately by Susana but instead she went in hiding in her corner in the office. She seemed to be quite happy to sit there chatting with team member Martijn while around her the team was falling apart.

From the very beginning the people who became the bullies warned me about Susana's lack of professionalism, her abuse of evaluation reports to punish you, etc. Exactly the same complaints I have now that made me sick. As I stood up to defend my team leader, as I always respect my managers, this was the reason for the start of the bullying. Susana should have stopped that immediately but didn't. The result is there for all to see: over the last 2 years she lost 100% of her team members what must amount to a tremendous cost for the company. Why doesn't this ring any alarm bells?

Susana's total lack of leadership skills and professionalism is shown above all when, still being married, she started an amorous relationship with Martijn, a member of the team she was leading at that moment. The cosy snuggling up together, the extended lunch breaks together, the secrecy involving their relationship at work and with a subordinate can in no way be seen as a professional attitude. This was already ongoing before I started at GVC and had created 2 camps in the team: Martijn and Susana against Yousri, Sabir, Hamid and José Luis. The fact that I chose to respect my team leader put me automatically in the "wrong camp" for the bullies. What I do not understand is why this situation has been allowed to evolve and escalate to the total destruction of the Dutch/Belgian team. It definitely is not acceptable that my team leader's extramarital sex life should have become so disastrous in my job that at the end I even became sick. This situation is actually ongoing although Martijn is now at VIP but still sharing the same office space with Susana. Martijn is still being seen in e-mails in our team's mail boxes that

definitely don't fall under his VIP responsibility. On several occasions Susana asked me to do evaluations of my team colleagues' work for more complicated cases that she doesn't understand herself. In the same way Martijn has been checking some of my more complicated cases what makes it look like someone who is not my team leader (even from a totally different department) is doing my evaluations. This is creating unrest in the team. Martijn is still very protective re Susana and sometimes making bad comments when he thinks I am against her as team leader. This is not acceptable at all in a professional environment.

After all these experiences I can only conclude that in the 30 years that I work for companies, I have never found such a total lack of professionalism, covering up of mistakes, serious attitude problems and incompetence as I have to suffer in my present job. I have discussed this on several occasions with Samira who simply replied that if I didn't like it here, I could go, pointing at the door. This is another strong indication that she is covering up for Susana and partly explains the 100% loss of personnel in the last 2 years. Whatever proof or facts and figures I come up with, Samira dismisses them immediately as "assumptions and perceptions". This obviously does nothing to solve the problem and only makes it worse. Very nice to see all the motivating slogans in the HR office when the reality for me is exactly the opposite of those slogans...

My present situation at this moment is simply dramatic. Whatever way I decide, I will lose. If I go back to work after my sick leave, Susana's bullying will start again immediately as she now found out that she's getting away with it. This will lead to me becoming sick again and lose more income. If I leave the company myself then I will lose my right of unemployment benefits. Whatever way, I always lose. This is destroying the quality of my life entirely and e.g. leads to nightmares that are a result of my stress related anxiety.

The sadistic "return from sickness" procedure now will require me to meet Susana as team leader, the bully, to explain her that the cause of my sickness was her bullying. This is simply immoral and bad practice. I am actually scared to talk to Susana after all I had to go through as she will abuse her position again to manipulate me, blackmail me, try to present me as an unprofessional employee just to keep her own unprofessionalism out of the picture.

Potential solutions I see are my transfer to another team in CS or another department in the company. The loss of income I already suffered because of the company's total mismanagement should be compensated as a goodwill gesture, after all I have been working for weeks on this report during my sick leave. In no way can it be allowed that my

simple information request for a different job in the same company results immediately in severe repercussions and punishments as bad evaluations, denied holiday requests, tough bullying and disastrous effects on my health and quality of life. This is gross misconduct on a scale never seen before in my life.

As said at the beginning of my e-mail: it is my duty to my colleagues, my department, my management, our share holders and our customers to report this situation as it is clearly detrimental for all. I really hope that my courage to stand up will not lead to me getting fired. I hope HR will find a solution before Tuesday 10.04.2018 at 8am when I will present myself for work again with my team leader arriving an hour later. I am willing to take a few days of holidays if HR needs more time to find a proper solution for this terrible dreadful festering disaster. I am willing to come into the HR office on Monday to discuss this further, should the need arise.

Thanks for reading this and best regards,

Bart

200. The Dutch/Flemish team was down now to three people; me, Kieran Vandenhoeck (still learning) and Jalila Kessissa (recently started). On 9th April 2018 there was again a new starter in the team, Kevin Goutier. This would put a further strain on the team resources as quite a lot of time had to be spent on shadowing him. Susana Martin was of no use for this as she did not know the softwares and products properly. As we started initially with eight people and now the same amount of work had to be done by one full and two halve personnel, it was astonishing that HR still had no idea that there was some major problem in the team. I knew that several team members had repeatedly complained to HR about Susana Martin's incompetence as a team leader, and now I finally had done the same with my long email.

201. On 9th April 2018 Danielle Wood replied to my long email (sent on 6th April 2018) with complaints about Susana Martin and the meeting minutes taken by Samira Mouhayar. Somehow it seemed that Danielle Wood for the first time took my complaints seriously as she agreed that there was some urgency in having a meeting. On the other hand Danielle Wood still expected me to go back to my team after about a month of "stress related anxiety" sick leave caused by the bullying and all the examples of problems I had

explained in my email and during the face to face chats with Danielle Wood and others in HR during my sick leave. I definitely did not want to return to the toxic atmosphere in my work environment so without doubt took the option to have the meeting that same day. I definitely wanted to meet with HR before I had to return to work the following day. I feared that returning to Susana Martin's team without any guarantees would make me collapse again, leading to further sick leave and, I feared, most probably the end of my employment with GVC.

202. The email from Danielle Wood:

Bart, as you probably saw I have been on leave.

I have looked at my diary today and tomorrow and the only slots I have to hold a meeting with you is either 4.00pm today or 4.00pm tomorrow. When we meet I will look at the return to work and also next steps in relation to your email below. I wanted to give you the choice as to what works best for you.

If you choose tomorrow then I will let Susanna know to hold off doing the return to work interview with you.

Let me know what your preference is.

Danielle Wood

203. My reply to Danielle Wood:

Hi Danielle,

I think the best option is to do the meeting today at 4pm. As such everything can be cleared out before I go back to work tomorrow what will prevent further escalations.

Please confirm the date/time.

Bart

204. On 9th April 2018 at 16h00 I had an hour long meeting with Danielle Wood from HR regarding the bullying complaints I had voiced before. The meeting minutes were taken by Emma Horwood from HR but she now and then interacted and participated in the meeting. This meeting was the start of a formal investigation process. The reason for the meeting was described as: "Return to work, sickness, accusation of bullying". During this meeting I

reminded them that this was not only about Susana Martin's bullying me but also the eleven months of ongoing bullying by the Camp Two colleagues. During the meeting they tried several times to minimise my complaints and to convince me that it was a problem with Susana Martin. Actually not even that, it was just an allegation, they said. I replied several times that it was a problem ongoing for eleven months. They seemed to try to minimise the problem all the time. I mentioned the Gibraltar Bullying at Work Act during the meeting. I pointed out that I was not myself during the meeting, making clear that there were still ongoing mental health issues. I also pointed out that if I had to go back to Susana Martin the following day, I most probably would collapse again resulting in further sick leave for mental health reasons. I also pointed out that the Camp Two bullying was ongoing although they suggested it had stopped or improved. Still Danielle Wood tried to downplay everything and continued to repeat that I had to go back to my team. I became desperate with their attempts to make me go back to the bullies without solution and I therefore offered to take up annual leave so as not to have to return to Susana Martin and the Camp Two bullies immediately. To my surprise that offer was accepted so somehow they must have agreed that my problems were serious enough and they had accepted that going back would cause me further mental health problems.

205. On 10th April 2018 HR sends the minutes of the meeting: "Susana cause of your distress" ... "Can I point out one thing, I started out in May last year with a lot of illusions and hopes, almost every single day since I started working, I've been bullied, if not by team leader then people in the team, 11 months" ... "Are you aware of the Bullying act here in Gibraltar?" ... After reading the minutes, I came to the conclusion that the whole meeting had been a waste of time. HR was pushing me to go back to my team but without any solution provided. At least I was on annual leave now, so I could escape the bullying for a few more days.

206. The minutes of the meeting between me (BVT) and Danielle Wood (DW):
DW Read your email, thought it would be good to have a chat, Susana cause of your distress, concerned about the RTW and how that would happen, so thought we could start by us having a chat, Emma taking notes, one thing to say, Emma not typing down all notes, just the key points. I'm going to start with the return to work interview, good starting

point

BVT Can I point out one thing, I started out in May last year with a lot of illusions and hopes, almost every single day since I started working, I've been bullied, if not by team leader then people in the team, 11 months DW Which Is why we are here today to go through it all and then we can see where we go from here Danielle goes through the RTW form, she covers the email sent by EH regarding number of days absent and deduction from payroll

BVT Are you aware of the Bullying act here in Gibraltar? I do not accept this

DW Not been investigated and hasn't been proven, at the moment its an allegation

BVT 11 months of allegation

DW We need to go through the proper process which I'm supporting you with now, I am going to support you through. Just let me go through this form with you.

BVT Sorry to interrupt, I am not myself at the moment, I'm normally an easy going guy, glass half full but this has just taken it out of me

DW We are here to try to help you.

DW From this particular instance of sickness, total of 15 days, stress related anxiety, your email outlines some of the reasons you feel that your absence is related to the work place, a lot of it aimed at Susana Martin, I'm acknowledging that I understand what you are saying

BVT Okay, do you acknowledge that it was hard for me to write, thinking over months, aware how difficult its been for me

DW Yes I am, trying to help you move forward first. I have to go through this form okay (refers to RTW)

BVT Yes I understand

DW No recommendations on these doctors notes

BVT Recommendations for what?

DW If you go to Dr, let's say you hurt your back, Dr says this person will struggle to sit at their desk, they will have physio, might say don't sit for full day, get up every 30 mins, walk around etc, Drs put recommendations on to help the return to work. So I'm just noting the fact your notes do not have recommendations. I'm going to attach your email to the return to work so that we have full understanding of what it is. The form also asks about any form of disability we should be aware of

BVT Shakes head (indicating NO)

DW From an HR perspective I need to take it very seriously that you are alleging bullying,

I would suggest that we are at a stage where we need to determine what options are possible. I can't guarantee I wave magic wand and make it happen but what do you want to achieve

BVT When I applied for this job in this company, knowing for many years, many people I know here who are very happy, it was a fantastic opportunity to start a long term career. Chose CS as best job for a starting job in a co like this, plan for 2 years and then which direction would I like to go. That's my initial aim. The situation I am in, I'm quite convinced that my career chances are zero, will be kept on file I've been sick, hang over my head, negative mark on my file. That's why I probably waited way too long and because sick before I've said I have to report this

DW What solutions do you see?

BVT None

DW What do you want to happen then? If you can't see solutions what do you want to happen?

BVT Move departments where I don't work with bullying people. Imagine tomorrow I have to make that 8 hours working with Susanna, I'm not going to make that 8 hours, I'm going to collapse again

DW Okay lets wind back a little, when we conducted investigation, you had issues with Jose Luis and Hamid, both are now removed from the situation

BVT Hamid left, Jose Luis on 2nd May

DW So I understand that's got a bit better

BVT Only moved 10 meters away, he continues to walk in and do his shit stirring, all about Susanna, I now understand why he is frustrated about Susanna and why that hatred is so deep with him. I think it is identical story to mine

DW Not here to look at their stories, we are here to look at your situation

BVT I agree

DW These team members are now moved from your immediate environment

BVT No we still share same office space, same colleagues, same kitchen and toilet

DW But you don't have to interact with them do you?

BVT Yes I will, they are VIP managers.

DW How is your professional working relationship with Jose Luis day to day? Better?

BVT Well it's not worse, but it's not what I would call a relationship, we both acknowledge that the other exists

DW Do you behave professionally and get the job done?

BVT Yes, he is a very good worker, we may not be friends but he is a good worker

DW So the main problem at the moment is the relationship with Susanna, when we did the investigation before you were positive about her, so it's quite a huge turnabout in not too long a time

BVT It all started when I learned from Stef that he had a new job, he sent an email to me when I was off with flu, he mentions a similar thing, bad atmosphere

DW But what has changed?

BVT I said okay if Stef in such a short time got a job that's perfect for him, I'll have a chat with Noemie, Stef got a job, what is the possibilities for me, we had a good meeting, told her interested in analytics, I have 2 jobs, one with specific experience, the other may be interesting for you. She organised a telephone interview with Stefan Kalcher, we had 45 min interview. So I wanted to do things the right way and I communicated it clearly and directly with my team leader, then everything changed that specific moment

DW Okay to be clear, you believe because you were looking for another opportunity all changed

BVT Absolutely

DW What are the key things if you had to sum it up?

BVT Everything – bad evaluations, nagging and criticising, she sits next to me, “why aren't you in that email”, always on me, 4 hours challenging what I'm doing

DW Is that different to before?

BVT Yes

DW How was she before?

BVT She seems to be too soft and was unable to stop the bullies, could have done some better work with Dennis, she was always nice and okay, she would always have said please or say I would appreciate it if....

DW Do you sit somewhere different?

BVT No

DW I'm trying to work out if she couldn't your screen before, and now she can

BVT No always been able to see

DW Since you've told her that you are looking for another job she has become more critical of what you are doing and watching what you are doing?

BVT She is on a mission, maybe she thinks I make her look bad, she has been going for me, I said what the hell is going on here, I have been begging her in that meeting with Samira to say can we work together better

DW Okay, so you said you would like to work better together, what was her response?

BVT She agreed in the meeting and then the next time we worked together it was even worse – I said to Samira that attack for over an hour on my professional character.

DW Was that the time when you wanted to speak to Samira and she wasn't available, then you went home and following that you were sick?

BVT I came an hour early, I said Samira we need to talk about this, she said not available, then all of a sudden I collapsed and so I went, I couldn't do it anymore

DW So you've not had an opportunity to speak to Samira?

BVT No, I came to see you, asked for the minutes of the meeting with Susana and Samira

DW Which I sent to you

BVT So at that time when I read those minutes I thought I am entirely fucked, Samira is covering up for her

DW I'm going to stop you there, that's a bit harsh as you haven't spoken to her about the situation yet

BVT I give you my opinion that is Samira is covering up, and that's what I try to write in that email about certain things not mentioned although they were thoroughly discussed, like the dots and dashes for dates

DW We have that now

BVT But why is that not there that I am forced to follow certain rules that my colleagues do not have to follow?

DW These are things I can look at

BVT 6 or 7 examples of things that are not there – I had been talking for minutes and minutes about the VIP user but it's not all there, especially that I had made a decision with a VIP account manager, they asked me, I have that communication, it's not there, it's so important to know he had deposited 10,000 euros

DW Can I just ask one question for clarification, I don't know the procedure so you have to tell me. Did you follow the procedure or do something outside it?

BVT Procedure is, if basic things need to be done with VIP users we can do, this case was that risk asked me to double check identity with two questions, one being the ID card number, I felt uncomfortable to ask such a high level VIP about personal details and considered that his account manager who has a much more personal contact with the customer might be better placed to ask these questions compared to a standard e-mail that might look like phishing, for a lower level VIP I would have asked that person as per standard operating procedure, I would have followed the procedure to ask him As I saw he

deposited 10k and does frequently I decided to contact the guy's VIP manager, I asked myself in the moment what is the best to do? So I decided the standard wording wasn't the right thing to do, For this specific high VIP I asked a second opinion to his account manager, for other cases I could have asked Susanna or Jose Luis for a 2nd opinion, it is part of my job to sometimes think out of the box

DW But it wasn't one of them you asked for the 2nd opinion was it?

BVT No, it was the account manager

BVT Did I follow the procedure, no? According to the stand operating procedure I should have directly sent the guy the mail, but for this guy I used discretion

DW You don't have to explain anymore, just wanted to check that fact

DW We have to work out what we are going to do next, you have expressed you would like a good working relationship with Susana before, she has also stressed she would like the same with you. At the moment your solution is to be somewhere else

BVT My situation is I have entirely lost trust in Susanna because of what I've had to go through , so bad I got physically sick because of it, never had that in my life, ashamed of myself for getting sick

DW I need to work out how we move forward, she is employed as the team leader, you are employed as part of that team due to your language skills, how do we move forward?

DW She hasn't had an opportunity to reply, she doesn't know we are here today. The ideal solution is to work out a way of you two working together, that would be my starting point. If there is another role in the business, of course that would be great, at present I don't think there is a role that matched. A move to another CS team wouldn't be a long term option as you need to be in this team for language, so long term you need to resolve this with Susanna

BVT I don't see that happening. Last time I spoke to her she was very unpleasant on phone

DW I need to investigate with her, you have put all your thoughts on paper, all your issues, I've not had a chance to work through with Susanna, you are citing bullying, I need to give her a right to reply, we have to investigate. When you say you are being bullied it's an allegation, we need to look into it. Whilst we do that, I could temporarily have you be managed by someone else whilst we conduct investigation, like I said, she is your manager, you work for her team, we need to work on a solution

BVT I have no answer, it has been ongoing for a very long time, my colleagues historically have had the same thing

DW What we need to remember Bart, it is about moving forward which is where we need to focus, we need to look at the future and how do we make this better. You have an opportunity right now with new eyes and new blood in the team, you could build relationships there, it could be a totally different environment. Susanna as you know has been working on some of the issues that have been raised in the investigation, she will be addressing things if she feels they need addressing, she will do that as its part of her development. I need to know you are open to working to move forward

BVT I got sick because I don't see the solution, if I could see a solution I wouldn't have been sick

DW But we have to try and find a solution

DW To be fair, you have only had a problem with Susanna the last couple of months

BVT But before it was all the other rubbish, it's an ongoing issue from the very beginning. It's a continuation of bullying, all my complaints for 10 months and ongoing

DW Your original complaints about bullying were raised to Susanna and Samira?

BVT Yes

DW Anything done?

BVT No – they said its all assumptions and perceptions

BVT When I raised it, she said if you don't like it here is the door

DW She actually said that to you, those exact words?

BVT Yes, with the exact hand movements

EH Is that Susanna or Samira?

BVT Samira with the hand movement and everything

DW Out of interest, do you perceive that you have ever done anything to upset or annoy another colleague?

BVT The story I have to hear about why they don't like me is if I was still in the training part of the job, the first two months, if they explained me something I constantly went to manager or team leader to double check, they felt insulted by it. I asked, I said if what you say isn't what I learnt on the training then I asked for a second opinion, Yousai said that and spread it all over the team. I asked him, man to man, that allegation, how many times has that happened? 3-4 times over the 2 months I worked here, that means once every two weeks I ask for a second opinion, is it worth making a fuss about

DW What was his response?

BVT He (Yousri) said "oh really, only once every two weeks", so I asked him why this has been kept going and going then? he had no reply on that question. That's what I have

done wrong and he claimed I did it on purpose to make them look ridiculous. I have an e-mail from Stef (in Dutch) he sent me after the meeting that got HR involved many months later, in it Stef writes: "It's ridiculous that one time you went to Daniella, it keeps getting raised".

DW As I understand, over last year, frustrations on both sides, that probably should have been sorted out as they went along but they weren't, we are where we are, we now need to look at solutions, are you willing to work with me to find a solution?

BVT I am willing to work with you on a solutions, I have a strong feeling that my career here is finished

DW I know you dont want to hear this, but that's a perception, it's not founded in any reality, how do you know that your career is stopped, have you applied to anything you should have got?

BVT Like you said it's a perceptions, a feeling, no physical evidence, but it's important you know I think that

DW I understand but at the moment there is no truth in that, we don't know if you applied for something you wouldn't get it, we don't know that.

BVT Is my sick leave a black mark on my file?

DW We don't share your file with anyone else, we don't share your file so please put that out of your head. What we are looking at is how to get you back to work and functioning

BVT I had a meeting with Stefan Kalcher he said "ah you work with Susanna" how do I not know she would tell him and turn it into a negative thing, "if Bart isn't happy he isn't coming in for a month"?

DW If Susanna didn't want to work with you, why would she stop you getting another opportunity, surely she would help you? I think you are imagining things slightly Bart

BVT My story today is a copy paste I've seen happen to Dennis, he left before getting bonus, he had to repay relo

DW We are not talking about Dennis, we are talking about you, we have to focus on you

BVT But if I see that happen to Dennis and then to me, like a copy paste

DW You have to remember you dont know all the facts about all the cases so please lets park the thing about Dennis

DW What are going to do about getting you back to work and back up and running, you are due in tomorrow, in order to come in you don't need a return to work with Susanna as you have had that today with me. I need to share the content of your email with Samira and Susanna. Whilst we look at this, I have two options; you remain to work with Susanna

whilst we investigate or there could be a possibility to temporarily have you report into a different line manager as a short term.

BVT Me working with Susanna will be extremely difficult, 7:50am I will be at the job tomorrow, I will have to go through thousands of emails from the last month.

DW So you will need time in the morning to get up to speed

BVT Susanna comes in at 9am I will be sitting there shitting myself waiting for a confrontation with Susanna

DW But you are imagining this happening

BVT This is what has happened last 10 months

DW But we are looking at moving forward

BVT But even if you move me, see me sitting in another time after being off for a month, she is not going to like that

BVT As an intermediate solution, a proposal, yes or no, to give you some time to think over, would it be an option I take off holiday until next Monday, gives you time to come up with a possible solution, talk to them, sleep on it, would that not be better rather than do everything here in a few minutes, hours?

DW Do you know what your shift pattern is this week?

BVT 8 til 4, everyone is working with week, chat hours 12 til 8

DW When should you work this week?

BVT Tues to Fri, off Sat and Sunday

DW So you are proposing 4 days annual leave

BVT Yes it think that will give everyone body some time to come up with a proper solution to understand what Susanna replies on my email. Maybe it's an eye opener for her, maybe she will say she has been wrong and sorry

DW I can't give an answer, will need to speak with them first. Let me try and call her

Bart leaves the room, Danielle calls Susanna who agrees to the 4 days leave

DW Okay so Susana has agreed to the leave. I need to give Susanna a right to reply on what you've said, we will then speak about going forward, we need to work out how you are going to work together, if that means both of you need to give a little bit, be aware of each others feelings, maybe that has come to a head now and this needs to stop. We need to work a way of you being in the work place together , you are adults and professionals. We may need to have a facilitated meeting with both of you, to agree what needs to happen moving forward.

DW So that's it for today, you can have a little more time to gather your thoughts, I will now

speak with Samira and Susanna and we will get back to you, likelihood is we will arrange to meet you when you come back in next week

BVT I don't mind coming in anytime, even if on Sunday evening

DW We won't do that

BVT I'm holiday from tomorrow, weather will be terrible, I can come in whenever

DW We will do it on your first day back, try and relax as much as you can and leave it with me to deal with and come back to you. Anything else to add?

BVT Keep in mind in your further discussion that this is not something that arose recently, it arose from the very beginning ongoing bullying and my formal complaints written to Susanna, 11 months further and we are still looking for a solution, you may need to review your bullying policy

DW But you haven't raised a formal grievance for bullying and the people you have an issue with has changed

BVT But the issue is the same, you might have to do a campaign in the company about what to do if you are being bullied

DW To be clear, at the moment you are making allegations, its not proven

BVT 11 months of bullying

DW I need to investigate, this is an allegation

BVT I got physically sick by the things that are happening, 2 different doctors

DW In fairness to Susanna, I need to investigate and give her the right to reply, you need to leave it in my hands to deal with and come back to you. I will get back in contact with you regarding the meeting when you come back into work

BVT One thing I think when Susanna see some or all of my assumptions, as you call them, she will say not true, he is dreaming, misinterpretation, is it then my word against hers?

DW If misunderstandings we would need to look at the whole thing, if it is a misperception. You need to let me investigate now.

DW I have to remain impartial, I will look at what you've said, I then look at the other person, then maybe I have to speak with witnesses but you have to give me the time to investigate. I have all I need for now. Okay?

BVT Okay

207. On 11th April 2018 I forwarded the 29th July 2017 and 2nd August 2017 emails to

Danielle Wood at HR. Those were the emails I had sent to my direct management Susana Martin and Samira Mouhayar in which I complained in detail about bullying by the Camp Two guys at the beginning of my employment. I did this as a follow up to the meeting and its minutes. I was convinced that Danielle Wood was not aware of the seriousness of my previous bullying complaints and that she therefore wrongly assumed that those things were not important. Danielle Wood confirmed receiving my complaints emails and asked what the outcome of them was. I replied that there actually never was a solution and the bullying continued.

208. Danielle Wood's email:

Bart I note receipt of the emails that you sent.

You have sent the emails you sent to Susanna but have not explained what actions/outcomes came from these. Do you have any correspondence or update to confirm what happened as a result of you raising this?

Danielle Wood

209. My reply via email to Danielle Wood:

Hi Danielle,

The outcome of these e-mails was nihil, some meetings were organised with individuals and once a meeting with Susana, me and Jose Luis but the bullying is ongoing. That was the reason why the team meeting exploded and when HR was called in to do an investigation.

Believe me when I say that this is an ongoing problem that started 11 months ago and never really stopped, eventually causing detrimental effects on my health.

Thanks and best regards,

Bart

210. On 11th April 2018 Jalila Kessissa sent an invitation to the Dutch/Belgium and Scandinavian team members to invite all of them for a team dinner. This was something new as in the past the Camp Two guys kept their own private events without inviting others. The invitation in fact was not for the team alone but had been widened and

extended to some but not to others. For instance Yousri Amrani (who had left for the VIP team) was invited but Stef van Veen (who had moved to Traders after Yousri Amrani left) was not invited. I was the second last one in the list of invited people. It was immediately clear that the team party or dinner was centered around the Camp Two guys as the party was for Jose Luis Aznar and Yousri Amrani was invited. That of course meant for me that I would not be going. My present mental state would not allow me to enjoy the time, specifically now that HR had finally started some investigation in the bullying problems with those people.

211. On the same date 11th April 2018 Yousri Amrani was the first to reply to the invitation for the “team dinner”. This clearly showed how close he still was with the team which he had left. No wonder as he was still sharing the same workfloor and office with the Dutch/Flemish team. Yousri Amrani definitely was not moved away to a place or position where he could not bully me anymore. A few other people joined in too for the dinner. I was later told that the dinner happened in a bad atmosphere as there were Yousri Amrani and Jose Luis Aznar on one side and Susana Martin and Martijn van der Vechte on the other side and the negative mutual feelings surfaced again.

212. On 13th April 2018 Danielle Wood sent me the corrected minutes of the 9th April 2018 meeting, Emma Horwood had corrected a few points in the minutes that I had requested. I had now taken up four days of my precious annual leave to give Danielle Wood a week to do an investigation and interview the people involved; bullies, witnesses, management, etc. I was heavily disappointed when Danielle Wood told me that she did not interview anyone at all, not even Susana Martin who had been at work all week, during the annual leave I had sacrificed for this investigation. I felt really sad that I had gone the extra mile to try to go back to a job I loved but then again nothing was done to investigate my bullying complaints. Danielle Wood even asked me again to go back to work, go back to Susana Martin and the other bullies, without any solution provided. My complaint was not even actioned upon. My bullying complaint was obviously not taken serious! I was wondering how serious Danielle Wood was taking her Duty of Care? She simply wanted to send me back to a by now well documented toxic work environment that had caused me mental health problems and I had warned them that my mental health problems would most

probably return or get worse if I was sent back there. I felt very depressed with this whole situation.

213. That same day 13th April 2018 I replied to Danielle Wood's email from home. I stated that I was expected to go back to work, and back to the bullies, without an investigation being started or temporary solutions in place to prevent further issues. I clearly communicated that I was very upset at having to go back to the bullying without a solution. To make sure that I was tremendously serious about this endless bullying problem, I clearly stated my intentions to take the whole saga to court, if necessary. I also indicated the option of suspension with full pay as I did not want to lose or give up any more of my annual leave.

214. My email to Danielle Wood:

Hi Danielle,

Thanks for the update. This version of the minutes of the meeting now indeed reflects correctly what was said during our meeting on Monday.

I am obviously disappointed that no progress has been made in your investigation. I understand though that that is not your fault and I appreciate your efforts. Please remember that I volunteered to take 4 days of annual leave and that during these days the weather has been terrible, so no holiday feelings were enjoyed by me.

What I find shocking though is that apparently the company's Bullying at Work Policy now expects me to go back to work, back to the bullies, without any solution of the ongoing problems. This means going back to Yousri and Jose Luis and also back to Susana and Samira. We have to add to this Martijn now who might be upset that I denounced his lover Susana. In no way will I be protected from more and potentially even worse bullying. That is shocking and unacceptable.

My accusations of bullying, although they are by now very well documented, are apparently not serious enough? Over the last 11 months I have shown an extreme amount of goodwill to sort this out but it looks more and more like I will have to take this whole saga to court. A decision I will not hesitate to make and I have already thought through. It shows my goodwill again that I haven't done so yet.

I still see you as a person of confidence and understand your difficult position. It cannot be

expected from me though to be further victimised. I understand you might need another week to conclude your investigations but I cannot be expected to, again, take a week of holidays to protect myself. Please consider the different options available to you to go forward for the time needed for this investigation and implementing a solution. I see in the company's Bullying at Work Policy that Emma gave me at Monday's meeting that the option exists of suspending me during the time of the investigation. Is that maybe an option?

Thanks and kind regards,

Bart

215. That same day 13th April 2018 Danielle Wood replied via email and to my surprise suspension with full pay was granted until and including Friday 20th April 2018. Apparently the threat to go to court was taken seriously. I was very happy that I had another week away from the bullies. On the other hand it saddened me that every day I was off work, my lack of knowledge of the new promotions was increasing, the amount of emails in my mail box kept increasing and the time needed to get back up to date would be several days. I was not convinced that the management would be very understanding of this as there was such an under-staffed team now.

216. Danielle Wood's reply via email:

Bart, thanks for the update.

I can confirm that we can invoke the suspension on full pay. I suggest I authorise that up until and including Friday 20th April. This should give sufficient time for the right people to be together for the process to take place. I will update you as things progress.

Regards

Danielle Wood

21788. On 16th April 2018 I forwarded the email thread about Yousri Amrani going to the team dinner organised by Jalila Kessissa to Danielle Wood and Emma Horwood. I thought it was important to show Danielle Wood that Yousri Amrani indeed was around, and not removed from the team, as she had suggested during the meeting. I also pointed out that

the Camp Two guys were all able to attend but other team members were de facto excluded because they had late shifts on the date and time of the planned team dinner. Apparently this was taken up with Susana Martin who then gave Kieran Vandenhoeck and Cathy Gosseye off for that evening after 20h00 so they could attend the team dinner. This showed that it had been considered already that after 20h00 there was no necessity for someone to be present in the Dutch/Flemish team as the opening hours for chat and phone calls had been reduced from 8h00 till 24h00 to 12h00 till 20h00 by the management.

218. My email to Danielle Wood:

Hi Danielle,

Just a quick update to show you how Yousri is still considered part of my team at CS. The new girl Jalila is organising a team event for the DU/BE/SCAN team on the occasion of Jose Luis leaving the team. Yousri (and girlfriend) are also invited although he is for several months not a member of this team anymore.

Obviously I'm not joining such an event. The event is organised on Friday 27 May when Kieran and Cathy are working late. If it would have been organised a day later everyone would have finished early (8pm) and the full team would have been able to attend. This shows what potentially is a new breakline in the team that might cause future troubles.

Just wanted to let you know.

Best regards,

Bart

219. On 17th April 2018 I sent an email to Danielle Wood and Emma Horwood with a holiday request from 8th till 15th May 2018 for my godson's confirmation in Belgium and to renew my Belgian passport as a matter of urgency. I had studied the shift roster and had noticed that there were no issues as, although the team was under-staffed, there were sufficient people present to cover the chat and phone hours. In the email I mention that I booked my flights on 11.02.2018 but this booking was actually done earlier, on 02.11.2017. I am not sure where that mistake came from, probably the state of my mental health and troubled mind at the moment I wrote this. This holiday had been agreed by Susana Martin verbally before the date of the booking. Susana Martin had asked me to remind her more

or less a month before the dates when she was going to make the new shift roster for that specific month. This email also showed my despair that I feared that I could lose my job soon. Nothing had been done to restore the loss of trust and confidence in the management and my trust and confidence in HR was diminishing quickly because of their lacklustre approach of my bullying complaints.

220. My email to Danielle Wood and Emma Horwood:

Hi Daniele, Emma,

With all the ongoing issues I actually forgot to mention that on 11 February 2018 I booked flights to Belgium for my brother's son's confirmation, whose godfather I am. I also booked an appointment to renew my Belgian passport what is a matter of urgency.

My flights are on 9 and 14 May but holidays should include 8 and 15 May because I travel via Malaga Airport.

In the theoretical case I would still be working for CS by those dates: in the present shift roster my week 19 shift is covered by colleagues and week 20 is not included in the planning yet.

Could you please take this up with the relevant people, obviously in case I will still be working for GVC by those dates.

Thanks and best regards,

Bart

221. On 20th April 2018 Danielle Wood from HR finally sent me an email (CC to Emma Horwood), replying on my 17th April 2018 annual leave request, that a meeting was going to be set up about my bullying complaints investigation. This email is sent by Danielle Wood forty-seven (47) days after my 4th March 2018 email in which I complained to her about Susana Martin's Performance Card report in which Susana Martin misrepresented my reaction on being called out of the poker training. This is thirty-eight (38) days after my 11th March 2018 email to Danielle Wood in which I mentioned mental torture by my team leader, something hard to misunderstand, and the email also clearly indicated my mental health issues. In the meantime I had already been off sick about a month with "stress related anxiety" but still this apparently did not sound any alarm bells at HR. Danielle Wood's email came fourteen (14) days after my 6th of April 2018 email denouncing the

minutes from Samira Mouhayar reporting on the meeting with my team leader Susana Martin that was set up as a trap and became an hour long attack towards me. The bullying and mental health issues were apparently not a priority for Danielle Wood, exactly the same as had happened with Dennis Dorland.

222. The email from Danielle Wood (CC Emma Horwood):

I put a request in to your line manager for your annual leave and will get back to you as soon as I can.

In respect of the ongoing investigation we will have a meeting set up today and then will want to meet with you next week. I can not confirm which date as yet. Therefore, I suggest your suspension on full pay until Wednesday 25th April. I anticipate you needing to attend a meeting on either Monday or Tuesday.

If you have any questions please do let me know.

Danielle Wood

223. The same day 20th April 2018 I replied to HR via email to express my wish again that this would all soon come to an end. Although I was now off work on annual leave or suspension with full pay, my mental health issues had not improved. I still felt down and depressed, drank a lot of alcohol to be able to sleep, had nightmares and lack of appetite. The only thing that kept me going was doing my voluntary work in the Nature Reserve at Europa Foreshore. This was the only thing I did that made me feel like I was not entirely useless. At least during those few hours doing that manual labour I could clear my mind most of the time, which probably prevented me from going entirely insane in those sad days.

224. My email to Danielle Wood (CC Emma Horwood):

Hi Danielle,

Thanks for the update.

Hopefully there will be a solution soon as this prolonged period of uncertainty is draining all my energy.

This will hopefully soon end, one way or another.

Best regards,

Bart

225. The same day 20th April 2018 HR proposed a meeting with Roni Maman, whom I had met once already during the calibration exercise. I remembered him as a no-nonsense type of guy who I thought could be exactly the kind of person needed to sort out the mess in the Dutch/Flemish team. He was also the company's vice-president, what I found to be some overkill but I thought that at least something was being done after ten months of doing nothing. Maybe the days of waiting till the problem would go away, had come to an end. HR invited me to attend a meeting with Roni Maman on 24th April 2018. I accepted the invitation.

226. Again on the same day 20th April 2018 Danielle Wood requested in an email that I should refrain from using work email or Skype to contact any of my colleagues. I found that a very weird request as I actually had not been in touch with any of my colleagues. I actively made an effort to omit any contact with colleagues as I did not want to discuss my mental health issues with them, I was in fact ashamed of my present state. Another reason why I avoided to meet colleagues in any way, was that it would remind me of all the bullying and that was exactly what I tried to avoid. I did not need a reminder of the bad state of affairs at work to make me relive the horrors I had already gone through. I even went out of my way to go to Morrisons at times when the chance to meet or bump into colleagues was most minimal. As the GVC/bwin offices at Europort were very close to Morrisons, many colleagues used breaks to buy snacks, lunch, etc. in the supermarket. When I occasionally bumped into colleagues in the street by coincidence I avoided eye contact and changed direction so as not to have to have to talk to them. This had actually complicated my private life and although I was not at work the effects of the bullying were continuing and negatively influencing my personal life every day. I found Danielle Wood's email alarming and intimidating. I suspected that it could mean that they were planning to sack me.

227. The email from Danielle Wood:

We are working to resolve ASAP. In the meantime, while you are off on suspension I would request that you refrain from using work email/SKYPE for correspondence other than for with ourselves.

Danielle Wood

228. My reply via email to Danielle Wood:

Hi Danielle,

I see professionalism as a very important value in my life. For that I can assure you that since I called in sick, after that took annual leave and then was suspended I have never contacted anyone in the company apart of the contacts with you. I made no contacts via company or personal communication tools and even went out of my way to e.g. go to Morrisons at times when the chance to meet colleagues was most minimal. When I occasionally bumped into colleagues in the street I avoided eye contact and changed direction so as not have to talk to them. As I live in Gibraltar for 9 years and have an active social live here, and almost all my colleagues live in Spain, I have no personal friendships or so with colleagues and haven't met any of them since I went on sick leave.

As such I am happy to oblige your request as it is what I was already doing anyway.

Can I ask if the meeting with Mr Roni Maman on Tuesday is to talk about solutions or is it part of the investigation that is still ongoing?

Thanks and best regards,

Bart

229. Cathy Gosseye resigned on 20th April 2018 in the morning. She had only worked a month and a half in the company. I was never able to find out why exactly Cathy Gosseye left after such a short period of time but on the other hand my first impression of her was that she was not the kind of woman to accept the unprofessional behaviour of Susana Martin. The first time I heard that Cathy Gosseye had left was at noon on the 23rd April 2018 when Danielle Wood of HR sent me an email in which she mentioned that "Cathy is no longer with the business".

230. On 21st April 2018 the updated shift plan was sent by Susana Martin to all

Dutch/Flemish team members, including me. I read that email from home as I occasionally logged in to check for emails from HR. The updated shift roster showed that my holiday from 8th till 15th May 2018 was perfectly possible with some minor shift changes. Susana Martin also worked during the two weeks, from Tuesday 8th May till Tuesday 15th May 2018, over which my holiday had been planned. Susana Martin worked that week and the following week from Monday till Friday from 10h00 till 18h00 so she too could take over chats in case it was busy. As Susana Martin had now so few team members left, her administrative work, like for instance preparing monthly evaluations, had gone down a lot too, so she definitely would have been able to help out if needed. Although Cathy Gosseye had resigned and left the company (I was still unaware of that fact at that time), she was still mentioned in this updated shift roster.

231. On 22nd April 2018 at 20h36, on a Sunday evening, Danielle Wood sent me an email in which she wrote that Vice-President Roni Maman would be briefed on my concerns and provided with relevant meeting minutes and correspondence and that he already had met with my line manager Susana Martin. I had that meeting on Tuesday morning 24th April 2018 at 09h30 which meant that the Vice-President, supposedly an extremely busy man, had only one business day to go through all evidence of bullying provided by me. It became immediately clear to me that this was impossible. Was there an attempt to cover up what had really happened? Were they sabotaging my complaint by giving only selected information to Roni Maman? How did he not get all information before he interviewed Susana Martin so he could ask her the right questions? Why had only Susana Martin been interviewed while there could be no doubt that Yousri Amrani and Jose Luis Aznar also had bullied me over a prolonged period of time? Something definitely did not seem right here, why all this last minute action on a Sunday evening?

232. The email I received from Danielle Wood:

Thank you for the update.

The meeting on Tuesday is part of the investigation. Roni will be briefed on your concerns and provided with relevant meeting minutes and correspondence to be ready to discuss the situation with you. He has already had the opportunity to meet with your line manager. I hope this helps.

Danielle Wood

233. On 22nd April 2018 at 20h42, on that same Sunday evening, Danielle Wood replied (CC to Emma Horwood) to my email with my holiday request for 8th till 15th May 2018. She wrote that my team leader Susana Martin could only accomodate 10th till 15th May 2018. This was absolutely ridiculous as my flight to Belgium was booked for 9th May 2018 very early in the morning (departure at 7h30). Having to rebook flights to Brussels from Malaga Airport in the tourist high season was almost impossible as all flights were fully booked and even if possible it would have been at a ridiculously high cost. This meant in reality that the only option left was to cancel my holiday and as such not be able to renew my Belgian passport. Susana Martin's earlier verbal agreement with the requested holiday period, before I booked my flights six months earlier, was not even mentioned. This was so identical to the stories I had heard from several colleagues about Susana Martin sabotaging their holiday requests if she had an issue with that person. I knew that some of my team members had brought that up during the interviews with HR. What shocked me most of all was that HR had contacted Susana Martin, against whom they were supposedly doing an investigation for bullying me. Susana Martin was clearly abusing her position to cause me problems and extra hardship as revenge for my full blast complaint that HR had forwarded to her. Still HR saw no problem in allowing Susana Martin to make decisions about me and take control of important parts of my professional life and the influences those had on my private life. I had already pointed out Susana Martin's vengeful and vindictive nature to HR and so had others from the team in the past on several occasions. This again showed me that HR could well not take my complaints serious at all and just kept fobbing me off. This further added to my distress and I expressed that in my reply to Danielle Wood's email, pointing out again that I had already been bullied by Susana Martin.

234. The email from Danielle Wood (CC Emma Horwood):

I had confirmation that Susana can accommodate 10th to 15th May.

Danielle Wood

235. My reply via email to Danielle Wood on 23rd April 2018 at 9h07 (CC Emma Horwood):

Hi Danielle,

I am confused by your message as I asked annual leave from 8 till (and including) 15 May. Now you write that 10 to 15 May is OK. As I fly to Belgium very early on 9 May that is obviously a problem.

Is this a mistake or is the whole saga starting again even while I'm not in the office at present? Can you please check?

Thanks,

Bart

236. On 23rd April 2018 Danielle Wood replied about the denied holiday (CC to Emma Horwood) that due to the rota it was not possible to give me any leave before 10th May 2018. According to the shift roster that Susana Martin had sent only two days earlier, Danielle Wood's statement was not correct. She also added that I had to request leave and had to have it approved before booking anything, but that was exactly what I had done... It became clear that there was a determination at HR, specifically with Danielle Wood, to defend Susana Martin, or for whatever other reason I was not aware of, in denying me my holiday request.

237. Danielle Wood's reply via email (CC Emma Horwood):

The information I provided is correct. Due to the rota it is not possible to give you any leave before 10th May. Please don't forget that the company process is to request leave and have it approved before you book anything.

Danielle Wood

238. The same day 23rd April 2018 I replied to Danielle Wood's email (CC to Emma Horwood) expressing my astonishment that it was precisely Susana Martin, the person who was bullying me and who had used refusal of annual leave before to victimise colleagues, who was now again asked to make a decision about my annual leave request. I made it very clear that I saw that as further proof of victimisation and an attempt to bully me out of the company. I also pointed out that I felt that my mental health problems were

coming back due to the unnecessary stress regarding my annual leave request. This holiday request saga made it extremely clear to me that I definitely needed that week of holiday in Belgium, far away from the employment troubles I was experiencing in Gibraltar. A week with family and friends would definitely help me to take some mental distance from the ordeal I was suffering. This holiday was highly needed to help me clear my mind and mitigate some of the mental health issues I was enduring. I was now more or less convinced that they wanted me out of that company. Having had the time to think about it in Belgium, I would have most probably come to the conclusion that the best option for me was to resign from the company. But at that date I was still employed by the company and I was not able to use the full capacity of my brain anymore because of my mental health issues. This was not helped by the impression that nobody was really interested in my ordeal or was actually listening to what I had to say.

239. My reply to Danielle Wood's email (CC Emma Horwood):

Hi Danielle,

I strongly disagree with that way of presenting the issue of the annual leave. I was asked to book my annual leave closer to those dates. As you are well aware there is a formal complaint for continuous bullying going on from almost the first day I started working on 15.05.2017. This eventually made me seriously sick so I couldn't request the holiday anymore via the intranet. I am still awaiting a result of the investigation of my first complaints about 10 months ago. I recently asked during the investigation to be moved to another team and you agreed in writing that could be a temporary solution. As such I don't even know whom I should have asked for the annual leave anymore. It is shocking that I now have to find out that Susana, the person who is bullying me and used refusal of annual leave before to victimise me, is now again asked to decide my annual leave. Apart of that it is not my fault that over the last 2 years everyone in my team left the team and/or the company showing a serious issue is affecting the team. That the team is now understaffed is something I am very well aware of but I cannot be punished for that. During the days I asked for leave there is a presence of 2 team members (according to the roster from 21.04.2018) what is more than sufficient to cover the live chat and phone service from 12:00 till 20:00. It is even quite common that only 1 person covers such a period like e.g. only yesterday 22.04.2018 Kieran sat entirely alone for that shift. It feels like my annual leave request is now being used to punish me for me considering going to

court over the bullying during the last 11 months.

The issue now of not wanting to give me the annual leave requested is a further proof of victimisation and a clear attempt to make me resign from the company. Can you please let me know what the company's "Bullying at Work Policy" is in this case as I can't find anything in the print from the intranet that Emma gave me?

I urge you to reconsider my annual leave request and take the necessary action to stop this continued bullying immediately as I feel my health problems coming back due to this unnecessary stress.

Thanks,

Bart

240. Danielle Wood replied to my email within fifteen minutes on 23rd April 2018 (CC to Emma Horwood) and she came up with some further excuses for the holiday refusal. Interestingly she mentioned that the new starter Kevin Goutier was on Poker training. Kieran Vandenhoeck had already completed his Poker training too, so I was the only one now left awaiting to finish my Poker training after I had been unable to complete it after being called out of the training. To cover for the chat and telephone opening hours from 12h00 till 20h00 it would have been sufficient to change Kieran Vandenhoeck's shift that was 16h00 till 24h00. Kieran Vandenhoeck had two children so I knew he would not have minded to change shift and be back home earlier to enjoy family life.

241. Danielle Wood's reply via email (CC Emma Horwood):

Bart

As you know annual leave requests should go via your team leader as per company procedure. You sent it to me so I forwarded it on for consideration.

The majority of your leave has been approved. However, the days that have been denied, have been denied because the only other person other than you on rota is Kevin and he is booked in to attend Poker Training from 7-9th, therefore, you are the only agent on shift between 8-4.

As you know you raised a formal grievance with us earlier this month. This process is in progress now. We heard your grievance on 9th April 2018, we have interviewed your line manager and you are now attending for the investigation meeting with you tomorrow. The

intention would be for an outcome this week.

Danielle Wood

242. I replied via email to Danielle Wood (CC to Emma Horwood) about twenty minutes later on the same day 23rd April 2018. By this time I was thinking that Susana Martin was misleading Danielle Wood who I supposed did most probably not have a full understanding of how the customer service shift roster worked. I therefore explained the possibilities to change the roster to her and how the chat/phone hours could be covered. I also made it clear that this playing games with my holiday request was closing the door for me to return to a team led by Susana Martin.

243. My reply to Danielle Wood's email (CC Emma Horwood):

Hi Danielle,

Your information about the rota is incorrect. Attached a screenshot of the roster for week 19.

This shows clearly that Cathy is present from 10-18 and Kieran is present from 16-24. The live chat and phone service from 12-20 is fully covered. If the presence from someone is requested from 8-10 then this could easily be solved by asking Cathy to come in 2 hours earlier (and leave 2 hours earlier). Claiming I can't take annual leave because of rota is nonsensical. Again: further proof of victimisation.

It is now becoming extremely obvious that whatever solution can be found for the ongoing 11 months of bullying case, me going back to that team with that team leader is not an option anymore, this annual leave discussion is the final drop that makes the bucket overflow.

Bart

244. Danielle Wood's reply (CC to Emma Horwood) brings up that Cathy Gosseye left the company. This surprised me tremendously as I had not been aware of that until then. Cathy Gosseye actually had left the company three days before but no one had informed me about that and HR had forbidden me to contact colleagues and I had obeyed and followed that instruction.

245. Danielle Wood's reply (CC Emma Horwood):

Bart just for clarity, your information is incorrect, Cathy is no longer with the business.

Danielle Wood

246. Still on the same day 23rd April 2018 I replied to Danielle Wood and Emma Horwood to express my bewilderment about Cathy Gosseye's unexpected leaving. This further reduction of the team that was already under half of its strength made me despair that they would do everything to further sabotage my holiday. It looked then that the only option left for me to go on my much needed, for mental health reasons, week away was never going to happen unless I stopped working for the company. I had by then already studied some of the laws in Gibraltar for instance the Bullying at Work Act 2014 that I had already mentioned earlier in a meeting with HR on 9th April 2018 (fourteen days earlier) and that was also written in the minutes. I was also aware of the possibility to claim for Constructive or Unfair Dismissal if I left under these circumstances. Therefore I pointed out again that they were pushing me in the direction of having to go to court to protect my rights. The option to go to court was already mentioned by me in writing on 13th April 2018. I hoped that bringing the legal option up again for a third time would convince them that I was serious about this.

247. My reply to Danielle Wood:

What a disaster... Now also Cathy left... I'm deeply shocked.

I understand from your replies that if I want to go to Belgium as requested, I will be forced to leave the business too? Is that the solution you propose? Let the courts decide? It seems like you leave me no other option.

Bart

248. The most shocking aspect of this holiday request saga was the company's total lack of empathy with an employee with mental health problems. I had already indicated that my mental health problems were continuing and potentially getting worse. Danielle Wood from HR, the same person who mentioned the Duty of Care to me, did not obviously care at all about her Duty of Care. Exactly the same had happened with Dennis Dorland who was

bullied out of the company. All this happened while I was looking forward tremendously to my holiday in Belgium to be entirely away from Gibraltar and all work related issues to at least, for a week, be fully disconnected. This holiday refusal saga had a disastrous effect on my mental health and well-being and I resorted to even more alcohol consumption to be able to sleep and numb my thoughts.

249. On the same date 23rd April 2018 HR sent me an email with an attached invitation letter for a meeting with the Vice-President Roni Maman the following day. The first thing I checked was who sent and signed the letter, it was Emma Horwood. I also noticed that it had "CC Personnel File" under the signature and that immediately worried me, I found that alarming and intimidating as I had no way of knowing what the implications could be in the long or short term or in what way this could negatively affect my career opportunities in the company.

250. The invitation letter from HR:

Dear Bart,

Re: Invite to Grievance Investigation

I am writing to confirm that you are required to attend an investigation meeting on Tuesday 24th April 2018 at 9.30am. This will take place in the HR meeting room, 1st floor, Atlantic Suites.

This meeting is part of the process that is taking place in response to the grievance raised by you on 6th April 2018 and will be chaired by Roni Maman, VP Business Operations. I will also be in attendance to support the process and take notes.

You have the right to be accompanied at the meeting by a work colleague or Employee Representative. Please be aware no other form of representation is permitted and it is your responsibility to make the necessary arrangements. If you wish to be accompanied, please contact me by email to confirm in writing by 23rd April 2018 by 5pm to advise me of the name of the person, so that any necessary arrangements can be made.

If this letter or the information that you have received needs further clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Horwood

251. In this letter HR formally confirmed the meeting for the next morning with Roni Maman, vice-president, that was already discussed in earlier emails. This invitation letter immediately rang several alarm bells in my mind as there were several points that sounded wrong. The letter mentioned: *"You have the right to be accompanied at the meeting by a work colleague or Employee Representative. Please be aware no other form of representation is permitted and it is your responsibility to make the necessary arrangements. If you wish to be accompanied, please contact me by e-mail to confirm in writing by 23rd April 2018 by 5pm to advise me of the name of the person so that any necessary arrangements can be made."* I compared this statement to the Bullying at Work Act 2014 that clearly stated "... must allow the complainant to be represented by a representative of his choice at all stages" what was in clear contradiction with the letter from HR. Another thing that also worried me a lot was that I had less than eight hours to find a person to accompany me and I had to name that person so he or she could potentially be put under pressure before the meeting started. This did not look like a fair set up at all. On 20th April 2018, three days earlier, I had received the email from Danielle Wood (CC to Emma Horwood) to inform me that I was forbidden to use company email and skype to contact colleagues, what was clearly intentional sabotage specifically for this meeting. I did not reply to this invitation as I had already confirmed my presence at the meeting previously and went unaccompanied as there simply was no time or possibility to contact someone at such short notice. I was also convinced that none of my colleagues would be eager to accompany me anyway as they all knew it could jeopardise their future within the company.

252. On 23rd April 2018 Stef van Veen, ex-Dutch/Flemish team member who went to the Traders Department, sent me an email asking if I was still alive. In fact the email just had the company footer and only the subject wrote: "leef je nog bartus?", translated: "are you still alive, Bart?". I forwarded this to HR to confirm that I would not reply on this email, as requested in Danielle Wood's email from 20th April 2018. I also raised the question why Stef van Veen was not invited at the "Dutch/Belgian team party". Stef van Veen left the

team after Yousri Amrani did. I never got a reply as it apparently was not convenient for HR that this showed that Yousri Amrani, a Camp Two bully, was still very much embedded in the Dutch/Flemish customer service team, unlike Stef van Veen.

253. My email to Danielle Wood:

Hi Danielle,

Stef, ex Dutch/Belgian team member, just sent me this e-mail to ask if I'm still alive. As promised I won't answer this at all.

The question arising here is why Stef was not invited to the "team party" on Friday 27.04.2018 while Yousri, also ex Dutch/Belgian team member, is?

And so the shit stirring and bullying continues... No Bullying at Work Policy exists in GVC...

Bart

254. On 24th April 2018 the meeting with Roni Maman, Vice-President of the company and responsible for all customer services in the GVC Group, took place. Minutes were taken by Emma Horwood and Danielle Wood assisted Roni Maman. The fact that there were three of them and I was alone, made me feel uncomfortable and nervous. Roni Maman came unprepared and was not aware of several points I raised during the meeting or had raised in earlier emails and communications with HR and my management. He was clearly thinking that the meeting was about a minor incident with Susana Martin and I kept repeating that the bullying had been ongoing for eleven months. This was obviously an attempt by HR to try to minimise what had really happened and hide facts from Roni Maman.

255. The minutes of this meeting:

HR Thank you for attending the meeting today.

We have called this meeting in response to the allegations of bullying you have made against Susana Martin on 6th April. Susana has been interviewed and Roni would now like to speak with you.

RM Good morning, listen Bart, I think the main reason for us is for me to hear you view on

things and to clarification on my end with chain of events. My view is if there is a will of a way, if we can solve lets solve, if no will, no way. Tell me what went wrong, tell me what went wrong, here nearly a year, no issue with Susana up to January, since then, you feel she is sort of bullying stuff like that, after meeting with her and Samira, all went sour
BV Mmhmm, actually story starts much earlier than that, May last year, with Stef and Denis and from very first day there was immediately a noticeable atmosphere, something going on, we each had colleagues aside us that we could ask for advice, check emails etc. I asked if they could check my email "don't you see I'm busy", and that's how it started, literally from day 1. Went on and on, little group in team of people, went on and on. Stef said to me had same troubles, Denis left cos he couldn't take it anymore. So I started to write a report, sent to Susana, this one is shouting etc, no response from Susana. People keeping reports taking screen shots of mistakes

RM Who, your colleagues in the team?

BV Yes all documented

BV Susana has tried to do something but not been successful, apparently that's been going on for long time, before me Steph and Denis joined. Although I specifically chose this company and like the job, although not the job I want to spend my life

RM Of course

BV But good start. Susanna a very soft team leader, written notes from at least.

RM You saying she was too soft on the team?

BV Yes when she isn't stopping stuff like that, people suffering, complaining and no action taken on it that's sufficient or stop the problem, that's an issue. Stef got a job with the traders, my plan was to stay with CS for 2 years and then move on, I decided to have a chat with Noemie, asked her about my possibilities, we had half hour meeting

RM Perfectly fine

BV An interview came out of that, Stefan Kalcher, did a video call. Sounds quite good the interview, said openly to my team leader that I had a chat with Noemie and an interview

RM And then you think she changed

BV Yes bad evaluations, nagging on me, became annoying. My colleagues said to me be careful, the moment she don't like you, if you go to look for another job etc. you will know it and exactly what they said happened. Jose Luis says I'm stupid and hypocrite and I support the company's conspiracy to defraud or steal from our customers.

Susana put her head down and ignored it. I raised with Samira, Hamid jumped up in a very loud voice, I hated you from the first day you came in, I cant look at your face. Said

very loud, everyone heard. In all those 9 months I worked with him, I never

RM Why do you think he said that? Any idea?

BV If I see someone's face I don't like I don't have to spend time with that guy or sleep with that guy, I don't know anything about that man, don't know his hobbies or if he has a girlfriend

RM And all of a sudden he jumped up like that

BV Yes.

BV And that's why when Susanna started to go for me, I broke down, I simply broke down and collapsed. It's a continuation of things for 11 months

RM I'm trying to focus on Susanna, up to January you said she was too soft with you and others, after 31st she became strict

BV It's not about strict, it's about looking for problems where there are not problems.

Asking me why I'm in emails? Because that's my job to do that

RM Let me tell you two things, and let's start with the strategy around it. I would like everyone in CS to get promoted, for me one of the good practices of CS is for people to do their time there and move to VIP or promotion, only recently 6 or 7 people went to VIP as I'm sure you know, Samira knows that and I don't want you to feel anybody is trying to stop you, certainly nobody in CS will ever stop you. If I had you coming from CS coming to marketing, you bring all that experience, if you are a good ambassador of CS you bring that into the new role. I would like you to assure you, if a team would like you to start and have the right skill set; you have my blessing for sure, that's one. On Susanna, there was a reason the meeting took place in Jan, I'm assuming you and other people weren't happy with how the team was run, and what I hear is the team asked for clear guidelines about how the team moves forward, give clear guidelines, treat everyone the same, be firmer and the implementation of this feedback means Susanna now seems to be on top of things, checking the details. From what you are saying, I would not say I'm happy as it might cause you to feel you are under pressure, but from what I see everyone to be treated same way, everything checked in the same way, as you and everyone said she was too soft, and now you, alike others are feeling the pressure of Susana stepping up. This is coincidental to you applying for another role. As long as I'm running this CS, I would like everyone to progress, I would like everyone treat the same way, she is your team leader, if she tells you to do this or do that, that's the way it is, you don't need to like that, my boss tells me what to do and I don't challenge that, it's the way it is. If she says something, as long as it's not against any regulation, that's the decision and should be

followed. I don't always agree with my boss but this is how it is.

RM So, what would you like to do?

BV I don't know

RM I asked Susanna the same thing, she said herself she would like to resolve, she said your performance is good, highlighting areas that need improvement doesn't mean she doesn't think you are a good performer. I asked her what now, I sat with her a couple of days ago, and she is saying he is good. I asked if she could do a restart and work with him, she said she would. So I'm asking you, I would like to solve it, so what would you like to do, I'm not happy that you are at home, I'm not liking she is stressed, I would like to solve it. Question is, what would you like to do?

BV I don't know. I was invited to go to a meeting to talk about and so I wanted to see what the possibilities are.

RM Okay I mean do you want to stay? I wouldn't tell you she didn't appreciate your performance if that wasn't the case. At this point what would you like to do, she is your line manager, and obviously it may be a bit of a bumpy road as it is a relationship between people at the end of the day. I obviously can't force you to stay or do anything you don't want to do but I think you said you want to progress in the company. I'm more than happy for you to take the time, if you can restart the relationship knowing she is your line manager, if you feel there is any specific area that needs attention you can say that, if you think it can work, I mean if you don't think it can work that's a different scenario, as I said at the beginning where there is a will there is a way

BV Several issues there, I have had to wait too much time to think, the weather has not been good, I've been walking round the rock and thinking, I have several issues that influenced how I feel. There have been issues in the team since I started that caused the team to split into groups, one team trying to sabotage Susanna, I understand it put her in a difficult position, her against 4 team members who were very close, that problem is still ongoing today. With Yousari it's still ongoing and Jose Luis, as long as those two share the same office (moved to VIP) that shit stirring will continue to go. Shouting between Susanna and Yousari in the kitchen, if that's not stopped that's my problem, what we are talking about is that you will be having the same conversation with other people or maybe they leave or go sick

SM You think she needs to be stronger?

BV No, I've lead a team before, I think physically move those people from that building to this one, so they don't share the same kitchen etc. and talking bad everywhere. That's one

thing, second thing she started a relationship with Martijn, long before I started, all that secrecy with their relationship, that's the cause for those 4 to start a fight against her, Martijn should be separated, shouldn't be influencing the team. 3 people who has a day to day impact in a negative, all very good workers, but the way that combination of people constantly sharing the floor

RM But they are now with VIP right

BV In the same office

RM But that is a different area

BV We share a kitchen

RM But I can't stop people to go to the kitchen to socialise

RM We can certainly sort out day-to-day work, they can't come to your desk, I take your view but I would need to hear other side of the story, I can certainly work to solve that. But to be honest with you I can't tell people they can't sit together in the kitchen

BV I give you an example, a new girl Jalila starts, starts her training, start on the floor, Jose Luis and Yousari start to form a little club she will sit with Jose Luis and not talk to me not look at me, the second Jose Luis isn't there, she then talks to me asks to help her. So there is still an influence. After physically becoming sick after this and knowing it's not the same

RM Jose Luis sits with VIP no?

BV On 1st May he moves

RM Okay so he wont sit any more

BV No but he is still on the same floor. He started sending me messages on Facebook about Susanna, I blocked him, I told him whether I like her or not, I don't want to shit stir against my boss, she is my boss, those were exactly my words, I don't want to shit stir. I said to Yousari, I don't want to hear anymore, if I'm there or Susanna he won't come round, if I'm not there or Susanna not there, he comes round bababababa, chatting, he sees me come round, he runs off

RM Once he moves to VIP, I will speak to Samira and VIP team leaders, I will ensure he stays with VIP, only unless he needs to speak to someone for a work related reason. I will instruct both teams to keep it professional, simple as that

BV I work very well with VIP guys in London, on Skype, don't need that face to face interaction, they come over once a year, it's good. But those people, coming over trying to cause problems with Susanna, trying to cause problems with me because I like Susana, things like the new girl Jalila being influenced. Its very important, will take a lot of stress off

of me, take a lot of stress off of Susana, I found out yesterday Cathy left so now we are a very small team, I want for us to be happy people, come to work for 8 hours, come to work happy and enjoy not like looking over the shoulder as to who is coming over, what they going to say, calling someone an arsehole etc. Its an all or nothing solution, starting tomorrow I can work with Susana, we are different but it was going well for very months and then went bad and I can say what my opinion is about that. But I don't want to be worried about who is coming round the door.

RM Why you intimidated by the VIP guys, so what?

BV Because I lived so many months through this

RM But then tell them to go away

BV Because then behind the back it goes on and on and on, all this gossiping

RM I tell you my experience, there is always gossiping, it is human nature, I've been in CS for 20 years and its always part of it, outside of CS too

BV But with gossiping, you repeat the lie long enough people start to believe it

RM No, really?

BV Really, not just for me but for the team as a whole, but for those people to keep going on its not going to get fixed and in the end maybe I will go sick or I will leave and the same will happen to other people

RM Is this problem just in your team or with other people in CS?

BV No just in our team, some normal conflicts, I don't see it in English or Spanish or French team. From very beginning, it was 4 people causing this problem, saying the company is shit, the management shit etc. constantly.

RM Fine

BV So, I've thought about that very long, if I could physically move them out from there, simply in another block, no kitchen etc., the problem is gonna go away. If you do what you propose it will be okay for 2 weeks, but I think it would go back. I'm not trying to tell you how to do your job

RM I know, but I believe those teams need to sit closely together, my professional view is that we need to solve those issues you raise, I will need to see the other side of the coin to see the picture fully, in your own words its fine with all the other teams, so I need to see

BV I have Yousari there, not talking to me, what kind of thing is that, are we 8 years old?

RM Bart you cannot force people to do things you think they should, or change their behaviour, they talk to me they don't talk to me fine, it is what it is. It doesn't matter if it's in the kitchen or anywhere else, like outside of work, so I don't see the issue with the kitchen

and I would like to see the CS and VIP together. As I said at the beginning, I hope we can resolve in a mature way

BV That's my issue, I don't believe it can be resolved in a mature way, 11 months this has been going on

RM But those people now are in VIP team, they are not under our umbrella

BV I see them every day and what they are doing, in last 2 years everyone who started has gone, I think that's something to worry about

RM I'm taking it on board, I would like them to communicate with the team only when work related, if they act as 8 year olds out of work, it's not my concern, but in work I can address

BV They are doing it in the work

RM But I mean in the cafeteria, as long as they do their jobs professionally, they can speak to who they want or not speak to who they want, I guess it is what it is, we can each one of us pick his friends in and inside of work. I'm looking at it as something to look into, but again I can't force you to do it, I can't promise from May 1st they go to VIP and all will be rosey, we are dealing with people and not computers. If someone comes to the team, whether its Susana or Samira, tell them there is other ways to deal with it or communicate it, if not work related, back to your desk, as long as it works like that it should be fine, it may not be perfect, you may not all be friends, but this is the solution I can think of. And you need to think it this is something you would like to try, nothing is perfect, we can aspire to be perfect but nothing is perfect. You can always decide not to, of course you can take different way out, ive sat with HR and Samira and Susanna and I'm sitting here with you, I think it can be resolved, that's where I am , it's harder to build something, it's easy to break it. That's where I am, we are coming to the end of the meeting, I'm flying tomorrow but will feed back to HR who will communicate with you, does all make sense?

BV (Bart shrugs)

RM Is there anything else you would like raise? Any other questions?

BV Wanted to hear your point of you, you have the overview of everything, it seems like we are 99% aligned in our view.

RM At least we are trying, we share our view, not always we agree, I see yours, I hope you see mine

BV The thing is, I don't see myself going back, it will be the same in a couple of weeks RM But we can address issues before they become crisis. Maybe I can set up a meeting in the next couple of weeks with Samira and Susana and the TL's in VIP and make sure

everything aligned and working as it should

BV But from first day, its been a constant crisis

RM All I can tell you is we can try to do what we can to make it better going forward, now you can make your call. Have a think about it. I always believe important decisions made after a good nights sleep.

256. My expectation and fear that the 24th April 2018 meeting with Roni Maman would be nothing more than a show to try to impress me back to work, proved to be correct. Roni Maman started the meeting with “no issues up to end 31st January”, entirely bypassing the bullying by the Camp Two guys from the first week onwards. His reaction was surprise, even slight astonishment, when I interrupted him and told him about the eleven months of bullying. He clearly was not aware of the Camp Two troubles I had gone through. I also pointed out that Susana Martin did not stop the bullying by the Camp Two guys, something else he reacted surprised to. During this hour long meeting I repeated six times that the bullying had been going on for eleven months. Roni Maman did not know about Susana Martin trying to stop Yousri Amrani from going to the VIP team by talking to Luis Pinto, the VIP manager either. Roni Maman had a very simplified idea of all the issues of my complaints and just wanted me to go back to Susana Martin's team and “restart”. He was clearly entirely unaware that that was exactly what I had been doing for months and it only had got worse. I made it clear that the VIP team (with Yousri Amrani and soon also Jose Luis Aznar) had to move to another building to solve the present problems in the team and prevent further escalations. As we had always worked with other VIP account managers in locations all over the world, there was no real need to share an office floor with them. Roni Maman tried to convince me that there was no need for that and that I had to deal with it “in a mature way”. I was flabbergasted by that statement as it seemed that Roni Maman was suggesting that my behaviour in the team had not been mature. That was another indication that he did not take my complaints seriously and even might have been thinking that I was creating a problem out of nothing. Roni Maman also did not know that Jose Luis Aznar was still in my customer service team and believed that Jose Luis Aznar had already moved to VIP, another clear indication that Roni Maman came not well prepared to the meeting. I mentioned as well Yousri Amrani contacting me on Facebook messenger to try to create more troubles around Susana Martin.

257. Roni Maman did not see any urgency in having to look for a solution. Only after Jose Luis Aznar would have moved to VIP (on 1st May 2018, eight days later) Roni Maman would speak with Samira Mouhayar and VIP team leaders, before that no changes were planned. He repeated that towards the end of the meeting. Another show of sit and wait till the problem had gone away and more proof that Roni Maman had not been properly informed about the facts. I made it clear that I wanted to be happy at work and that the Camp Two trouble makers made that impossible. I believed that with Camp Two away, moved to another building, I would be able to deal with Susana Martin as she would not be under that pressure anymore. Roni Maman rightfully concluded during the meeting that I was intimidated by the Camp Two guys but he then reduced that strong feeling to “gossiping is normal”. Roni Maman even defended that some of the Camp Two guys did not talk to me, that he could not change that. Now that he apparently accepted that there was an issue with more bullying than he initially thought at the beginning of the meeting, he refused to take it seriously. The solution he came up with was that I should return to the team and do as if nothing had ever happened. He mentioned in his conclusion that “I can take a different way out”, that was a clear allegation that I could leave the company if I was not happy with his proposal. A clear threat to put me under pressure. My conclusion of the meeting was impossible to misunderstand: “I don't see myself going back, it will be the same in a couple of weeks”. I had seen this already too many times with this management, too many times there had been a temporary improvement, although minor most of the times, and after that the bullying had continued even worse. I did not see another go at that recipe as a solution at all. Roni Maman was obviously reading from a simplified and manipulated script prepared by HR and had no clue what was really happening with the bullying, colleagues leaving constantly because of Susana Martin, etc.

258. On 26th April 2018 at 10h19 Emma Horwood sent me an email with a letter attached regarding the meeting with Roni Maman two days earlier. The letter was supposedly written by vice-president Roni Maman and dated 25th April 2018, the day before it was sent to me via email. The letter contained the outcome of the bullying investigation. Roni Maman more or less claimed it was my word against Susana Martin's, the only person he had interviewed during his investigation. Roni Maman also claimed that Susana Martin's behavioural change to the worse had been intentional and because of the team meeting at the end of January. The eleven months of bullying by Yousri Amrani, Jose Luis Aznar and

the others in Camp Two, Roni Maman called it in his letter "some concerns". The solution is that actually nothing at all changes.

259. The letter from Roni Maman:

Dear Bart,

Re: Grievance against Susana Martin – 6 April 2018

Further to the grievance you raised on the 6th April 2018, I am writing to confirm the outcome of the investigation.

I've assessed all the information provided by you in various emails, held an investigation meeting with Susana Martin on 20th April 2018 and spoken with you on 24th April 2018 to give you an opportunity to talk through the grievance and provide some points of clarity. In our meeting on 24th April you reiterated the fact that you believe Susana Martin's attitude towards you changed after you told her you were looking for different employment opportunities internally. As explained to you in our meeting, I asked Susana about this and she confirmed this is not the case. As a business we are supportive of internal promotion, particularly with regard to our employees who work in Customer Service and want to branch out into other departments, I personally fully endorse that. You and all members of your team had meetings with Human Resources at the end of January 2018 to discuss the atmosphere within the team and general feeling concerning Susana as your Team Leader. The consensus was that Susana needed to treat everyone the same and be professional in her approach, also that she was too soft and needed to be firmer to become a more effective Team Leader. This feedback was given to her and she was asked to act on it. The timing of this seemingly coincides with you looking at internal opportunities. I asked you if you would be able to work with Susana going forward and you said you could, I also asked Susana if she could work with you and she concurred. However, you did also express some concerns regarding working relationships with current team member Jose Luis Aznar (who will move department to VIP on 1st May 2018) and Yousri Amrani who works in the VIP department. Your main concern is their physical interaction with your team.

I have taken all this on board and after careful consideration, I can confirm the following outcome:

- Susana Martin is the Team Leader of the Belgium/Dutch/Scandinavian Team, as such your reporting line will not change. As Team Leader, Susana is within her right to give

input and feedback regarding your performance as part of her role. She is also able to make reasonable requests that should be respected.

- A meeting will take place between Susana Martin, Samira Mouhayar (Head of Customer Service Western Europe) and Luis Pinto (VIP Team Manager). The purpose will be to highlight the company expectation around professional conduct from all employees and more specifically, the interaction between VIP and Customer Service. We will ask that both Jose Luis Aznar and Yousri Amrani do not come onto the Support floor, unless it is for an urgent work related purpose.

- Further to this conversation, a meeting will happen every 2 weeks (initially, we will review to see if the duration needs to be more or less frequent) between Susana Martin, Samira Mouhayar and Luis Pinto to ensure a regular review of the interactions between VIP and Customer Service is taking place.

I believe the above brings a solution, enabling you to return to work on 27th April 2018 safe in the knowledge that all relevant managers will be aware of what the expectation is regarding conduct going forward. Needless to say, any report or complaint of inappropriate behaviour will be addressed and could be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

May I remind you that you have the right to appeal against this decision; any appeal should be made in writing within 5 working days of receipt of this letter to Cecilia Malmgren, Head of HR Operations, 1st Floor, Atlantic Suites, Europort Avenue, Gibraltar. The letter should clearly state the reasons for the appeal. Only issues relating to this specific outcome will be considered as part of the appeal process.

Yours sincerely,

p.p. Signed by Emma Horwood

Roni Maman

VP Business Operations

260. When I read this letter, I almost got a heart attack as it confirmed my deepest fears that my complaints were not taken seriously and this Roni Maman had been misinformed entirely about what was really happening. There was no mention at all of my mental health problems caused by the bullying. This was one big exercise to brush it all under the carpet and protect some people in customer service management and HR that clearly were not doing their jobs properly regarding their Duty of Care. In Roni Maman's letter Susana Martin's bullying and victimisation is described as "input and feedback" and

“reasonable requests that should be respected”. Roni Maman wrote that the bullying by the Camp Two guys was nothing more than “some concerns”. The conclusion to be drawn from this was that the problem was I. I was apparently seeing or creating problems where there were none. This was another major blow to my self-esteem and self-confidence and made me feel enormously distressed and humiliated.

261. As part of Roni Maman's laughable “solution” some meeting between managers would take place but no date was given for such a meeting. Jose Luis Aznar and Yousri Amrani would be asked to limit their visits to the customer service Dutch/Flemish team area but would continue to share the same office floor, recreation area and tiny kitchen. All relevant managers would be made aware of the expectations. The same managers that had done nothing at all over the past eleven months to stop the bullying. The letter continued with a threat: “Any complaint of inappropriate behaviour will be addressed and could be subject to disciplinary proceedings”. As Susana Martin had already invented complaints and bad evaluations against me and had been dishonest in representing my work, this clearly was a serious threat giving Susana Martin an even bigger stick to bully me with. Any further complaints from me would be investigated and clearly Susana Martin's version would be accepted, not mine. Roni Maman then pointed out the possibility of an appeal but that “Only issues relating to this specific outcome will be considered as part of the appeal process.” That sounded as an absolutely ridiculous limitation of my appeal possibilities seeing the fact that Roni Maman was not aware of all the bullying, that had become clear in the 24th April 2018 meeting. The letter was signed by Emma Horwood on behalf of Roni Maman. That reinforced my belief that HR was actively helping in the covering up of what had really happened. It felt like that letter had already been written before the meeting with Roni Maman had even started. The message of this letter was very clear; go back to the bullies without any solution or leave the company. I felt tremendously alarmed and seriously intimidated and worried how I should respond to this letter. This letter meant that Susana Martin would get a further confirmation that she could get away with murder. Susana Martin had been made aware that I had filed a complaint about her so she would be looking for revenge, her vindictive attitude was well known. There would be no one overseeing the situation, Samira Mouhayar would continue to cover up for Susana Martin and so would HR.

262. The same date 26th April 2018 the shift plan was changed again by Susana Martin and for week 19 Kieran Vandenhoeck was moved from working 16h00 till 24h00 to 13h00 till 21h00. Susana Martin could also have changed Kieran Vandenhoeck to 12h00 till 20h00 as that would have made my holiday in Belgium perfectly possible as the chat and phone opening hours would then have been entirely covered by Kieran Vandenhoeck and Susana Martin herself to help or take over as needed. Also the days they already “had agreed on” for my holidays (10th to 15th May 2018) were not in the updated shift plan. Susana Martin clearly was not showing any goodwill at all and further created an unnecessary problem for my annual leave request. That this happened on the same day that I received the letter from Roni Maman, sent by HR, made my suspicions stronger that they were teaming up to make my life impossible and bully me out of the company. I felt more depressed than ever before.

263. The following day 27th April 2018 I sent an email to Danielle Wood and Emma Horwood at HR to inform them that I was appealing the outcome of their investigation. I was pretty sure that my appeal would become another shambles and fobbing off exercise but at least I would not have to return to the bullies at work immediately. I feared that an immediate return to the toxic work environment would be detrimental to my mental health that was already in a very bad state. Therefore I asked for my suspension with full pay to be extended for the five working days for the appeal, mentioned in the letter from Roni Maman. HR agreed with my proposal and my suspension continued till 7th May 2018, including that date. That's how I saw it after reading their reply, as there was no specific date mentioned in their email on which I was expected to be back at work. Unexpectedly, on 30th April 2018 HR then sent me another email that I had been expected at work the day after their email, claiming that my suspension had not been extended, adding to my total confusion.

264. My email to Danielle Wood and Emma Horwood:

Dear Danielle, Emma,

I acknowledge receipt of the conclusions made about the bullying complaints I have been sending over the last eleven months. The e-mail with the conclusion was read by me on 27.04.2018 at 08:13 although the attached .pdf file was strangely predated 25.04.2018.

I wish to appeal to the conclusion in its entirety.

I am astonished though that after 11 months of documented complaints of bullying and victimisation you only give me 5 working days after receipt to respond to a totally unmotivated conclusion to my detriment. I see indeed that your Bullying at Work Policy, as Emma gave it to me (a print from a page at the company's intranet I had never seen before) at the end of our 09.04.2018 meeting, actually mentions that time scale. I don't remember though to ever have subscribed to or accepted such a policy. Please inform me with proof if otherwise.

As I received this notification on 27.04.2018 and I have to reply within 5 working days, this means I have to reply by the end of 07.05.2018. In Gibraltar 30.04.2018 and 01.05.2018 are bank holidays. According to GVC's own Bullying at Work Policy, as provided by Emma, this means I should continue till and including the date 07.05.2018 on suspension with full pay.

For my appeal I started working on a full timeline of events with all proof available since I first started on 15.05.2017. You will surely understand that to build up such a defence, it cannot be done in a few hours. As such denying my sincere, genuine and honest request for a continuation of suspension would be extremely unfair.

*Thank you in advance for confirming this at your earliest convenience and best regards,
Bart*

265. That same day 27th April 2018 at 12h08 Danielle Wood replied to my email (CC to Emma Horwood). She confirmed the five working days for my appeal, the same five days I had requested for my suspension on full pay to be extended. She also confirmed 7th May 2018 end of business day as the deadline to hand in my appeal letter. Then she wrote that I had to explain in my appeal letter "why I felt the suggested way forward was not viable". That was a hard slap in my face. As my "confidence person" in the company, Danielle Wood had interviewed me and had spoken to me on several occasions about the bullying and how bad it made me feel. She had seen my shaking hands when I explained to her how I felt after I called in sick with stress related anxiety. She had been present at all meetings for the bullying investigation in which I kept repeating countless times that it was eleven months of bullying and the detrimental effect on my mental health and risks that it could return or get worse. Out of all people in the world, Danielle Wood was the only one who perfectly knew what was happening and how I thought and felt about it. I had

somehow trusted her till now but that it was exactly she who wrote and sent me that email shocked me tremendously and shattered the very last bit of hope and confidence that a solution could still be possible. Danielle Wood ended her email with “we will expect you back on your next shift on the rota”, which I interpreted as the next shift on my rota after the mentioned five business days had ended on 7th May 2018 end of business day. According to the shift roster, that same day 27th April 2018 I was supposed to have started my shift at 10h00. As Danielle Wood's email was sent at 12h08 and did not mention at all that I did not show up for work that morning and I had not received a call from the customer service shift supervisors to ask why I had not shown up at the start of my shift, it confirmed to me that indeed my suspension had been extended for the duration I had requested. I continued to write like a madman on my timeline to support my appeal. That timeline eventually became this witness statement.

266. The email sent by Danielle Wood (CC Emma Horwood):

Bart

Thank you for letting us know of your intention to appeal against the outcome of the Grievance investigation process.

As you know you have 5 working days from receipt of the letter. These working days will therefore be today 27th April, Wednesday 2nd May, Thursday 3rd May, Friday 4th May and Monday 7th May. Therefore, we would expect your appeal in writing to Cecilia Malmgren, as outlined in your letter by close of business that day i.e. 6.00pm.

Please remember your appeal is specifically against the decision made and why you feel the suggested way forward is not viable.

I am attaching a copy of your signed employment contract (you kept the hard copy on your first week). I would draw your attention to clause 12 which details what you have agreed to in terms of the Grievance process. Clause 20 also outlines that you agree to abide by all company policies and procedures provided on the intranet.

The Gibraltar Harassment and Bullying Process (as detailed on the intranet) states that the complainant may be suspended on full pay while the investigation is being conducted. The investigation has taken place and an outcome has been delivered. Therefore, we will expect you back on your next shift on the rota.

I hope this addresses all your points.

Danielle Wood

267. On Sunday afternoon 29th April 2018 at 16h15 Susana Martin called me on my mobile phone number in Dutch from an anonymous number. The anonymous number showed me that Susana Martin was calling me from her computer telephone line and that the call would automatically be recorded. I was at home working on my timeline for the appeal at that moment and did not expect any calls so picked up the phone, not knowing who was calling me. Susana Martin called me to ask why I did not show up for work on Friday 27th April 2018, two days earlier. This question surprised and alarmed me a lot and I explained to her that I was on continued suspension as per HR's email. She spoke in a rude tone and accusing voice, exactly the one she used when bullying me. Susana Martin said that she had not been informed by HR about my leave extension till 7th May 2018. Susana Martin sounded very frustrated on the phone and I was very relieved when she ended the call. It left me very distressed and I was wondering what that was all about. I was now three days on my extended suspension and had not received a single phone call about this before although on the shift roster I had, I was mentioned for the last three days as working from 10h00 till 18h00. I assumed that Susana Martin had changed the shift roster to reflect my extended suspension but had not sent the updated shift roster to the team, as quite often happened for minor changes. Susana Martin had also worked the previous day 16h00 till 24h00 so she must have been perfectly aware that I was not present that day either, but she had not called me that day. This left me heavily confused but I attributed it to a communication mistake between HR and the customer service department. The way Susana Martin's phone call was done; the tone, the accusations, the humiliating way of treating me, all made me relive the horrors my team leader Susana Martin had caused me in the past. My mental state that had slightly improved since the longer absence from work collapsed again and I felt very depressed. I drank a lot of alcohol that night to be able to sleep and keep away the nightmares. This phone call confirmed to me that I would never be able to go back to work without a full solution of the bullying problem being implemented. Going back to get bullied again would be like mental suicide and I knew I could not do that anymore.

268. The next day, Monday 30th April 2018, a bank holiday, at 13h40 Susana Martin called me again but in English this time from phone number +44 2039380727. The call being done in English meant that it was most probably recorded or someone else was listening in. At the beginning of the call I told Susana Martin that I was willing to find a way to return

to work as soon as possible but that this could not be done until my appeal had been dealt with. Susana Martin then claimed that I was not on extended suspension and I should have shown up for work on Friday at 10h00, four days earlier. I was tremendously shocked when she said that she had the confidential letter from HR to me in front of her. It felt like there had been an earthquake and the house had collapsed on me when she said that. This was the biggest evidence till now that Danielle Wood and Emma Horwood from HR were directly involved in passing confidential emails to my management whom I accused of bullying and covering up. This proved that there was a conspiracy to bully me out of the company and these phone calls formed part of that. I told Susana Martin twice that I found her calls a continuation of bullying and asked her repeatedly to stop bullying me. I told her that because I was appealing the investigation outcome, she was still under investigation and therefore should not call me. She ended the call by saying twice: "This is leading nowhere, I'm going to end the call" and she hung up. I found that very intimidating and more proof that they were creating a situation to be able to sack me.

269. On 30th April 2018 at 19h16 in the evening Danielle Wood sent me an email (CC to Emma Horwood, Susana Martin, Samira Mouhayar, Roni Maman) claiming I should have been back at work on 27th April 2018, four days before this email, and she asked why I did not show up. She also attached the confidential email to me from that date. What immediately alarmed me was that a confidential document regarding bullying by Susana Martin and others like Samira Mouhayar covering up of it was sent to exactly those people, who were copied in on the email.

270. The email from Danielle Wood (CC Emma Horwood, Susana Martin, Samira Mouhayar, Roni Maman):

Bart, following my correspondence on Friday we were expecting you in the office for your shifts as per my email. I understand from your team leader that you have not come into work.

Just be absolutely clear you asked if you could remain on suspension on full pay and I said The Gibraltar Harassment and Bullying Process (as detailed on the intranet) states that the complainant may be suspended on full pay while the investigation is being conducted. The investigation has taken place and an outcome has been delivered.

Therefore, we will expect you back on your next shift on the rota. If in any doubt my whole email is below.. Therefore, I expected you back on shift. Your team leader is absolutely within their remit to call you at home when you have not come into the office and I would expect you to interact with her in a professional and rational manner.

To recap – you raised the grievance with HR officially earlier in April. We held an investigation with a new manager – Roni Maman. He interviewed both you and your team leader to get both sides of the story. This was your opportunity to make clear all your points. Following that Roni delivered an outcome based on the intention for everyone to move forwards on a better basis. Something that both you and your team leader said they wanted to do. You absolutely have the right to appeal but in the interim you should be back at work.

At the moment you are currently absent without leave. If you are absent without leave for 3 days or more it could adversely affect your continued employment with the organisation. I would urge you to read clause 10 of your attached contract. We will expect you back in the office for your next shift.

If you have any questions please do let me know.

I have copied in your line management team to avoid any confusion around this.

Regards

Danielle Wood

271. That a confidential document regarding my bullying complaints was shared with the bullies and some of the people covering up for them, showed once again that there was no real independent investigation. Trust and confidence in the management and HR, already lost some time ago, was proven again to be non-existent. A mock investigation was taking place to mislead me while the real intention was to get rid of me and force me out of the company by abusing my mental health issues. I was now asked to “interact with Susana in a professional and rational manner” but the same is not asked from Susana Martin towards me. It is therefore suggested that my behaviour in this situation was not professional and irrational. My mental health problems were reduced to that. The outcome of the flawed investigation that was “based on the intention for everyone to move forward on a better basis” was laughable as in no way had a better basis been created for me. The real intention behind the mock investigation was finally revealed when Danielle Wood wrote that if I would not return to the toxic environment with the bullies “it could adversely

affect my continued employment". The choice I had was made clear: return to the bullies or get sacked.

272. On 1st May 2018 I sent a quite long email to Danielle Wood and Emma Horwood at HR in which I explained my situation and my feelings about what had been happening over the last few days. I showed that their email about extension of suspension was written in such a way that it could be interpreted in different ways and that my interpretation in the context of those days had been that my suspension had been extended as requested by me. I also asked for a number of documents regarding meetings with me to help me prepare my appeal against the bullying investigation outcome. In the end I never received those documents and later it was even claimed in emails that I did not need those documents. I thought immediately that the Gibraltar Data Protection legislation was being breached by the way GVC/bwin handled my request. Later, the Commissioner of the Gibraltar Regulatory Authority concluded after an investigation that GVC indeed breached the Data Protection Act and regulations twice by not providing me the requested documents within twenty-eight days.

273. My email to Danielle Wood and Emma Horwood:

Dear Danielle, Emma,

It saddens me deeply that precisely on International Workers' Day 1st May I have to receive your alarming e-mail and have to write a reply to it. I can assure you that my hands are shaking while I write this and that I'm close to tears and will most probably have another few sleepless nights because of this. This very negatively affects the quality of my life.

First of all I wish to clearly state that this is NOT my appeal to the investigation's conclusion, I need much more time for that and you will receive my appeal on 7th May before 6pm although only 5 working days is a ridiculously short time for an appeal as I have to go through thousands of e-mails.

Your e-mail of 27th April in which you reply to my wish for further suspension to enable me to write a documented appeal has a very confusing message that can be interpreted in different ways. You have to understand that English is not my first language so extreme clarity would have been required. You chose though to write in ways open to

interpretation. E.g. nowhere do you state that my suspension has ended on some date. In the context that I asked specifically for an extension of suspension for the dates that you explicitly do mention in your e-mail, those dates (27th April, Wednesday 2nd May, Thursday 3rd May, Friday 4th May and Monday 7th May) were exactly the ones I asked suspension for. This leads me to believe that suspension was granted for those days. Apart of this you state "Therefore, we will expect you back on your next shift on the rota." This for me means the day after Monday 7th May you mention, being 8th May. Nowhere do you write a different or earlier date and time on which you expected me back at work. As such this is for me a clear confirmation that my suspension was granted. Your e-mail was written though in such an obscure way that depending on the way you look at it, it can be given contradictory meanings, this must have been done intentionally.

What confirms my sincere persuasion that indeed extended suspension had been granted, is that although you now claim I had to be back at work on 27th April at 10h00, only on the 29th April at 16h15 Susana, the team leader against whom I filed a bullying complaint, called me. In the department where I work these are the people (managers, team leaders and shift supervisors) who according to procedure should have called me on 27th April, 28th April and 29th April at the BEGINNING of each shift to ask why I didn't appear or was running late: Mouhayar Samira, Schiena Daniela, Martin Susana, Munden James, Dello Nigro Francesca, Parker Mark, Surget Jean-Philippe, Carusi Antonella, Cook Stephen, Krapf Fabien and Pizzo Daniele. Eleven people in responsible positions DID NOT contact me on three consecutive days, clearly because they had been under instruction that my suspension had been extended. It is shocking that the person who I have a documented complaint against, is the one who calls me on two days, this is obviously a continuation of the bullying and I felt and feel very distressed because of this. As I informed you that I appeal the bullying investigation decisions, that means that that person, Susana, is STILL under investigation and NOT in a position to contact me directly.

I already assured you some days ago that I will definitely need every day till 8th May to go through thousands of e-mails for a proper documented appeal. That you now revoked the suspension that I am convinced was granted initially is pure sabotage of my right to appeal and defend myself. This is entirely unacceptable and a clear act of victimisation.

Another obvious act of victimisation is the refusal of my annual leave request to go to Belgium for family reasons and because I need to renew my Belgian passport, without a passport I cannot travel. I already mentioned this is a matter of urgency. Annual leave could EASILY be granted as for the dates I asked there is cover by other members of the

team. It is shocking that the person, Susana, who I filed a complaint against for bullying is now committing victimisation by refusing me my annual leave. Vicious, malicious and vindictive are words that come to mind.

More proof that the company has no proper Bullying at Work Policy is the meeting organised with Roni Maman, vice president in the company. Obliging me to meet with such a high profile manager was something I found intimidating, especially because I was only given a few hours to find another employee to accompany me and with the request not to use company e-mail or Skype to contact other employees. That meeting was only about my bullying complaint against Susana, although I have stated that the bullying started immediately after 15th May 2017, almost a year ago. This shows that the whole investigation is a sham and has not been done independently. This shows clearly a conspiracy against my personal integrity to try to reduce a documented complaint of 11 MONTHS of bullying and victimisation to "some minor discussion with my team leader". And what about me, now suffering significant financial losses because of sickness, sleepless nights with terrible nightmares, huge distress in my personal life, the humiliations I had to undergo, ongoing intimidation, abuse of power by my team leader to continue her bullying and victimisation. This eventually caused me to go sick and on three different occasions I was diagnosed with "stress related anxiety." Now you also sent me proof that you shared a CONFIDENTIAL e-mail with my bullies!!! Susana who bullies me, Samira who is covering up for her and Roni who I feel intimidated by. What kind of a Bullying at Work Policy is this??? And what about Yousri and Jose Luis, two bullies for several months and ongoing who both got promoted to the VIP Department instead of facing disciplinary action? And now you want me to go back immediately to all those bullies who by now will be very eager for revenge as they know they will get away with it. If you don't call that a conspiracy then I don't know what else to call it. And now you threaten to sack me for being a victim of bullying? Unbelievable, all of this because I mentioned that I might have to take all of this to court. Victimisation till the end.

I repeat that this e-mail is NOT my appeal against the conclusion of the sham bullying investigation, you will receive that at a later date as already mentioned. To further prepare my appeal, I need:

- the minutes of the meeting in January with the whole Dutch/Belgian team and chaired by Samira and Susana.*
- the recordings of the 2 telephone calls made by Susana to me on 29th and 30th April to me.*

- a timeline of your investigation in my bullying complaint. This should not contain any confidential information but show clearly on what dates and times investigation actions were undertaken and with whom.

- the official point of view of the proven fact that over the last 2 years every single employee left the team and or company. 100% loss of personnel over an extended time frame is not normal.

During the time of preparing my appeal I consider myself to be on extended suspension till 8th May. On that date I will go on the requested annual leave till 16th May. Till then I definitely can't go back to all the bullies without an acceptable solution, it will be worse than ever and the risk of revenge is 100%.

The company's actions are intentionally leading to me losing my job. At the age of 47, that means you are also destroying every future career opportunities. But why mention this when nobody seems to care anyway?

Polite regards,

Bart

274. I started my email with a clear dramatic cry for help by pointing out the mental health problems I was suffering and that had overwhelmed my life entirely. Again I stressed that I needed the time off to write my appeal, not allowing me the time off was sabotaging my right to appeal. I indicated the flaws in the bullying investigation and the vague communications surrounding the process. To hopefully wake them up this time, I repeated my intention to go to court as and when needed. I ended my email with another dramatic cry for help when I made it clear that this was not only about my job they were destroying but my whole career.

275. The same day 1st May 2018 Danielle Wood answered my email but did not reply to any of the points I had brought up. There was absolutely no goodwill on HR's side to listen to my arguments and that started to convince me that they were indeed undermining and impairing my appeal. My annual leave request continued to be used to create a tremendous problem for me that could not be reasonably solved and they must have been aware of that by that time. The choice they offered me continued to be the same; return to the bullies which would make me sick again and then get sacked or simply get sacked for

not returning to a toxic environment that was a clear and imminent danger to my mental health and safety. The Duty of Care that Danielle Wood brought up some time ago, seemed to have gone out of the window entirely...

276 The email sent by Danielle Wood (CC Emma Horwood, Cecilia Malmgren):

Bart, whilst you feel you misunderstood the message in my original email, you are now aware that you are due back in work.

The investigation has concluded and both you and your team leader have been delivered an outcome to work towards a professional business relationship moving forward.

Therefore, she is well within her remit to contact you when you do not appear for work in the office.

May I remind you that you only have authorisation for some of your annual leave days requested. I have reviewed the request and it is reasonable to reject some of the days requested due to the overall availability of team members. Therefore, if you do not return to the office I am reminding you that you remain absent without leave. If you continue to remain absent without leave we reserve the right to invoke Clause 10 of your contract.

Therefore, we expect you will be in the office tomorrow as per your shift rota.

Regards

Danielle Wood

277. 1st May 2018 was also the day that Jose Luis started in the VIP team. That left me, Kieran Vandenhoeck (still a slow worker), Jalila Kessissa (recent starter and still in probation) and Kevin Goutier (just started) as only ones in the Dutch/Flemish team in which I had started with eight people eleven months earlier. The people that I could trust and were normal colleagues had left in what looked like a lifetime ago and the Camp Two bullies were still sharing the same office floor and facilities. My team leader had turned against me and was on a campaign to bully me out of the company, as she had done with Dennis Dorland and others.

278. On 2nd May 2018 at 8h52 Danielle Wood sent me an email to ask if I understood that I had to return to work that same day. My shift, according to the shift roster, was 10h00 till

18h00 that day. Susana Martin had exactly the same shift that day so I was expected to share the full eight hours with my bullying team leader. My mind blocked totally, I simply could not do it. My body felt like it was paralysed and there was no way I could bring myself to leave the front door of my house. I had a serious panic attack and could only think one thing: "I can not go back there."

279. Danielle Wood's email (CC Emma Horwood):

Bart, again please acknowledge receipt of the email below and confirm you understand.

Danielle Wood

280. The same day 2nd May 2018 at 10h40 Emma Horwood sent me an email that she had tried to call me after I did not appear for my shift. I indeed had a lost call on my mobile phone but when the phone rang I did not have the nerve to pick it up for fear that it would be Susana Martin again in her bullying tone and I would not have been able to handle that emotionally.

281. Emma Horwood's email (CC Danielle Wood):

Hi Bart,

It has been brought to our attention that you have failed to appear for your shift at 10am. I have tried to call you but there was no answer. Please can you make contact immediately.

Thanks,

Emma

282. On 2nd May 2018 the shift plan was changed again by Susana Martin. Kieran Vandenhoeck now did the 12h00 till 20h00 shift (instead of 13h00 till 21h00, a minor change) so that the chat and phone service (from 12h00 till 20h00) was entirely covered and this made my holiday request perfectly possible. It was malicious that my holiday request was not approved, this showed victimisation and mind games with a person who had already been diagnosed with mental health problems. Exactly the same as had happened with Dennis Dorland who was eventually bullied away. Still the "agreed" days for

my annual leave were not marked as such in the updated shift roster proving that there was a behind the scenes agreement between my management and HR to make my holiday impossible. I had to drink a lot of alcohol now to be able to fall asleep at night and when I slept, to keep the nightmares away. I kept spending some time on my voluntary work at Europa Foreshore as this was the only way to keep me from going entirely insane, keeping me mentally and physically occupied with the manual labour.

283. On 3rd May 2018 at 11h03 Emma Horwood wrote another email that I did not appear on my shift that day. Again I saw a lost call on my mobile phone. There was no way I was able emotionally to go to work, my mind did not allow me and the idea of further bullying terrified me. Even the phone ringing caused me a panic attack and I did not dare get close to it to pick it up for fear that it could be Susana Martin again. I was working like a madman on my appeal timeline for which I accessed the company email from my computer at home now and then to copy emails reporting bullying. As I feared that my email access could be cut off by the company, I also forwarded some emails to my personal hotmail address for later use in my appeal timeline. I continued working on my appeal to keep my job but with the bullying sorted out this time. With hindsight it would have been so much easier to simply have resigned and go and look for another job elsewhere but my mind was so far gone that this option did not even come up in my mind then.

284. Emma Horwood's email (CC Danielle Wood):

Hi Bart,

You have failed to appear again today for your shift at 10am. I've tried to call you and ping you on Skype for Business as I can see you are intermittently coming online, but you are not answering and we are concerned. Please can you make contact with us to let us know you are okay and your intention with regards to attendance of your shift please.

Many thanks,

Emma

285. The same day 3rd May 2018 at 16h05 Emma Horwood sent me another email. In this email she forbade me to forward work emails to my private email address. This only added

more evidence that they wanted to sabotage my appeal.

286. Emma Horwood's email:

Hi Bart,

We have received notification that you are forwarding work emails and meeting invitations to your personal email address. This is in contravention to the Acceptable Use Policy <https://my.gvcgroup.com/policies/information%20security/acceptable%20use.aspx>.

Please desist immediately. Any further contravention could result in disciplinary proceedings.

Kind regards,

Emma

287. On 4th May 2018 I sent an email to Emma Horwood and Danielle Wood asking what my present status was with the company. This email clearly indicated the troubled state of my mind. It also informed and updated HR again of my mental health problems. With hindsight I could have gone to see a doctor again for a sick note but because of the tremendous mental pressure they were putting me under, simple ideas like that did not come up in my mind anymore. Only one thing was extremely clear to me: no way that I could go back to the bullying.

288. My email to Emma Horwood and Danielle Wood:

Dear Emma, Danielle,

Referring to your continuous attempts to call me or e-mail me over the last few days, I wish to point you to my latest e-mail, the one from 1st May. In it I clearly mention that I need a lot of time to prepare my appeal. As such I continue to sometimes log in in my mailbox and when more convenient forward certain e-mails to myself. I don't know what else to do as I not always have an internet connection when working on this.

In the same e-mail I requested some minutes etc. Those I will need for a complete appeal, I haven't received those yet, please can you chase this?

Apart of this I keep getting confusing and contradictory messages from the company, i.e. the management of my team and HR. I'm going through a very difficult time, as you must

understand by now, and creating more confusion and insecurity doesn't help me at all.

Could you please point out what my present situation is:

- I have already already been sacked by the company.

- I am supposed to resign myself.

- I am to return to work after my appeal has been investigated.

In the last case I have clearly pointed out that I want suspension till 8th May, then annual leave till 16th May. This gives both me the necessary time to write an appeal and the company after that time to investigate it properly. That seems quite an honest deal to me.

Looking forward to you reply and with kind regards,

Bart

289. The same day 4th May 2018 Emma Horwood replied to my email and explained how I had to do the appeal. She went to great lengths to try to downplay what my appeal should be. According to her I should only explain in my appeal why going back to work without any real changes regarding the bullying, would not work. She clearly did not take on board any of the reasons I already brought up earlier or refused to accept those. There was no mention at all about my mental health problems although I had explained those several times over the last few days and weeks. There was also the continued lie about my holiday request not being possible, etc. She wrote that I had been put on leave without pay but further threatened to sack me if I were to stay away from work another day. That I might have a new mental breakdown when going back to the toxic environment, did not seem to worry her at all. She entirely ignored that I wanted to appeal against not only the outcome of the decision, I wanted to appeal the whole of the flawed and manipulated investigation so I wanted to bring up as much material as possible, properly organised in a timeline for a better understanding.

290. Emma Horwood's reply via email (CC Danielle Wood):

Morning Bart,

Thank you for finally getting in touch, we were concerned about you.

Okay it seems you have a number of issues confused, specifically in regards to the appeal. As you know, I have tried to call you the last couple of days to check on your wellbeing and to also clear up these points as it may have been easier on the phone,

however I can detail it here for you.

Firstly, the appeal you are planning to raise is against the decision made by Roni Maman and why you do not feel it is a workable solution. You shouldn't need to consult thousands of emails as you say you have to do, it is not about going back over old ground. You raised a grievance against Susana Martin, you provided supporting documentation to accompany your claim of bullying and had an opportunity to explain everything to Roni. All of this information has already been assessed as part of the investigation carried out by Roni. The grievance has been heard and an outcome delivered. To repeat and so there can be no confusion, your appeal can ONLY be against the outcome and why you do not feel it is a workable solution. This is point one.

Point two, it is neither practice nor policy for an employee to remain on suspension for the purpose of making an appeal. Suspension is something the company has to grant, not something the employee chooses. This was initially explained to you in an email from Danielle Wood on Friday 27th April 2018 has been made clear to you (after your confusion) on 30th April 2018 after you failed to appear for your shifts on the 27th, 28th and 29th April 2018.

Point three is with regards to your holiday. As you have already been made aware, due to rota constraints only part of your leave request has been granted; 10th to 15th May. As per both the company policy

<https://my.gvcgroup.com/policies/time%20off/gibraltar%20holiday%20leave>

%20process.aspx and as detailed in your contract of employment (clause 9.1), leave must be approved in advance.

You are still employed with the business but you are currently absent without leave which, if continued, is likely to be treated as gross misconduct (as per clause 10.1 of your employment contract) and may result in your dismissal. As per your employment contract, unauthorised absence for a period of 3 days or more will invoke this clause. Although you have been absent without leave since 27th April 2018, due to your confusion in this regard we are disregarding all days prior to 30th April (although these will be unpaid) when Danielle Wood made it very clear to you. This means both 2nd and 3rd May are considered unauthorised. You are expected on shift tomorrow at 12pm. Failure to appear will adversely affect your continued employment.

This should clear up any confusion you have about your current status and what next steps are expected.

However, should you have any questions at all, please feel free to email or call me.

*Many thanks,
Emma*

291. The same day 4th May 2018 I replied via email to Emma Horwood asking her to bring up written evidence to support her explanation of the appeal process as her explanation is not mentioned in the company's Bullying at Work Policy at all. I asked them to send me scans of any additional Bullying at Work Policy pages other than the three printed pages from the intranet I had received during the meeting in April. I had a strong suspicion by then that they were making things up to fob me off and that they were not really interested in sorting out the bullying issues.

292. My email to Emma Horwood and Danielle Wood:

Dear Emma, Danielle,

I don't want to be a pain or waste your time, but please understand that I am now even more confused than before re the appeal process.

In the GVC Bullying at Work Policy, the 3 pages you printed from the intranet, and handed me personally at the end of our meeting at 9th April 2018, the paragraph about appeal says: "The reasons for appeal must be submitted to HR in writing within five working days of receiving written notice of the outcome." Just this simple sentence, nothing more.

You now inform me about all these Terms and Conditions regarding the appeal of which I was entirely unaware and have never seen before. For your reference I attached scans of the 3 pages you gave me.

For some reason I can't access the intranet from home so I am not able to look for all the Terms and Conditions that you bring up. Can you please send me scans of those pages and any other re the Bullying Policy so that I can keep those in mind during the writing of my appeal.

As you must be aware I am not used to all these procedures as it is the first time in my life that something like this happens to me. For that I would really appreciate if you could send me those scans asap so that I won't have to waste another few days going through thousands of e-mails to find those I think could be relevant.

Thanks in advance and sorry again,

Bart

293. The same day 4th May 2018 Emma Horwood replied to my email and explained the bullying procedure in the company. This time she tried to convince me that the appeal process' only intention was to have the bullying investigation decision changed or reversed. She claimed that I did not need to bring evidence with me supporting the reasons for which I wanted to have the decision changed or reversed. That sounded entirely ridiculous to me and I was convinced that they thought that I was some kind of idiot. My whole point was that they had not done an independent investigation and did not include all the evidence available, they had just picked and chosen what they liked to reduce my complaints of eleven months of bullying to some minor incident with my team leader. The only way to be able to make them understand that they had to reverse or change their decision, was to make them finally understand that this was not about some minor incident with my team leader, that I had lost all trust and confidence in my management and HR and to point out that they were severely lacking in their Duty of Care regarding my mental health problems caused by the bullying. The clear intention to sabotage my appeal became more obvious than ever.

294. The email Emma Horwood sent (CC Danielle Wood):

Hi Bart,

I'm sorry to hear that my email has somehow caused more confusion. Maybe it is easier to discuss over the telephone? Please call me if you would like advice regarding the processes and procedures around grievances and what an appeal might look like.

This isn't about "terms and conditions" regarding the ability to appeal an outcome of a grievance, this is a very standard process followed by any responsible employer in the UK and Gibraltar which effectively works as follows:

- A formal grievance/complaint is received by HR from the employee*
- A grievance hearing is held with a manager giving the employee the opportunity to state their grievance and discuss the matter in further detail*
- Further investigations are conducted as required*
- An outcome is delivered*
- If the employee is dissatisfied with the outcome, they have the right to appeal said outcome in writing within 5 working days of receiving written notice of the outcome The point I was making in my earlier email was in response to you claiming to need 5 business days away from work (by means of suspension on full pay) to "go through thousands of*

emails” in order to create your appeal. An appeal by its definition is an application for a decision to be reversed/changed. It’s not to go over the whole complaint again by way of looking over “thousands of emails”. Does that make sense?

Many thanks,

Emma

295. The same day 4th May 2018 I sent another email to Emma Horwood asking if the three printed pages from the intranet I received in April that year were the company's complete Bullying at Work Policy. I also pointed out the incomplete information available to employees about the bullying reporting procedures to be followed. I asked this specifically because the requirements in the Schedule of the Gibraltar Bullying at Work Act 2014 clearly pointed out that the following had to be provided: “details (including names and contact telephone numbers) of designated persons available to counsel, assist and advise individuals bringing complaints”. I wanted to know who these designated persons were so I could also file a formal complaint against Danielle Wood and Emma Horwood from HR who were clearly manipulating the process to cover up for others and/or themselves. I never found out who those designated persons were or even if those people existed in the company.

296. The email I sent to Emma Horwood (CC Danielle Wood):

Hi Emma,

If I understand correctly then: the 3 pages printed from the intranet that you gave me are the whole Bullying at Work Policy for GVC? So there are no additional Policy requirements published somewhere I have to keep in mind or so for my appeal, as your "terms and conditions" made me believe?

If that's the case, can I suggest that the existing Policy on the intranet is then updated or clarified to omit confusion as has happened with me? We're losing a lot of time here because that isn't mentioned there. Just trying to help.

Thanks,

Bart

297. That Friday 4th May 2018 I was not supposed to work according to the latest shift roster I had received. The two following days, Saturday and Sunday, I was on the shift roster from 12h00 till 20h00. The further proof of sabotaging of my appeal process by HR made that I continued to feel very depressed and had no courage at all to return to work. I was heavily convinced that returning would result in another mental breakdown and I genuinely feared that it would be worse than the ones I had endured before. I therefore was unable to go to work and simply stayed at home. The amounts of alcohol I consumed to be able to sleep had gone up again and I just waited for the world to stop turning and end my suffering.

298. On 7th May 2018 at 12h37 I sent an email to Cecilia Malmgren at HR, well before the deadline that was that day at close of business day. I informed her officialy that I appealed against the bullying investigation outcome. I asked for some time off and to meet again on 16th May 2018 after my holiday in Belgium. I entered my appeal against the bullying investigation, and the next thing was that I got sacked. No goodwill, no empathy, no understanding or acceptance of my mental health problems, just a cold blooded dismissal to get rid of the problem that I apparently had become after being bullied for just under a year. There was no doubt in my mind that it was no coincidence that I was working in my 51st week and for unfair dismissal I needed fifty-two weeks of employment. There was no doubt in my mind that they had it all nicely calculated and worked out to get rid of me in the way that would most harm my legal rights and future chances of finding another job in Gibraltar. They just hoped I would go away and never return so their mistakes, professional negligence, and intentional cover ups would be hidden forever. Exactly as what had happened with Dennis Dorland, who returned to The Netherlands after being bullied out of the company.

299. My email to Cecilia Malmgren:

Dear Cecilia,

As already earlier mentioned to Danielle and Emma I wish to appeal against the outcome of the bullying investigation based on the multitude of complaints I have been writing since 24 July last year. On 31 January this year I had a first meeting with HR (Danielle) regarding the atmosphere in the Dutch/Belgian team in which I elaborated on the bullying

by a clique of team members.

I am dismayed that the "investigation" though is based only on my complaint from 6 April this year. As part of that investigation only my team leader Susana has been interviewed. My whole documented claim of ongoing bullying over the last 11 months has been reduced and minimised to a discussion between Susana and me and its my word against hers. None of the proof I have provided has been used to bring a more realistic outcome. 11 months of bullying that I have been reporting in detail via e-mail has in the company's view now become "some concerns" with colleagues. As all e-mails printed together will fill a significant pile of pages it shows that my complaints haven't been investigated at all. The outcome of your investigation simply is that I should go back to work as if nothing ever happened.

So what then with my loss of income of 18 days of sick leave at half pay? My "stress related anxiety" was a direct consequence of the bullying and that loss of income is a punishment for me being victim of bullying. Now I have been put on leave without pay although I was made to believe that my suspension would continue. The company is doing its best apparently to make me a criminal instead of a victim. I'm the bad guy now apparently.

As part of my appeal I have been preparing a timeline of all relevant events and communication regarding my bullying. Unfortunately Danielle and Emma are now refusing to send me copies of certain documents I asked for my appeal and I don't want to send an incomplete timeline. Under the Data Protection Act the requested information should have been provided so the company is breaching that law now.

For this I wish to report Danielle and Emma. They also have over the last few weeks been giving me confusing, conflicting and at times misleading information leading to the situation we are in today, worse than ever.

While my appeal might now be considered without me being given an honest chance to fully prepare it, I think that the way forward is to let things settle a bit and then organise a meeting in which progress can be discussed. As informed before: tomorrow morning early I leave for annual leave and will be back in Gibraltar 16 May. I am willing to meet on that day with HR. I will have spent some quality time with my family in Belgium then far away of all the present issues so could come to a meeting with a fresh mind.

Looking forward to your answer and with kind regards,

Bart

300. That same day 7th May 2018 at 13h22, forty-five minutes after I sent my appeal to Cecilia Malmgren, Susana Martin sent an email to the Scandinavian team to ask to help out the Dutch/Flemish team. This again showed that an overflow system existed and that was more evidence that my holiday request was perfectly reasonable and feasible, even with the reduced team numbers.

301. Susana Martin's email:

Hello SCAN team ;-),

If the workload is done in your own support, please help out in the Dutch.com inbox. We need to always try to keep them to "0".

If there the workload is done as well, we help out in the EN inbox.

Thank you all for your help, kr.

Susana

302. On 8th May 2018 at 10h23 Emma Horwood sent me via email a "notice of termination of employment". The appeal against the bullying investigation outcome I sent the day before was not even mentioned. I had not been able to go back to work because of the mental health problems caused by the bullying. HR had organised a situation where I was forced to go in absence without leave and then got me fired for it. Their lack of adequate action led to financial losses that I wanted to be compensated. My first mental breakdown led to a second and worse mental breakdown that led to me being sacked. That must have been perfectly foreseeable by my management and HR as it was well documented in several emails and minutes of meetings. The termination of employment letter was three pages long, which was unexpected, as half a page would have been sufficient. The first two pages were just some repeats of things already mentioned before but seemed to try to build up a reasoning for sacking me without mentioning at all my ongoing mental health problems. It would have been sufficient for them to have written: "you have been absent without leave for x days, and therefore your services are no longer required." But no, they wrote an explanation of two pages, probably to convince themselves that what they were doing was right although they must have known that it was not right at all. Only the third page contained some useful information on how the financial aspects of my dismissal would be handled.

303. Emma Horwood's email:

Hi Bart,

Please see the attached letter. The original will be delivered to you this morning.

Thanks,

Emma

304. Notice of termination of employment:

Dear Bart,

Re: Termination of Employment – Absence from work without notification

I am writing to you further to my emails of 2nd and 3rd May 2018 and our email correspondence of the 4th May 2018. For ease, I am going to detail a timeline of events:

- You provided various doctors notes for sickness absence for stress related anxiety from 12th March 2018 to 10th April 2018.*
- On 6th April 2018 you raised a grievance against your line manager Susana Martin as an accusation of bullying.*
- Danielle Wood (Human Resources) replied to you on 9th April 2018 and invited you to attend a meeting to look at your return to work and discuss your email in more detail.*
- This meeting took place on 9th April 2018 at 4pm, led by Danielle Wood with me taking minutes (which have been shared with you and you have provided input to).*
- Following this meeting, it was decided a formal grievance process needed to take place. Ordinarily, when a grievance is against the immediate line manager, the hearing would be held by their manager. However, in this instance as Samira Mouhayar, Head of Customer Service WE was implicated as part of your complaint, we had to escalate to her line manager Roni Maman, VP Business Operations.*
- All information regarding your grievance was sent to Roni Maman (including the various emails you sent to myself and Danielle Wood on 11th April 2018) in order for him to assess and carry out investigation as needed. This included holding an investigation meeting with Susana Martin.*
- It was agreed with Danielle Wood that you would be suspended while the investigation took place and this was initially from 16th to 20th April 2018 but was extended to 25th April 2018 to enable all the relevant meetings and reviews to take place.*
- On 17th April 2018 you requested Annual Leave between 8th and 15th May 2018, this was subsequently partly approved for the dates 10th to 15th May 2018 due to availability of other*

team members to cover the shifts. You challenged this decision. The reasons for the decision were explained and it was pointed out that you should get holiday approval before making plans. However, on 4th May 2018 you wrote to us to tell us you would be taking the annual leave despite it not being approved.

- Roni Maman wanted to speak to give you an opportunity to explain and go over some of your points, for clarity. This meeting took place on 24th April 2018 at 9.30am and I was in attendance to take notes (which have been shared with you and you have provided input to).

- Following this meeting with yourself, the meeting with Susana Martin and assessing all information provided, Roni Maman delivered an outcome which was detailed in writing and sent to you on 26th April 2018. This letter offered a solution to enable you to return to work on 27th April 2018.

- On the morning of the 27th April 2018, you emailed myself and Danielle Wood to advise of your intention to appeal against the decision and stated you intended to remain on suspension on full pay for the 5 working days. Danielle Wood responded at lunchtime on 27th April 2018 explaining what the next steps looked like regarding the appeal. She also explained that it was not practice for you to be suspended for the purpose of an appeal and as such you were expected back on your shift.

- You failed to appear for your shift on 27th, 28th, 29th and 30th April 2018. As normal practice and in line with company policy, your line manager tried to contact you when you failed to appear to check on your wellbeing and understand why you had not attended work.

- Danielle Wood again emailed you on 30th April 2018 to clarify the situation, confirming you were not suspended on full pay and you would be expected back in the office for your shifts. She also confirmed it was appropriate for your line manager to be contacting you to check on your whereabouts following the delivery of the outcome of the investigation. Furthermore, your attention was drawn to the fact that your current absence was considered unauthorised and that you should be aware that, in accordance with your Clause 10 of your employment contract your absence could be considered as gross misconduct.

- On 1st May 2018 you emailed myself and Danielle Wood claiming you were confused about the content of Danielle Wood's email of 27th April 2018 regarding your return to work. Danielle Wood responded on 1st May 2018 and again highlighted the fact you were due back on shift and that you were now absent without leave and referred you to Clause

10 of your contract again.

- You failed to appear for your shift on 2nd May 2018. I tried to call you but there was no answer and so I dropped you an email asking you to make contact.

- You failed to appear for your shift on 3rd May 2018. Again, I tried to call you and make contact via email and Skype for Business (as you had been showing as online) to check on your wellbeing and understand your intention with regard to attending work, but you did not respond.

- You finally responded on 4th May 2018 stating that you needed a lot of time to prepare your appeal. As you still seemed unclear around the appeal process/how suspension works, I responded to provide you with more clarity and again highlighted the fact your absence was unauthorised and that any continued absence would adversely affect your employment. At this point you also asked

- You then failed to appear for your shifts on both 5th and 6th May 2018.

As per Clause 10.1 of your Employment Contract (which has been highlighted to you on more than one occasion) 3 days or more of unauthorised absence is grounds for gross misconduct which can lead to your dismissal without notice or pay in lieu of notice.

Therefore, you have left us with not option but to invoke this clause and terminate your employment.

I hereby confirm that your final day with the business is 7th May 2018.

As you have been absent, you will receive no payment from 1st May 2018 until your termination date in accordance with the terms of your contract. You have been paid for 27th

- 30th April 2018 in the April payroll along with your April salary but did not work these days, therefore as these should have been unpaid (as they were unauthorised absence), they will be deducted from your final payment.

With regards to holiday, you carried over 5 days annual leave from the 2017 year and as at 7th May 2018 you would have accrued 13 days for this year making a total allowance for 2018 so far of 18 days. Since 1st January 2018 you have taken 7 days meaning you have 11 days holiday outstanding which is owed to you.

Your final salary will look as follows:

[Table with calculations]

May I remind you that you have the right to appeal against this decision and any appeal should be made in writing within 5 working days of receipt of this letter to: Cecilia Malmgren, Head of HR Operations, GVC Services Ltd, Atlantic Suites, Gibraltar.

When you joined the company you signed a contract which contains a confidentiality

clause and I would emphasise to you that this continues to apply after your association with the Company ends.

If you have any questions or need any clarification on any of the points please do let me know.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Horwood

Human Resources

305. The termination of employment letter was a nice doctored selection of events and communications trying to show that I was a bad employee and, conveniently for them, entirely ignored the many times I had brought up my mental health problems and the ongoing risks for it. The letter mentioned the suspension with full pay but not that this only came after I had surrendered several of my annual leave days to give Danielle Wood time to find a solution and do an investigation. They wrote that I had left them with no option but to terminate my employment but then they point out the eleven annual leave days available that could have been used for extra time to find a solution. They could have also asked me to continue on leave without pay till I returned with a clear mind from my holiday in Belgium, but they did not. Then there is the gloating in how they are going to deduct money from my final pay, the revenge feelings are almost dripping from the text. And of course there is the usual threat, this time the confidentiality clause in my contract which they seem to try to use on this occasion to prevent me from going to court over my rights.

306. What is also entirely forgotten in the letter is the 24th April 2018 meeting with Roni Maman in which my last comments were: "The thing is, I don't see myself going back, it will be the same in a couple of weeks. From the first day, it's been a constant crisis." That is my clear and undisputable statement that I could simply not return to the team with the proposed "solution" and this has been entirely ignored since I said it and repeated it in later email communications. The foreseeability of me not returning to the work floor for fear of further and worse mental health issues was undeniable, but still that was the only solution they came up with. Knowing that, it was easy enough for them to create the situation which led eventually to me being sacked. And after all the extra miles I had gone during my employment, they sacked me for gross misconduct, to make sure it would hurt me the

most and to further damage my mental health as much as they could.

307. On 11th May 2018 I appealed via email against my dismissal citing several arguments. I knew that my appeal would be hopeless because of all the lies, misrepresentations and manipulations that had already happened in the past. Still I found it important to let them know how I saw the present situation. I had been several days in Belgium by then and being away from Gibraltar brought a huge relief to my mental health. I could at least take some distance from the situation now and look at it with different eyes. The fact that I was sacked also meant that the bullying had come to an end, that further contributed to my feelings of relief. There was no way though that I would accept the financial losses they had forced upon me, that was a feeling that grew stronger and stronger every day. There had been enough injustices while I worked there and that should be corrected one way or another to prevent it from happening again to others, like what had for instance happened to Dennis Dorland. I definitely was not back to the normal mental health state I had been in before I started working at GVC/bwin but at least for the time being I had enough with family and friends to occupy my mind and push the bullying to the back of my mind for a few days.

308. My appeal sent to Cecilia Malmgren:

Dear Cecilia,

To my dismay the first impression of Emma's Termination of Employment e-mail looks like a cheap attempt to save some money on a few days of wages and sick leave, so much for my proposal to meet and discuss a way forward. It just confirms my strong feeling from the last few weeks that the company was actively looking for ways to get rid of me cheaply instead of finding a decent solution to my bullying complaints.

I can add to this that the person who checks my mailbox when I'm away reported that no original copy of your dismissal notification or any other communication was delivered to my home address as Emma claims in her e-mail from 08.05.2018.

Emma also claims I haven been absent from work without notification. That is incorrect: I have repeatedly informed the company that I could not return to work without a proper solution for 11 months of bullying and victimisation. I am still awaiting an investigation and reply for my appeal on 07.05.2018 to Cecilia about the Bullying Investigation Outcome. I

have also clearly stated on several occasions that from 08.05.2018 till 16.05.2018 I would not be in Gibraltar so unable to attend work. The company was very well aware that I would not be present those days. Let it be very clear to all that it is the company that is at fault and the company is entirely responsible for creating a situation where it has been made impossible for me to return to work. As such victimising me for the company's failure of having a proper Bullying at Work Policy fulfilling all requirements of Gibraltar's legislation is utterly immoral. Forcing me to absence without leave, causing me mental and physical hardship, fabricating evidence to build a case to sack me, confusing e-mails with multiple possible interpretations, etc. all indicate strongly a conspiracy at several levels in the company against my person and professional interests.

I see it as an intentional insult that it is precisely Emma, whom I reported for her "confusing, conflicting and at times misleading" attitude, is the one to send me the dismissal notice. Lack of respect is again the order of the day. It also shows that my appeal against the Bullying Investigation Outcome has not even been read or considered. The extensive explanation of the reasons for my dismissal shows that the real reason for my dismissal are my 11 months of complaints about bullying, not a few days of "unauthorised" leave, of which you actually voluntarily agree to drop the first 3 ones showing you have no grounds. Somehow I understand the choice the company made though: Yousri, Jose Luis, Susana, Samira, Martijn, Roni, Danielle and Emma all might face disciplinary sanctions in case of a serious and independent investigation. It is of course much easier to sack the 1 victim. I'm not as stupid as you think...

The urgency and amateurishly hastened way which with the company is now dismissing me shows the panic that is around because I will soon be 1 year with the company. If you are trying to prevent me from claiming unfair dismissal because I'm not yet 1 year in the company, then it is already too late anyway.

The company only makes it much worse, probably trying to prevent me from going to court over unfair dismissal but adding even more victimisation to my bullying complaint. I have already mentioned the Gibraltar Employment (Bullying at Work) Act 2014 to Danielle and Emma in our meeting on 09.04.2018, the minutes also clearly mention this. Bullying, victimisation, an illegal Bullying at Work Policy, breaching the Gibraltar Data Protection Act and unfair dismissal, you must be really proud of yourselves...

There have been several attempts to sabotage my appeal against the Bullying Investigation Outcome, now even more because of my dismissal, intended so as not to have to reply to my appeal. Your attempted sabotage has mostly failed though as my file is

complete and ready to go to court well within the 3 months required by the relevant laws. Let me give you an example of your conspiracy: my holiday request for 08.05.2018 till 16.05.2018 that I orally requested in February this year but has since been ignored or turned down "for reasons of not being possible for lack of other team members availability", a fact that I always said was incorrect. I have now been proven right, please see the attached file with shift changes for my holiday period. On 26.04.2018 the shift plan is changed and Kieran is moved for week 19 from working 16 - 24 to 13 -21. Simply having it changed to 12 - 20 would have made my holiday in Belgium possible. Susana isn't showing any goodwill and creating an unnecessary problem for me. On 02.05.2018 the shift plan is changed again by Susana: Kieran does now do the 12 - 20 shift so the chat and phone service is entirely covered and this makes my holiday perfectly possible. It is malicious that my holiday request isn't approved, what shows Susana continues to bully me, victimisation and a conspiracy as HR continues to allow this. It also shows that every attempt is made to force me into unauthorised leave. Even worse: my agreed on holiday (from 10.05.2018 till 15.05.2018) is not even in the shift roster. It shows exactly the malicious thinking behind it all.

Other mentioned options like e.g. temporarily being placed in another team or other department aren't even considered anymore. And that while I was looking forward to return in time for this summer's World Cup season where a lot of potential overtime could be done. The company either doesn't care that my dismissal will have a very demoralising effect on the few remaining team members, they all have witnessed what I had to go through.

From a legal point of view the Gibraltar Employment Act states that an employee cannot claim to be unfairly dismissed if he was not continuously employed for a period of not less than 52 weeks. But it also states that the 52 weeks requirement is voided when the dismissal of an employee by an employer if the reason for it was that the employee alleged that the employer had infringed a relevant statutory right.

The statutory right of all employees not to be subjected to bullying and victimisation is the one I mentioned before. I'm not a lawyer but I think this is clear enough. The Gibraltar Employment (Bullying at Work) Act 2014 doesn't even have this 52 weeks requirement. For all these reasons I appeal the Termination of Employment and repeat my proposal to meet on 16.05.2018 when I will be back in Gibraltar. I also demand that my appeal against the Bullying Investigation Outcome is properly investigated. Obviously there will be no need to meet if I will still be sacked, for that I ask you to review the decision most urgently.

I propose "leave without pay" for the days you claim I have not been authorised but I felt forced to take off. If the dismissal is not fully revoked then there is no reason for me to return to Gibraltar by 16.05.2018 and I will rebook my return flight at a later date so I can spend some extra time with my family and friends in Belgium.

Regards,

Bart

309. That same day 11th May 2018 Cecilia Malmgren replied to my appeal email acknowledging receipt of both my appeals; the one against the bullying investigation outcome and the second appeal against my dismissal. She invited me to a hearing but gave no date for it. My arguments were already well explained in writing so I was wondering why there should be another meeting to repeat the same things. Cecilia Malmgren refused to hear my appeal against the bullying investigation and only the one about dismissal would be heard although I had made it extremely clear that one led to the other. This was a clear attempt to sabotage my bullying appeal. For the dismissal appeal the only aspect to be considered was if yes or no I was absent without leave, not what the reasons for my absence were. More sabotage of my appeals and a clear indication that they had no intention to deal with my appeals in an impartial, just and honest way and the conclusions were already made before they had even heard my appeals.

310. Cecilia Malmgren's email:

Hi Bart,

Please find attached our acknowledgement of your appeals.

Can you please acknowledge receipt.

Kind regards,

Cecilia Malmgren

311. The letter sent by Cecilia Malmgren:

Dear Bart

Re: Acknowledgement of appeals

I write to acknowledge receipt of your appeal against the outcome of your grievance dated

7th May 2018 and your dismissal dated 11th May 2018.

The first step will be to invite you to a hearing to discuss your appeal against the decision to dismiss you.

The focus of this meeting will be to understand why you feel the decision to dismiss you based on Clause 10 of your employment contract is incorrect.

If the decision, to dismiss you, is overturned in the appeal hearing and you return to work, we will then continue with the appeal against your Grievance.

We will be in contact again, in due course, to confirm the details of the hearing. To accommodate your travel plans we intend to hold the appeal hearing after you return to the country. We understand that this can, therefore, be any time on or after 17th May 2018. If this is incorrect please let me know as soon as possible so we can make the appropriate arrangements for the appeal hearing.

In the interim, you remained dismissed.

If this letter, or the information that you have received, needs further clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Cecilia Malmgren

Head of HR Operations

CC: Personnel File

312. On 21st May 2018 I sent a reminder email to Cecilia Malmgren to inform her that I had not heard back from her for ten days after I filed my appeal against my dismissal. This showed their attitude that they were happy that “the problem was solved” by sacking me. No more time was to be wasted on my case as they knew I would never return to the company anyway, their manipulating of the appeals provided for that. It was also convenient as now they did not have to do any disciplinary investigations anymore against the people who had bullied me or covered up for them.

313. My email to Cecilia Malmgren:

Dear Cecilia,

On 11.05.2018 you informed me via e-mail that you received my appeal against my unfair dismissal following several months of bullying complaints. You also confirmed receipt of

my appeal against the Bullying Investigation Outcome and your refusal to act on that appeal.

We are now ten days further and I haven't received any further news from you, it looks like you are not taking my dismissal appeal seriously, as you never took my complaints re bullying seriously. I can confirm you that there is no need for a hearing or meeting as my written appeal already contains the most important points.

I hereby request documentary evidence of my rights within the appeal for dismissal procedure. I also request any other documentary evidence relevant to my case.

Regards,

Bart Van Thienen

314. On 22nd May 2018 Cecilia Malmgren replied and sent an invite for a hearing on Friday 25th May 2018, only three days notice. Her email contained several blatant lies. She claimed that I could not be reached as I had been in Belgium but I read, sent and replied to emails from HR while I was on my holiday there and had my mobile phone with me. She also claimed that she was on business travel but that meant that she still had access to her emails and she was not incommunicado either. I immediately noticed the sadistic insult to hold the appeal hearing in the "Recognition Meeting Room". Her attempt to hide from the chairman of the meeting that the real reason for my dismissal was the bullying was obvious. Cecilia Malmgren's mention that I had the right to be accompanied at the appeal hearing by a work colleague and no other form of representation was permitted, made it tremendously clear that they had no genuine intention to do a proper appeal hearing, just a pro forma hearing to finally get rid of me once and for all. The loss of trust and confidence in HR had never been more complete than after reading that email and letter.

315. Cecilia Malmgren's reply via email:

Hi Bart,

I was traveling with business last week and returned yesterday (21 May). As you can see from my email below I ask you to acknowledge the receipt of this letter and I knew you were out of the country.

I have now prepared the hearing for this Friday- see attached invite letter and attached a copy of your employment contract.

Please confirm acknowledgement of this letter/invite.

Kind regards,

Cecilia Malmgren

316. The letter Cecilia Malmgren sent:

Dear Bart

RE: Invite to Dismissal Appeal Hearing

Following receipt of your appeal correspondence date 11th May 2018 and further to our letter of the same date, I am writing to invite you to an official appeal hearing regarding your dismissal.

The meeting will take place on Friday 25th May 2018 at 12pm. This will take place at Suite 6, Atlantic Suites – Recognition Meeting Room.

The hearing will be chaired by Obdulio Bacarese -Finance Director. I will be in attendance to support the process and Virginia Gilda Villalta – HR & Payroll Administrator will take notes. During this meeting we will discuss your grounds for appeal for dismissal. The meeting will cover the points in your appeal letter which are related to the reasons for dismissing you based on Clause 10 of your employment contract, copy attached.

You have the right to be accompanied at the appeal hearing by a work colleague. Please be aware no other form of representation is permitted and it is your responsibility to make the necessary arrangements. If you wish to be accompanied, please contact me by email to confirm in writing by Thursday 24th May at 12pm to advise me of the name of the person, so that any necessary arrangements can be made.

The decision of the appeal is final and there is no further right of review.

If this letter or the information that you have received needs further clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Cecilia Malmgren

Head of HR Operations

CC Personnel File

Employment Contract

317. On 23rd May 2018 I sent an email to Cecilia Malmgren about the company breaching

the Gibraltar Data Protection Act and other laws. I also pointed out the intimidating set up of the proposed appeal meeting: three of GVC/bwin, some of them complete and utter strangers to me, whereas I would be alone. I was allowed to bring a colleague but this person could be easily manipulated or put under pressure by the company. I pointed out that their claim that the final decision in this case would be made by the company was not correct as there was also the further option of the Employment Tribunal. After a week away in Belgium and my initial tremendous relief that finally the bullying had finished by being sacked, I had a relapse into my previous despair. I had to start again from zero and find a job in another gaming company, starting at the bottom again by learning their products and procedures, going through a probation time again, etc. This was extra complicated because I was sacked for gross misconduct/absence without leave. The gaming sector is quite small and especially at management level everyone knows everyone. Seeing the bad way in which I had been kicked out of GVC/bwin, I could not expect that I would get a good reference. During later job interviews with other gaming companies it was always brought up that they knew people working at GVC/bwin so they could ask informal references without having to go through the official channels. Or the person interviewing me said something like: "I met one of your ex-colleagues in a bar in La Linea yesterday", etc. In general my depressed feelings continued, one day a bit better, the next day worse. I continued to drink to be able to sleep and started elaborating on the timeline I had written for the bullying appeal. This made me relive the bullying I had to suffer while still employed and did not help my mental health. The way the company continued to fob me off regarding both the appeals for bullying and dismissal, showing they were never really interested in giving me a fair and honest chance, depressed me even more.

318. My email to Cecilia Malmgren:

Dear Cecilia,

It is no surprise for me that as usual the company ignores my request for documentary evidence of my rights within the appeal for dismissal procedure and my request for any other documentary evidence relevant to my case. The continuation of knowingly and purposely breaching the Gibraltar Data Protection Act and other Laws is appalling.

I notice that you summon me to a meeting on 25 May to discuss my unfair dismissal. This is very short notice and for that I have to inform you I had already made other arrangements for that date.

I also notice the usual intimidating set up of that proposed meeting: three of GVC while I will be alone. I apparently am allowed to bring a colleague, with which you must mean ex-colleague as you seem to forget you have sacked me. I do not intend to bring an ex-colleague to any meeting as this person could be easily manipulated or put under pressure by the company that employs him. That would actually make it four against one. I can assure you that I wish to be accompanied at such a meeting by my lawyers, a representative of a Union, a representative of the ETB, a representative of the Dignity at Work Group, a representative of the Gibraltar Regulatory Authority and other relevant parties.

The lack of documentary evidence of my rights within the appeal also shows (again) that rules are made up as they're written. It is pretty obvious that you pick and choose which things can be discussed during this proposed meeting and which can't. No surprises here that none of my valid points are part of your list. It becomes very clear that you have already doctored the outcome of the proposed meeting and the decision has already been made long before the meeting is to start. There is clearly no need for me to attend such a meeting, that would be a total waste of time. I repeat that you can discuss my written points and arguments from the last twelve months and with that I mean ALL of them, not just the ones that you find convenient.

You write that the appeal decision is final and I have no further right of review. I think that statement is entirely wrong as the final decision in this case will be made by the Industrial Tribunal, not by the GVC management.

Regards,

Bart Van Thienen

319. That same day 23rd May 2018 Cecilia Malmgren replied to my email. Now she claimed that she had no idea which documents I requested under the Data Protection Act, which was a clear lie. She also stated that she would only hand over the requested documents if they were of relevance for the appeal of my dismissal. The handing over of documents was conditional and to be decided by GVC/bwin, another fobbing off effort and breaching the Data Protection Act to sabotage my appeal. The rules had changed again, making them up as they went along, as now I could bring a person of my choice, but I was informed that that was an exception. No documentary evidence was presented in which the procedures were explained. They only accepted to deal with my dismissal appeal and

did not want to deal with my appeal for the bullying investigation outcome, although it was precisely that one that had led to my dismissal. More proof that they kept the real problems away from the proposed meeting and just wanted a pro forma hearing for which the decision was already made without hearing the real story about the bullying. Exactly the same as had happened with the investigation meeting with Roni Maman that had resulted in “nothing really happened so go back to the bullies”.

320. The email from Cecilia Malmgren:

Hi Bart,

I'm unsure what documents you are missing related to your dismissal? If you inform me, and this is of relevance for the appeal of your dismissal, I will provide this to you.

If the 25 of May is not suitable could you suggest an alternative date please? Please note that I'm on annual leave next week and return to the office on 5th of June.

In terms of the set up for the appeal. I just want to clarify that Obdulio is the decision maker, I'm there to support him in his role and Virginia is only a note taker. If you don't wish to bring an ex-colleague, can you please give me the name of the person you wish to accompany you and explain your relationship.

This is outside of the normal procedure but I would, as an exception, consider this request. When you received the dismissal letter there was information about who you should appeal to and within what timeframe and when you got the invitation for the appeal hearing we again outlined what procedure we would follow. This is the standard process as we are only reviewing the decision of dismissing you due to be absent without leave from work in accordance to clause 10 in your employment contract. As explained if the decision is to reinstate you we will hear the appeal against the outcome of your grievance. I just want to clarify that within GVC an appeal is only heard one time and there is no further stage internally. If you decide to take this further to an Employment Tribunal that is your right.

Kind regards,

Cecilia Malmgren

321. On 25th May 2018 I replied via email to Cecilia Malmgren that I had repeatedly stated that my appeal against unfair dismissal and my appeal against the Bullying Investigation

Outcome were intrinsically linked. The company was clearly not genuinely looking for a solution and it was becoming very obvious that they were trying to win time in the hope that the legal three months time limit to start proceedings at the Employment Tribunal under the Bullying at Work Act would lapse.

322. My reply to Cecilia Malmgren:

Dear Cecilia,

Your e-mails are becoming ever more obtuse and confusing.

On several occasions in the recent past I have listed you the documents and information requested. I have also repeatedly stated that my appeal against unfair dismissal and my appeal against the Bullying Investigation Outcome are intrinsically connected.

Again: the lack of documentary evidence of my rights within the appeals or your continuing refusals to provide them to me, show that the company is not genuinely looking for a solution and it is becoming obvious that you are trying to win time in the hope that the legal time limits will be gone so I can't use legal action.

As I am now convinced that GVC has zero interest in working out an honest solution respecting all my rights, I can confirm that today the forms for the Industrial Tribunal have been filled in.

Regards,

Bart

323. On 30th May 2018 I received an email from Gareth Fieldhouse, legal counsel for GVC according to the footer of the email. All of a sudden I could now do both appeals; bullying and dismissal. My bullying complaints were still minimised as “allegations” and there was no mention at all about my mental health condition caused by the company's inaction to stop the bullying. The appeal for bullying would be heard prior to the dismissal appeal. They simply continued to make up the rules as they went along. The credibility of the appeal process was further undermined and became an even bigger mockery. The breach of the Data Protection Act was brushed under the carpet and the company set a new deadline: “by close of business on Tuesday 5 June 2018”, although the law was very clear and they were already over the twenty-eight days allowed. No trust or confidence was restored at all, only further postponements and empty promises without any genuine

guarantees. My mental health problems were at a peak in those days and in no way did I want to go back into the offices of GVC and have to relive the misery I had to go through for fear of more damage to my mental health.

324. The email from Gareth Fieldhouse (CC Cecilia Malmgren):

Dear Bart

Thank you for your email. As Cecilia is on annual leave at the moment, I have been asked to respond.

We note the allegations you make in your email below, which you will have the opportunity to raise during the appeal process. You have a right to appeal on both the outcome of your grievance alleging bullying and separate to this, the decision to dismiss you.

The appeal in relation to the grievance outcome will take place prior to the dismissal appeal hearing.

Both can take place on the same day.

The appeal chair will have all the documents that originally formed part of the investigation into your grievance. If you have any further documentation you wish to rely on in respect of the appeal hearing on the grievance hearing outcome or, separately, your dismissal, we would ask that you provide by close of business on Tuesday 5 June 2018. Similarly, if you still require additional information from the business please list the items in your response as soon as is possible and, again, at the latest by close of business on Tuesday 5 June 2018, so we can provide the information to you in a timely fashion if we are able to.

Please could also provide your availability between 12 - 15 June so we may arrange a mutually convenient time for both appeal hearings with you.

Kind regards

Gareth

325. On 31st May 2018 I replied via email to Gareth Fieldhouse (CC to Cecilia Malmgren). I made it clear that I did not want to be further contacted by GVC. I had had enough of their lies, false promises and misleading statements. There was no goodwill at all to come to a solution on their side. No one could be trusted in that company and the humiliation of being sacked for gross misconduct, while I was actually the victim of bullying, had undermined my self-esteem and self-confidence completely. I had had to go through way

too much and I was not able anymore to deal with any of the rubbish they kept coming up with. I could not deal anymore with any of their fake schemes that would push me deeper in my depression. I had to stop this and try to get my life back on track. The thought of having to go back in the GVC offices almost paralysed me. Even when I went to shop in Morrisons I used the back roads so I would not bump into anyone from their personnel.

326. My reply to Gareth Fieldhouse (CC Cecilia Malmgren):

Dear Gareth,

These matters are now in the hands of the relevant authorities and tribunals. They will contact you in due course.

Regards,

Bart

327. That same date 31st May 2018 Gareth Fieldhouse replied to my email. He repeated that he wanted to set a date for both appeals. It added to my despair that that man did not seem to understand that I wanted to be left in peace. That I did not want to hear from him or anyone else in GVC again.

328. The email from Gareth Fieldhouse (CC Cecilia Malmgren):

Dear Bart

We acknowledge the content of your email. Please note, given you had indicated your desire to appeal both decisions the company would still be happy to arrange the appeal hearings mentioned below at a mutually convenient time.

Kind regards

Gareth

329. The next day 1st June 2018 I replied to Gareth Fieldhouse (CC to Cecilia Malmgren). I made it very clear that I wished not to repeat earlier communication. Everything that that man wanted to know, was already known by the company. It showed that he was not genuine in his emails and his intention was not to find a solution. I was not able to think

clearly anymore, I just wanted them to stop bullying me with their emails. I could not bear the thought anymore that they would continue to stalk me and further add to my mental health problems. I wanted to bullying and badgering to end.

330. My email to Gareth Fieldhouse:

Dear Gareth,

I wish not to enter again in a time wasting exchange of e-mails with GVC. Everything you need to know is already to be found in earlier communications and any questions you might have, are already answered there too.

Please be so kind to await the communications from the relevant authorities and tribunals and follow their instructions. This might take some time though, e.g. the Industrial Tribunal date will be set for early September, I have been informed.

Regards,

Bart

331. After breaching all laws and regulations that GVC could breach, their total lack of respect for human beings and their personnel's health, after bringing me mentally down to the level of a life form like a single celled organism like an amoeba or the likes of a jellyfish, I was scared to death to receive any further emails from GVC. For days I was too terrified to look in my mailbox but luckily they got the message this time and stopped their harassment and constant badgering. They had left me no choice but to go to the Gibraltar Regulatory Authority and Employment Tribunal to fix what they had broken. There was no doubt in my mind that GVC had pushed me so hard in the hope that I would go away like Dennis Dorland had done, back to The Netherlands, and they probably even hoped that if that would not work, I would try to commit suicide to solve their problem once and for all.

I believe the contents of this witness statement to be true.

Bart Van Thienen